



Elders Council of Newcastle

Older People working for Older People

March – April 2017 Issue 76

Your Home, Your Choice

**DATE FOR YOUR
DIARY**

**Wednesday
26 April 2017**

Being comfortable at home is so important to us all. We want to help everyone make comfortable choices about their future home, whether they want to stay put, or whether they want to find something new. So the Elders Council is organising one of its biggest events ever; we're calling it ***Your Home, Your Choice***.

We want to better inform our members, non-members, their families, friends, carers and advisers about real housing choices.

On Wednesday 26 April, *Your Home, Your Choice* will be located in the Banqueting Hall at Newcastle's Civic Centre from 10.30am to 3pm. It will feature an exhibition area (Banqueting Hall) plus some special presentations in the adjacent Pandon Room.

For easy navigation and your information-gathering, the Hall will be organised as a housing journey consisting of a series of "Topic Islands", each with information stands representing private, voluntary and public-sector offerings:

- **Registration and general information** plus self-help guidance
- **Staying Put** – but looking at improved comfort and adaptation possibilities
- **New Home Options** – Retirement; Sheltered; Extra Care; Care Homes
- **Move Helpers** – including professional advice
- **Future Here & Now** – Technology; Future Homes Project

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Elders Council at Work

Your Home, Your Choice – cont. -

In delivering the event the Elders Council will be supported by partners including Newcastle City Council, Your Homes Newcastle, Age UK (Newcastle), Care & Repair England, as well as voluntary and private-sector participants.

The event is free but we cannot offer you free transport – sorry! Please come along yourself and bring friends and family with you.

Housing Group

Cohousing Project Visit

Three members of the Elders Council Housing Group and Barbara Douglas, Strategic Director of the Quality of Life Partnership, were invited to join a small group of interested people to visit a cohousing scheme in Leeds.

This scheme, Lilac (Low Impact Living Affordable Community) was originally the brain child of a group of six friends who dreamt of living together in an affordable but eco-friendly manner. It grew over a few years to the present group of twenty families sharing the same ideals. This group, with careful planning, saving and persistence and cooperation, have finally realised their dream.

Their community consists of 20 homes, a mixture of one and two-bedroom flats and three and four-bedroom houses, built on the site of a former school to eco-friendly standards of straw bales, lime and timber with solar panels and super insulation. The site gives ample room for the properties to be built around a common area and also contains a common house where families share meals two or three times a week. There is a laundry room with five washing machines, saving space and energy

consumption in their own homes, and it provides a 'bumping' space for people to have a chat. Spaces in the common house are also offered to other community groups in the neighbourhood. A large area is set aside for allotments (one for each property), a playground (see photo on page 3), which is



Elders Council at Work

Housing Group

also used for barbecues and other outdoor activities, and a small park open to the general public.

The residents, now numbering 48, range from families with children from babies to teenagers, up to pensioners, some over 80, living on their own, but it still seems to work



extremely well. They have organised themselves into management teams, known as task teams, to cover all community things such as repairs, gardening, and finance. They help each other out where necessary and live according to their original concept, doing all they can in an efficient eco-friendly way, even to the

extent of putting their washing in one of the machines and leaving a note to ask someone else to switch it on at noon when the sun is at its highest and the energy is free. Now who else would have thought of that?

They are also very conscious of traffic congestion and pollution and to that end deliberately restricted parking spaces to 10, but do have very large bike sheds. (See *photo below*).

The Elders Council group found the whole visit extremely interesting and the concept of cohousing certainly adds a new perspective to housing and how we may live in the future. If you wish to know more, please check their website:

www.lilac.coop .



Elders Council at Work

Communication Working Group

Everyone's tomorrow – today!

There was a good programme on 3 February, in which we looked at the benefits of music for older people, whether as performers or listeners. On 3 March we looked at scams and how to avoid them; and on 7 April we'll consider the role of volunteers (particularly older ones) as the Council is forced to withdraw into covering only its statutory responsibilities.

We decided that the theme for our broadcast on 5 May would be decided by you, the members of the Elders Council. Please let us know what you would like us to deal with – just ring Steve on 0191 273 4727 and give him your suggestion.



Better still: come and join us. You don't have to have had any radio experience; just bring a voice and your enthusiasm.

The programme goes out on the first Friday of every month between 2 and 4 in the afternoon on the 102.5fm wavelength. Please listen in and send us your comments.

Mile Castle drop-in

There were just over 40 people who came to the January meeting, when Dorothy, Julie and Mary talked, with the accompaniment of slides, about our visit to the "Newcastles of the World Conference" in Canada in September. Staff at the Mile Castle worked hard to ensure that the projector and screen were able to be used – thank goodness!

Future dates are:

15 March	Tyne and Wear Museums and Information NOW
19 April	Eat Well

Remember: it is always the THIRD WEDNESDAY of the month at 10.30am.

See you there.

Elders Council at Work

Older Person Friendly City

Parks and Open Spaces

The City Council has announced three months of consultation about the future of public parks and green spaces. There is a commitment to keep parks in public ownership and free to use, but because of a cut in the parks budget it is necessary to find different ways to look after them. One possibility is to transfer responsibility to a Charitable Trust, which would be able to bring more resources, and to increase community involvement in maintaining and developing these valuable open green spaces. The Working Group's previous report about the older person friendliness of parks identified that they are a valued amenity for the older population. We have continued to support activities in parks for older people, including, for instance, the provision of adult outdoor exercise equipment, as well as ensuring access to basic amenities, such as refreshments and toilets, for those who just want to enjoy fresh air in an attractive space. So our main interest is in a management structure that will ensure that any developments are inclusive of the interests of older citizens. As a contribution to future plans, members are intending to repeat our previous surveys of parks and recreation areas. So we shall be encouraging members to take part in any formal consultation events in their neighbourhoods and would be pleased of extra help with our surveys. To get involved, please come to one of our meetings or leave a message at the Elders Council office tel. 0191 208 2701.

Advance Notice

Fun and Fitness Afternoon, Wednesday, 24 May, 2-4pm in Jesmond Dene Visitor Centre, will be organised by the Working Group, during the Jesmond Community Festival. **PLEASE RESERVE THE DATE AND JOIN IN THIS EVENT.**

City Centre Development Planning Framework

There are still many issues to be resolved arising from developments pending in East Pilgrim Street Development area, Bigg Market, Northumberland Street – to name but a few – as well as the most recent consultation about the **Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment**, which set out the land available for housing and for economic developments. It is quite a task to keep up with planning documents and consider their implications for an age-friendly city. If you are interested in any of these issues, please get in touch.

The next meeting will take place on 20 March, 10.30am-12.30pm in Broadacre House, Market Street East. Agenda and minutes are available from the Elders Council office tel. 0191 208 2701.

Elders Council at Work

Health and Social Care Working Group

Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP)

This consultation paper about the future of the NHS in this area has attracted a first round of comments from a range of interested parties and includes a contribution from this Working Group. Anyone interested can obtain a copy of our statement from the Elders Council office. The main points we wanted to put forward at this stage are that we welcome the emphasis on preventive services, and support any public health initiatives at community level that will reduce inequalities. We would welcome more multi-disciplinary teams both within hospital and out of hospital services. Research has shown that older people are likely to suffer from more than one health condition, and also sometimes to be involved with more than one speciality. So it is helpful to have some way of coordinating services, and to navigate a way through complex systems – starting with clear information about what’s available, a one-stop access point into services, and a clear pathway from assessment and diagnosis to the required service. A further point is that we all want to live independently at home for as long as possible, which is consistent with the policy to keep us out of expensive hospital care – but an important element in this equation is having a suitable home in a supportive neighbourhood. So there are many wider issues involved in designing long-

term sustainable services for the future. Just a few points to make at this stage – we want to see how plans will evolve, and most important, what response there may be to mounting pressure for more funding for social care as well as the NHS (which would be the best way to sustain and transform services).

Health and Wellbeing continue to be a focus of interest, and of action, for the Working Group. There is support for the Wellbeing programme of meetings organised jointly by Elders Council members and Friends of Jesmond Library on the first Wednesday of each month. The dates have been notified in the Newsletter. Each session starts with information about Ways to Wellbeing but goes on with practical information about where to exercise and enjoy healthy activities locally, and get involved socially in the neighbourhood.

So there is quite a wide agenda as we consider the bigger picture of national policies for health and social care – but also what we can do at a very local level to promote our health and wellbeing.

Come and join us if you can. The next meeting will take place on Friday 17 March, 10.30am-12.30pm at Broadacre House.



Elders Council at Work

Transport and Highways Working Group

Summer Outings

We would like to know if you have any suggestions for the 2017 edition of this popular leaflet. Please write to the Group via Anne Richardson (contact details on pg. 28).

Stagecoach

Stagecoach has launched a new direct express bus service between Sunderland and Newcastle. Stagecoach says that this service (X24) will run every 30 minutes Monday to Saturday between Sunderland's Fawcett Street and Newcastle's Pilgrim Street. There will also be an extra service in the evening catering for commuters, leaving Sunderland at 7.24pm and Newcastle at 8.10pm.

Stagecoach says that it is responding to public demand for increased express services between the two cities and is aiming to provide an alternative to the Metro.

Living Streets

The Transport Group received a presentation by Jenny Wiles, Regional Director (North) of Living Streets. This included the following points:

- Living Streets is a national organisation with a local branch.
- Their campaigns include:
 - pedestrian crossing times
 - icy pavements
 - putting walking first
 - walking to work
 - walking to school
- Their work programme includes:
 - community street audits
 - litter picks
 - group walks

Many of their interests are similar to ours and we will continue to work with them in the future.

Road Improvements

The Killingworth Road changes are expected to start in May with the Metro temporary closures due in July. We understand that the Haddricks Mill developments are under further discussion. And the Fawdon Lane road improvements are likely to last until Autumn.

Nexus

First reports indicate that the cycle trial was reasonably successful but has been extended until at least the end of March. However, it has to be recognised that this trial covers only a small part of the network and only at quiet times. Our view is that they will introduce an extended trial in the summer but it is clear that the infrastructure is such that bikes will not be allowed in the underground stations in the City Centre.

Elders Council at Work

Age Friendly City

This is a group of a wide range of people and organisations that have an interest in the development of the city as age friendly. The group has people from different sections of the city: the universities; the City Council; Age UK Newcastle; the Clinical Commissioning Group; and the Elders Council as well as others who are either regular members or invited specifically. For example, Eugene Milne, Newcastle's Director of Public Health, receives an invitation to specific events.

The group is co-ordinated by Barbara Douglas and currently chaired (on an interim basis) by Mary Nicholls. As a group, it has no direct power but the individuals within the group have much influence. At the moment, they meet quarterly, where part of the programme is to catch up with the individual organisations working on age friendliness as well as work at any item where there is partnership work.

Barbara always adds a bulletin to show what has been happening internationally, nationally and locally in the different aspects of being age friendly; so some may be looking particularly at housing or

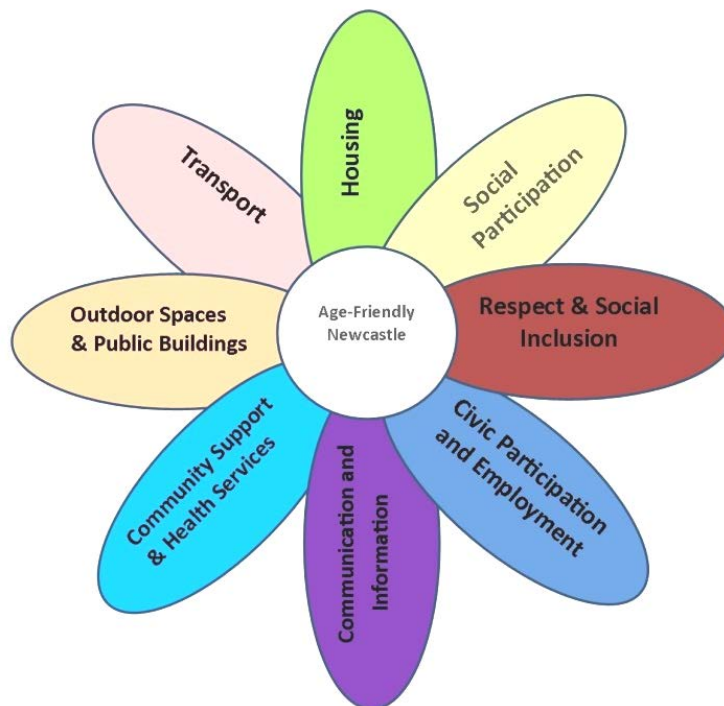
transport. Barbara represents the group sometimes with others internationally and is our national contact who meets other cities' representatives involved in this work; we can always learn from each other.

In the last year, the group has had talks from Prof. Roy Sandbach, who is the Director of the National Centre for Ageing Science and Innovation. The

building for this is currently under construction at Science Central (the old brewery). He described innovation as "matching what's possible with what's needed" and a purpose "to support productive ageing". The group also heard from Prof. Mark Tewdr Jones, who looked well into the future viewing how Newcastle might be

in 2065. He had three possible scenarios and depending on which pathway the city took would lead to a very different outcome.

Apart from some of these more theoretical and scenario building presentations, others have been working in a more practical way. Prof. Rose Gilroy leads an offshoot of Age Friendly in a group about future



Elders Council at Work

Age Friendly City

homes. This group have really worked hard and currently are planning to build demonstrator homes of the future on the Science Central site.

The Elders Council is able to make useful contributions from our own work or as contributors to the work of others. In the latter part of 2016 we were able to bring our report on Community Conversations to the group. This piece of work took almost a year and we talked to members in Fenham, Dinnington,

Fawdon, Westerhope, Kenton and West Denton. The report has been in the newsletter several times and of course you can read it all properly on our website www.elderscouncil.org.uk .

As with all groups and organisations there is always time to review and reflect. The Age Friendly group are looking carefully at this. One question we are asking is “Is Age-friendliness another side of creating a healthy city; are they part of the same whole?”

No excuse for adult abuse!

Safeguarding adults means protecting an adult’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. As an organisation that promotes wellbeing as key aspect of growing older, we think that stopping abuse is everyone’s concern. So as a key part of taking our responsibilities as a charity seriously and protecting the good name of the Elders Council, the Board of Trustees has recently updated our policies and procedures on safeguarding adults. This means that we are clear how we should respond to any concerns about an adult who may be at risk of abuse and neglect. We also have two members who are trained in this difficult area and responsible for making sure that our policies meet statutory requirements.

If you want a copy of the policy, then please email Anne Richardson at anne.richardson@qualityoflife.org.uk or phone her on 0191 208 2701.

However, if you suspect that an adult you know is at risk of abuse or neglect, do report this by contacting Newcastle Community Health and Social Care Direct. During office hours ring 0191 278 8377; out of office hours, ring 0191 278 7878.

You can also telephone for free and confidential advice on all aspects of elder abuse from Action on Elder Abuse, which is a national charity that addresses issues of elder abuse in the UK. Their helpline number is 0808 808 8141 (Monday to Friday 9am-4pm).

Information

Newcastle Council street charter

Newcastle Council are proposing to introduce a street charter. This is a policy document prepared in consultation with a number of organisations within the city – including the Elders Council – outlining a list of actions and commitments that everyone involved agrees to abide by.

The draft charter promises to ensure the presence of blind and partially sighted people at consultations to promote accessible ways for disabled people to report temporary street obstructions, and to involve and consult with blind and partially sighted people and other disability groups when new developments are put forward and, where reasonable, make necessary changes.

It is arranged under different headings including:

- the design and implementation of street furniture – poles, litter bins, seats, advertising boards, telephone boxes etc.
- swift action upon reports of overgrown shrubbery, and awareness campaigns to encourage consideration by residents
- continuing to license all café furniture taking care that tables and chairs are adequately guarded and do not constitute a hazard
- guidance for the operation of street entertainers
- taking the necessary action at crossings where the audible beeps or tactile cones are not working, and enforcing national guidelines regarding crossings
- working with the police to enforce legislation regarding obstructions caused by cars parked on pavements
- working with residents and bin crews to encourage the need to place wheelie bins and recycling bags so that they do not obstruct pavements

The Older Person Friendly City Working Group feel that, despite the fact that the Elders Council were involved in the consultation process, the needs of older people – and anybody who experiences difficulty in moving around the city - are not properly addressed.

We are anxious to obtain the feelings of all members of the Elders Council as to any improvements that are considered necessary. You can get the full draft of the charter by ringing John Telfer on 0191 286 5645 or 0775 156 7434 or by emailing him at johnbtelfer@blueyonder.co.uk . Then please send your comments to him as soon as possible: the Council are hoping for a launch in April.

Information

Introducing HoHo (Hard of Hearing Organisation)

HoHo meetings are held on the second Wednesday of every month (except August) in Holy Saviour's Parish Centre, next to the Church on the corner of King Edward Road, and The Broadway, Tynemouth. This is just five minutes' walk from Tynemouth Metro Station. There is a map on the website: www.hoho.btck.co.uk and you'll find a meeting programme there as well. The meetings start at 2pm and finish at about 3.30pm. Everyone is welcome, regardless of their hearing ability.

HoHo provides an opportunity to meet other people with hearing problems and share coping strategies. To ensure that all hard-of-hearing people can understand what is said, they provide a loop system to help hearing-aid wearers. They also have a typist who types live what the speaker says as they say it. This text is displayed on the wall for people to read.

The meeting fee is £1. Visitors are asked to pay £5 annual membership after attending three meetings. Membership fees are payable in April of each year.

The HoHo Newsletter is published 11 months of the year for members and friends of HoHo. It gives details of activities and other helpful information for hard-of-hearing people.

For further information about HoHo, visit the website or phone Judith on 0191 252 3807.

The Hearing Loss Support "Drop In" takes place from 1.30pm to 2pm, before the meetings. You can get batteries or tubing for your hearing aid, and advice about hearing problems and equipment. For further information about Hearing Loss Support, call 0191 447 6433; Teresa's mobile number is 0745 0344 427.



Information



Action Hosting open evening at The Castle Gate, Melbourne Street NE1 2JQ

Newcastle-based organisation, Action Foundation, has been live with their hosting scheme for over six months, and they are looking for new volunteer hosts. They are holding open evenings to talk about the scheme. If you have a spare room and would like to help someone who is homeless, then hosting may suit you.

The dates for the evenings are:

- Wednesday 29 March 6-7pm
- Wednesday 10 May 6-7pm
- Wednesday 21 June 6-7pm

The scheme helps destitute asylum seekers in the Tyne and Wear area. Hosts will provide a safe place to sleep, for people who have nowhere else to go, for an agreed and defined amount of time. Action Foundation will provide full induction training to all hosts who are eligible to become part of the scheme.

The eligibility criteria are: a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check; a spare room; facilities for the guest to wash, launder clothes, and prepare food; and be near public transport.

Would you like to find out more? Come to one of the meetings and you can find out how the scheme works and what support you will get.

There is more information about the scheme here:

www.actionfoundation.org.uk/projects_hosting.html.

If you would like to come to a meeting, please RSVP on 0191 231 3113 or 0755 721 6588; or email hosting@actionfoundation.org.uk and let them know which meeting you would like to attend.

Information

Ageing without Children (AWOC) ...

... is a national organisation dedicated to supporting and campaigning for people over 50 without children through choice, circumstance, infertility, bereavement, estrangement, distance or any other reason.

While there has been extensive and widespread coverage of many ageing-related issues, the issue of being old and without children has received virtually none. One in five people over 50 have no children, yet there is little understanding, discussion or consideration of what impact this may have on individuals, services for older people and the wider community even though an estimated two million people will be over 65 and without children by 2030. In 2015 AWOC published *Our voices*, a report sharing the experiences of people ageing without children, which is available on their website.

AWOC has four aims:

- To carry out more research into the issues associated with ageing without children, to inform policy, practice and planning.
- To develop a network of local groups for people ageing without children.
- To campaign for issues affecting people ageing without children to be included in mainstream thinking and planning on ageing, and to challenge the judgements made about them.
- To work with other organisations to develop solutions to some of the difficulties faced by people ageing without children.

You can follow AWOC on twitter @awocuk and they have a Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1476937045912974/>.

As AWOC is very small and receives no funding, it has no office base and therefore no phone but can be contacted via email ageingwithoutchildren@gmail.com. The website is at www.awoc.org.

Editors' note: see letter in correspondence section pg. 24.

Information

Age UK Newcastle Will Day

Tuesday 28 March 2017

Age UK Newcastle would like to offer you the opportunity to come along to their Will Open Day to see a solicitor and to make your Will.

The cost is £50 (or £80 for a couple).

All welcome!

To find out more or to book an appointment, please contact the Advice and Support Team on 0191 232 6488 or email enquiries at enquiries@ageuknewcastle.org.uk .



Wellbeing for Life Sessions

The next Wellbeing for Life session will take place on 5 April, 10.30am – 12.00 noon at Jesmond Community Library. This has been organised jointly by the Elders Council of Newcastle and Friends of Jesmond Library.

There is no age limit, but the target audience is older people aged 50+, and in particular older people who would like an opportunity to meet socially in the library to hear about fitness-related, creative or simply sociable activities and events happening in the area.

For more information call Jesmond Library on 0191 281 2385 or email enquiries@jesmondlibrary.co.uk .

Things to do...

All aboard the Culture Bus

Calling all prospective culture vultures: Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums (TWAM) are recruiting a team of participants to take part in a pilot project. The 'Culture Bus' project is a pilot working with over-50s using public transport to access TWAM's nine museum and cultural venues across Tyneside. Participants will give their perspective of getting to the museums via public transport and what is on offer once they arrive. Participants will take part in a wide range of activities including behind-the-scenes tours, hands-on activities and gallery talks. This pilot project will help to create a printed and digital resource to help over-50s access and be inspired by local museums as part of the Live Well programme. Sessions will take place on Wednesday afternoons on 12, 19 and 26 April, 3, 17, 24 and 31 May and 7 June (eight sessions). Any travel costs will be reimbursed and refreshments will be provided. TWAM asks people to commit to the majority of the eight sessions. Closure for registration is 22 March.

For more information about the project, please ring Sophie Mitchell on 0191 277 2246 or email her at livewell@twmuseums.org.uk.

If you would like to book your place, please ring Anne Richardson on 0191 208 2701 or email her at anne.richardson@qualityoflife.org.uk.

Out and About with a Concessionary Bus Pass

A small-group trip will take place on Wednesday 29 March to Stockton Market and Preston Park to visit the very interesting museum (entrance fee £1.50), which has a parade of shops and many exhibits of our younger days. (If the group prefers, we will visit the Transporter Bridge instead of Preston Park.) Meet at Eldon Square Bus Station stand A at 10am for the X10 bus.

If you are interested, please call Mervin Dixon on 0191 285 5843.

Please note:

- There is some walking involved in this trip
- The trip will take place only if the weather permits

Disclaimer: The Elders Council is very pleased to see that members are organising amongst themselves such interesting trips, using their bus passes. However, for the avoidance of doubt, the Elders Council and the group leader wish to make it clear that they take no responsibility for any bus pass trips and all such trips are undertaken entirely at participants' own risk.

Things to do...

Board Games Club

If you'd like an afternoon of playing a board game or two, get yourself along to Jesmond library from 2 to 4 on the afternoons of Wednesday 22 March and 5 April. There is a cost of £2 per person, which includes tea, coffee, and biscuits. The library has a selection of games available. However, if anyone wishes to bring a favourite game with them, they would be most welcome to do so.



Unite Social Club

The social club meets on the second Tuesday of each month at the Irish Club, Gallowgate, Newcastle from 11am until 3pm.

Everyone is made welcome with tea, coffee and biscuits on arrival. Each social event has a speaker on topics such as the history of Newcastle, police security, the fire brigade, social care, pensions, or transport. The talk is followed by bingo and a raffle with members socialising.

The club organises day trips to places such as Whitby or York and five-day holidays to places like Scotland and the south-east coast. This year, they have arranged a trip to Blackpool from Monday 5 June to Friday 9 June. You can visit the winter gardens, where subjects relevant to present-day pensions, transport, national health, social care and dementia will be debated with the guest speakers. On Wednesday 7 June there is a social evening with Neil Diamond Tribute, disco and Tina Turner tribute in the ballroom free for everyone. Come along and you will be made welcome.

The cost of the Blackpool trip is £328 for a couple and £184 for a single person. For further information, call Bob Pinkerton on 0191 414 4537.

Try something old, learn something new ...

Free Adult Cycle Training

Learn to ride is for beginners who don't yet ride a bike. It is delivered by experienced instructors who run sessions specially targeted to help adults learn to balance and then ride short distances.

Level 1 is for people who are new to or returning to cycling but who are not confident and want to improve. The training should help you to cycle for short journeys off road and generally improve your cycling skills.

All cycle training will take place at the Cycle Hub on the Quayside in Newcastle from 10 to 12 or 1 to 3 on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. It's free for all who live, work or study in Newcastle.

To book your place please ring Liz Jackson or Cheryl Ford-Lyddon on 0191 278 3390 or 0191 211 5961; or email cyclinginthecity@newcastle.gov.uk

To find out what else Cycling in the City offers, please go to <http://cyclinginthecity.activenewcastle.co.uk>

Tai Chi for the over-50s

Tai Chi Chuan is a holistic art seeking to use internal energy ('Chi') for good health and relaxation. It concentrates on slow, relaxed, flowing movement. Its adherents say that this makes it adaptable to many levels of health and fitness. They say that, through this inclusive approach, Tai Chi has become regarded the world over as a fun and effective way to strengthen mind, body and spirit for young and old alike.

So, Age UK invites you to come and try their beginners class:

When	Mondays 11am-12 noon
Where	Broadacre House, Market Street, Newcastle
Cost	£4.50 per session

No need to book

For more information, please ring 0191 232 6488 or email enquiries@ageuknewcastle.org.uk.

Information Board



Befrienders Needed!

Do you know anyone who would like to join Age UK Newcastle as a volunteer befriender?

Befrienders visit people who live alone in their own home in the community and who are lonely and socially isolated. They visit on a regular basis, ideally once a week for about an hour – or longer if they can.

Befrienders provide conversation and social interaction. They do not take people out or get involved in any practical tasks such as housework or shopping. It's all about providing quality one-to-one time for the customer involved. Age UK try wherever possible to match a befriender with a customer with shared interests and who is easily accessible.

This is a really popular service and there is currently a waiting list. So, if you know anyone who would like to get involved as a befriender, please contact Yvonne Shanley, Volunteering & Befriending Manager, on 0191 235 9903 or email yvonne.shanley@ageuknewcastle.org.uk to find out more.

Social lunches

Every Tuesday between 1pm and 3pm Harissa is open for a brand new, social lunch club. If you're looking for a warm and welcoming place to spend time and meet new people, then the social lunch club is for you. Everyone is welcome.

Every week there will be:

- a hot meal, full of Harissa flavours and goodness
- a music station waiting for your requests
- games and activities on offer
- a friendly atmosphere to relax in.

Find us at Harissa, 31-35 Starbeck Avenue, Sandyford, Newcastle,

If you would like more information, please ring 0191 276 0595 or email hello@harissakitchen.co.uk .

Hot off the press

... new look Information NOW coming soon!

Information NOW 

Information & advice for older people in Newcastle upon Tyne



Got questions?

Find information & advice



Need help and support?

Search for local services



Want to get involved?

Discover activities near you

www.InformationNOW.org.uk

Information NOW 

Information & advice for older people in Newcastle upon Tyne

Find everything you need in one place...

- what's going on near you
- local organisations & support
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And much more!

New!
Events & Activities

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Find an event or activity by category, day or location

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Activity

Dementia Cafe at Great Park

Friday 17 Feb 2017

The Dementia Memory Dementia Cafes offers friendship and support in a warm and welcoming environment.

[Read more](#)

Activity

Dementia Carers Support Group

Friday 17 Feb 2017

[Read more](#)

Activity

Tap Dancing

Monday 20 Feb 2017

[Read more](#)

Information NOW  Login/Register

Information & advice for older people in Newcastle upon Tyne

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End of Life


Family & Relationships


Getting Online


Health


Housing


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Money


Staying Safe


Travel & Transport


Work & Retirement

www.InformationNOW.org.uk



You won't believe what you can do!

Study of osteoarthritis treatment

Healthwatch Newcastle and Northumbria University are currently recruiting people to take part in a study about their preferences when taking medication for osteoarthritis. To take part in the study you just need to have a diagnosis of osteoarthritis and have had some joint pain over the last 12 months.

Participation will be anonymous and will not include any form of medical examination or disclosure of symptoms. You will need to answer a series of computer-based questions about the suitability of treatments. No previous experience of using computers is required as support will be available.

The main aims of the study are:

- To find out patients' preferences for medication treatment of osteoarthritis.
- To test a new interactive computerised questionnaire with people who have osteoarthritis.

If you are interested in taking part, please contact Healthwatch Newcastle on 0191 338 5720 or email info@healthwatchnewcastle.org.uk . They will be holding a series of community-based sessions to complete the surveys later in the spring and will contact you nearer the date to arrange for you attend a convenient session.

A message of thanks ...

Bethany Bareham, PhD researcher within the Institute for Health and Society at Newcastle University would like to send out her thanks for the generous offers of involvement for her study "Thinking About Drinking" in response to a notice in last month's newsletter. She has received a great number of responses and is delighted with the enthusiasm shown by readers. Please be aware that recruitment is still on-going, and any interested individuals (aged 65+ with any experience of drinking alcohol at any point in life) can continue to get in touch on 0191 208 2056 or at b.k.bareham@ncl.ac.uk for further information.



Can you handle a computer?

Every Sunday morning, Newcastle Talking News records snippets from the local press for blind and visually-impaired people. They need a volunteer to help with that recording once a month. Could you please help? You'd need to be:

- willing to manage new software
- willing to be trained in how to make the recordings
- available to spend one Sunday morning a month in the Newcastle studio

If you would like to offer your help or simply want to know more about what's involved, please ring 0191 261 4124 and leave a message on the answer-phone; if you want to talk to someone direct, please ring the number between 9.30 and 1.30 on a Thursday.

Have your say!

If you are a YHN (Your Homes Newcastle) tenant or leaseholder and want to have your say, Newcastle Independent Tenant Voice (NITV) want to hear from you.

NITV is setting up a new conversation between the City Council and people living in YHN properties. You can give your views:

- by face-to-face conversations
- by completing surveys
- via social media
- through the website
- by joining the tenant panel

If you go on to the panel, YHN will support you via training, conferences, events and site visits.

If you are interested in having your say, please ring 0191 277 1807, email nitv@newcastle.gov.uk or visit www.newcastle.gov.uk/nitv .

Correspondence

Dear Editors,

Concerning the 'Cycling on pavements' article included on page 21 of the last newsletter, if you challenge someone cycling on a pavement there is a risk that you may get a mouthful of abuse!

Yours truly,
Andrew Gosschalk

Editor's note: The Highway Code (Rule 64) states quite clearly: "You **MUST NOT** cycle on a pavement. **Laws HA 1835 sect 72 & R(S)A 1984, sect 129.**"



Dear Editors

IT CLASSES PROJECT

I have just returned home from a very informative session on using my iPad with the Northumbria Student Union IT Classes Project. My instructor, Hannah Donovan, a 3rd Year Law student, was friendly, skilled, patient and made the whole experience a real pleasure. A big thank you to all concerned.

I will be back for more as there are many topics to learn about!

Best wishes,
Jenny Wright

Editors' note: We are very pleased that Jenny found the session so worthwhile. Sessions take place fortnightly on a Wednesday, 2.00-4.00pm – just let Anne know that you want to go by ringing her on 0191 208 2701.



Correspondence

Dear Editors,

I was interested in the item in the last newsletter about Action Housing and the plight of failed asylum seekers.

When my mother was about five or six years old (as a small child, she was never quite sure how old she was), she became a refugee, an orphan and a stateless person.

My mother lived with her parents, grandparents and her two brothers and younger sister in the Armenian town of Zeitoon, which was situated in the Taurus mountains. On 24 April 1915, Turkish soldiers arrived and forced the entire population of the town to leave their homes; they were then sent on death marches.

Somehow along the way, my mother, her brothers and sister were smuggled out by friends of the family; they were sent to an orphanage run by American missionaries. Still they were not safe and had to endure being hidden in cellars, protected by one of the missionaries, who kept a loaded shotgun close by at all times. The adults in the family gave themselves up to their fate knowing that they would not survive.

Nine years later, my mother, then aged somewhere about fourteen or fifteen years old, was taken to Nazareth in Palestine. She was told that she was going to live with a family who would make sure that she continued with her education; however, when she got there, she discovered that she was just being used as an unpaid servant. She managed to leave and found her way to the Edinburgh Medical Missionary Hospital in Nazareth, known as The Scottish Hospital. She managed to persuade the matron, a Miss Parkinson from Whitby, to give her a chance to train as a nurse.

My mother completed her nursing and midwifery training, being registered with the Palestinian Government, and eventually came to England in 1937 to marry my father.

If it had not been for the courage and foresight of her parents and of the people who smuggled them to safety and also of those who looked after them, none of the children would have survived. Being given a chance by one lady from Yorkshire meant that my mother had the means of supporting herself and making her own way in life.

All it takes to make a difference is to show a little kindness and compassion and, if possible, to give someone a chance in life. After all, no one becomes an orphan or a refugee out of choice; no one leaves their home out of choice; even in our country many people are forced out of their homes through no fault of their own.

Yours truly
Anita Davies

Editors' note: please see article on pg. 12.

Correspondence

Dear Editors

The care minister recently told a parliamentary select committee that tackling the crisis in social care requires people to take responsibility for looking after their parents, as they do for their children. Jeremy Hunt said the same sort of thing in 2015: “Children [should] see their parents giving wonderful care to grandparents, and recognise that, in time, this will be their responsibility too.”

Leaving aside for a moment whether the state, having taken our national insurance contributions for the whole of our working lives and continuing to take our tax, should now renege on the deal and pass the responsibility to family members who may be in no position to bear it, I ask whether the ministers realise that there are already over one million over-65s who have no children; or that this figure will double by 2030, as one in five over-50s don't have children. Or is it just that they realise these facts and don't care?

If you are interested in this issue, you can get further information by emailing Ageing Without Children (AWOC) at ageingwithoutchildren@gmail.com or by visiting <https://awoc.org>.

Yours truly
Steve Whitley

Editors' note: please see article on pg. 13.



Newsletter Costs

Each edition of the newsletter costs the Elders Council nearly £600 to post out to members (plus about £1125 for printing). So we'd be really grateful if you could help to reduce these costs.

1. If you agree to take the newsletter electronically (by email), not only do you get your copy in colour and earlier than if you got it by post; it also means that we're saving on postage. To sign up for this service see details on pg. 28.
2. If you agree to deliver some newsletters in your neighbourhood by hand, we save on the postage and you get to have a bit of exercise and perhaps meet and chat with neighbours (just ring the doorbell and hand over their copy of the newsletter personally).

We'd be very grateful if you could choose either of these options. Please ring Anne Richardson (0191 208 2701) or email her (anne.richardson@qualityoflife.org.uk) and let her know

3. The third way you could help is by giving a donation to the Elders Council to cover postage and production costs. (See the donation form below and on pg. 26)
4. Or you could help by using the **Give as You Live** system, giving money to the Elders Council each time you shop online.

Donations and Gift Aid

Could you please help by making a Gift Aid donation to help cover the costs of the production of the Newsletter?

✂.....

PLEASE HELP THE ELDERS COUNCIL TO CONTINUE ITS WORK

I wish to donate £7.50 [] £15 [] £30 [] Other [£] to the Elders Council of Newcastle and enclose a cheque for that amount. Please send to Elders Council office (address details on page 28).

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Please tick if you require a receipt (✓).

Poetry Corner

Blue sky

Let my sky be blue
And colour my mind
Generously, even if only
For this small segment of time.

The image will persist
Beyond its time limit,
So that I can go back and forth
And reap the azure harvest.

My sky tends to be grey
In spite of sterling brightness elsewhere.
Somehow the spirit loses its sharpness
As it tries to filter into mine.

But I am not going to be defeatist,
I wait patiently and bide my time.
Let rain and thunderstorm rage.
My skin is water-proof and will prevail.

Asit Maitra

✂.....

Donations and Gift Aid

If you would like us to claim Gift Aid relief (so that we can claim back money from the Treasury), please complete the relevant boxes below:

Charity: The Elders Council of Newcastle Ltd.

- I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax at least equal to the Amount of tax that the charity will reclaim on my gifts.
- I confirm that this donation and all previous and future gifts of money to the Elders Council should be treated as Gift Aid donations.

Please notify us if you wish to cancel this declaration.

Thank you.

Poetry Corner

Cause and Effect

Regarding our local conurbation,
there has recently been an altercation
and a need for major consultation,
all about student accommodation.

Causing considerable consternation:
needing the task of promulgation,
thus avoiding a possible conflagration
because of student accommodation.

However, I plead for cogitation:
the problem is one of consummation –
usually done in combination
in a private room accommodation.

Despite your noisy protestation,
ask what led to ovulation
and an increase in population,
and thus for student accommodation?

Ask what increases our population?
It must be prurient ostentation
and not practising moderation –
even in student accommodation.

We need a programme of indoctrination,
supporting much less cooperation,
even a course of inoculation
could reduce student accommodation.

Even a bit of procrastination,
by having a longer conversation
and feeling less of an obligation
to fill this student accommodation.

There is an obvious correlation
between that forgotten pollination
and contemporary domination
concerning student accommodation.

Neville D. Harris

Newsletter Information

Newsletter Articles

If you would like to submit an article to be considered for the May/June 2017 edition of the Newsletter, will you please ensure that you forward it before Friday 7 April.

Newsletter in other formats

We can make our Newsletter available in alternative formats (e.g. in **larger print** or audio tape or an audio CD). Please just let Anne know what format you would like (0191 208 2701)

Electronic Version of the Newsletter

It costs about £1.20 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?

Contact Details

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