



Elders Council of Newcastle

Older People working for Older People

April – May 2018 Issue 81

We've moved back!

In our last edition, we told you that we'd moved to MEA House. And now we've moved back again to the Biomedical Research Building.

Why?

When we went to MEA House, we operated from a little room in the Age UK Newcastle offices. But unfortunately Age UK Newcastle ran out of funds and has gone into administration.

So over the last month, the Elders Council Board has been busy re-negotiating arrangements between ourselves, Newcastle City Council and Newcastle University. We have been delighted with the very positive response we have received and how much the work of the Elders Council is valued in the city. The outcome of our discussions is that the Elders Council has now returned to the Campus for Ageing and Vitality.

You can find us in Room 2.29, 2nd Floor, Biomedical Research Building, Campus for Ageing and Vitality, Nuns Moor Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 5PL. Telephone: 0191 208 2701. Email: barbara.douglas@qualityoflife.org.uk . – cont. -

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Your Personal Data

From 25 May 2018 the **General Data Protection Regulation** comes into effect and organisations who handle personal data will need to meet new legal requirements. On page 3 of this Newsletter you will find very important information regarding your personal data and how it is used by us. Please read this carefully if you wish to continue receiving information including the Newsletter from us.

Failure to respond will result in you no longer receiving information from us.

Act now!

We've moved back!

And if you want to get in touch with services that Age UK Newcastle used to provide, we suggest that your first port of call be the Information NOW website:

www.informationnow.org.uk .

For Active Ageing, ring Linda Williams on 0191 477 3559 ext.237 or email her at linda.williams@ageukgateshead.org.uk .

If you need advice on anything and can't find what you need on Information NOW, please ring the Age UK national number: 0800 055 6112.

Independent Age also offer a free friendship service for older people.

Loneliness is a growing problem for older people and a regular telephone call or visit from one of Independent Age's friendly volunteers can make all the difference. It provides the chance to have a regular chat with someone friendly and trustworthy.

If you would like to find out more about Independent Age's Face to Face friendship services on Tyneside or for volunteering opportunities, please contact:

tel. Harriet or Kay at the Newcastle Office 0191 731 4000;

email: harriet.critchley@independentage.org ;

website: www.independentage.org . .



advice and support for older age
Independent
Age

Your Personal Data – Important Notice

From 25 May 2018, organisations who handle personal data will need to meet new legal requirements, as the **General Data Protection Regulation** comes into effect.

At the Elders Council we are committed to ensuring that we are fully compliant with all the principles of GDPR. This means that we need to tell you how we use your data, and you need to agree to receiving further contact from us.

How we use your data

We comply with our obligations under the GDPR by keeping personal data up to date; by storing and destroying it securely; by protecting personal data from loss, misuse, unauthorised access or disclosure; and by ensuring that appropriate technical measures are in place to protect personal data.

We use personal data of members for the following purposes:

1. We store your name, address, telephone number, email, date of birth, gender and ethnicity on our membership database.
2. We use your contact details to inform you of news, events, activities and services that we offer.

Your personal data will be treated as strictly confidential and we will not share it without your consent unless we feel that there is a risk of harm to you or from you.

If we wish to use your personal data for a new purpose, not covered by this Data Protection Notice, we will seek your prior consent to the new processing.

Future communication

1. If you are an Elders Council member and receive a paper copy of the Newsletter and information circulars, you will find a form enclosed with this Newsletter. You will need to indicate on this form whether you wish to continue receiving information from the Elders Council or would prefer to unsubscribe.
2. If you are an Elders Council member and receive information electronically, you will receive an email with links to allow us to update your details or to unsubscribe you from our database.
3. If you are a worker or organisation who receives a paper copy of the Newsletter and information circulars, you will be sent a form to complete which will allow us to update your details or to unsubscribe you from our database.
4. If you are a worker or an organisation who receives information electronically, you will receive an email with links to allow us to update your details or to unsubscribe you from our database.

Please note: unsubscribing will result in us removing your details from our database, and you will not receive any further communication.

If you do not fill in and send back the enclosed form to us by 25 May 2018, you will cease to be a member and will not receive any further information from the Elders Council; so this will be your last Newsletter.

If you are unsure, please contact us on 0191 208 2701.

Elders Council at Work

Communication Group

We continue to broadcast once a month from a little studio in West Gate Community College. Our host station is the community radio station for Newcastle and Gateshead called NE1fm.

So:

1. Please tune in to 102.5fm at 2pm on Friday 4 May (Gardening and gardens), 1 June (The Great Exhibition of the North) and 6 July (Your holidays). Or you can listen online at www.ne1fm.net.
2. Get in touch with us (0191 273 4727) to tell us what you thought of the show or to request a favourite piece of music.
3. **Volunteer to join the team** (again, 0191 273 4727).

Transport and Highways Working Group

Hospital access

A number of improvements to hospital access are now in hand. There have been longstanding issues with Service 46, which calls at the RVI on its way to and from the General Hospital to town. We have been advised that it will now stop on Richardson Road (outside the dental wing) on its way into town and will stop inside the RVI grounds on its way back from town.

At the same time Arriva are doing some bus rescheduling which they say will help improve reliability. New timetables are being published.

We continue to press for bus-stops on Queen Victoria Road but, so far, without success. Operators are worried about possible congestion if they use this route, but we will continue our efforts for what we see as an important access to the hospital. We have been advised that new CCTV is being installed in the RVI car park, which will make it easier to identify staff and members of the public who should not be there and who will be notified accordingly. A new car park is planned for the RVI but no approval has been given yet. Also, being pursued is a virtual management system on access roads outside the hospital showing the number of spaces available.

The 553 service continues to go into the grounds of the Freeman Hospital, where steps are also being taken to cut down on illegal parking.

Elders Council at Work

Transport and Highways Working Group

Go North East are introducing a new K3 route on 18 March (Forest Hall-Four Lane Ends-Freeman Hospital) and Arriva are considering extending the 52 to the General Hospital site and the RVI.

We will continue to keep you informed as changes are made.

Blackett Street bus restrictions

For the summer period, Newcastle City Council are looking at the possibility of introducing some restrictions to vehicles using Blackett Street. This would mean relocation of bus-stops in that area and there will be extensive public announcements if this should happen. However, the current situation is that no decision has yet been made by the Council, and planners are currently consulting with interested parties including the Elders Council. We will keep you informed.

In the meantime, some road/traffic light improvements are taking place at Newgate Street junctions and outside the Gate to improve traffic flow.

Outings in 2018 with your bus-pass

We are planning to publish in May our 2018 version of this very popular leaflet.

There are a few new venues listed such as Great Ayton, Beamish Museum, Staindrop and Raby Castle, and for the more active some short walks you may like to do using the local bus network. When it is ready you will be able to download a copy of it from our website. Alternatively, you will be able to get a free printed copy by sending a stamped large addressed envelope to the office (address on the back page).



Elders Council at Work

Mile Castle drop-in

Here are the dates and planned activities for the next set of meetings at the Mile Castle public house. We meet every third Wednesday in the month at 10.30; the pub is at the corner of Grainger Street and Westgate Road. The meeting takes place on the third floor but for those who need it there is a lift. We have members at the front door to greet you and they will offer to help with the lift too as it can be a bit intimidating! Everyone is very welcome, and we look forward to seeing you.

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| 18 th April | David Hand, not yet certain what he is to talk about so come along and find out! |
| 16 th May | A version of the panel game “Would I lie to you?”. Back by popular request. |
| 20 th June | Sushma Kotecha, an optician, to talk about “Floaters and flashes – caring for your eyes”. |
| 18 th July | Louise Borrell from DeafLink to talk about hearing difficulties. |
| 15 th August | There is nothing planned for this session but if you want to come for a chat with friends there will be some members there. We start again with activities in September and we have quite a lot planned but some need confirming before we reveal them to you. |

Please do tell friends and acquaintances about these sessions. Most of us know how important it is to meet with people and stay in touch; this is an easy way to do that.



Elders Council at Work

Older Person Friendly City

The future of our parks continues to be an important issue. The City Council has announced its decision to transfer responsibility for parks and allotments to a Charitable Trust, which is now being formed and Board members are being recruited. There will also be a communities group for park users and stakeholders which must be consulted about plans and developments in parks. Over coming months, it will be important to keep track of how these arrangements work out in practice – and to ensure that older people have a say in the communities group.

Easy and free access to outdoor spaces and activities are vital for the health of everyone, including older people. In the meantime, it's important that we all continue to enjoy visits to our favourite parks as the trees come into leaf and spring flowers appear.

But if you are interested in ideas for activities in parks, then reserve the date of the **Fun and Fitness afternoon, Thursday 24 May in Jesmond Dene Visitor Centre**, when we are organising an afternoon of fun activities, including Rookie Golf (*pictured right*) during the Jesmond Community Festival (*see news item on pg. 17*). So, come and try your skills and find out about some new games for community groups to enjoy.



Northumberland Street transformation programme

The City Council is currently involved in taking a lead, together with businesses in the city, to transform Northumberland Street into a world-class shopping and leisure destination. The first target will be to capture the attention of visitors to the forthcoming Great Exhibition of the North to be held in various venues around Tyneside from 22 June to 9 September. There will be a number of consultation events, and an opportunity to express views about improvements by responding to an online survey, which can be found on <https://letstalknewcastle.co.uk/consultations/info/267> . We are thinking it would be more useful to arrange a consultation event for Elders Council members and to contribute some views on behalf of older citizens. What do you think?

Readers who are interested in any of the above issues are invited to join our discussions at Working Group meetings on Monday 16 April and Monday 14 May from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Please ring the Elders Council office on 0191 208 2701 for venue details.

We'll miss you!

Anne Richardson will leave us at the end of April

In the last issue of the Newsletter there were some kind comments about Vera Bolter's contribution to the work of Elders Council over past years. Now it is her turn to express her appreciation of the support given by Anne Richardson as we learn with sadness that she is to move into another job after 19 years as our administrative support.

Vera writes:

"I must say that whatever I have done in the past has not been done on my own but has been ably supported by colleagues and members. And chief among these has been Anne, who came to work for our older people's health action group even before the Elders Council came into existence. Countless times over the years Anne has transcribed my pages of scribble into a readable and attractively presented document. As Elders Council developed into an independent organisation, Anne was there to provide efficient secretarial and administrative support.

But it is not only behind the scenes that Anne has supported us. Notably, alongside so much else, she has led the way in helping us to develop IT skills by working in partnership with Northumbria University students to offer regular sessions of information and advice.

And, above all, we appreciate Anne's human skills as she remains cheerful and helpful as the pressure is on to get meetings, events, information days organised. And there are countless times when she has given help, advice, and support to telephone callers. We all have our individual recollections but together we can say, "We are sorry you are leaving us, Anne. Thank you for putting up with us for so long, and we hope all goes well with you in the future."

We'll miss you!

What others have said about Anne:

"Anne, you will be sorely missed. As well as doing the work equivalent to that of two or three people, you always had time to help with anyone's problems (even outside of work hours). I have known you for many years now and you have become one of my dearest friends and I am sure everyone will join me in wishing you every happiness in the future."

DT

"You're a powerhouse and like that elusive four-leafed clover: we have been so very, very lucky to have had your support and friendship. You were an absolute rock for me through my years as Chair. I can't thank you enough."

MN

"You're a wonderful human being and the Elders Council is so lucky to have been able to rely upon your efficiency and thoughtfulness for so long. We shall miss you."

SW

"The Elders Council is very lucky to have had you with us for nearly 20 years. Your enthusiasm, organising abilities and capacity for work have been a joy to observe. In short, you have been a real STAR and I'm very sorry you're going."

RW

"Whenever I needed any help, in any way, there was nobody better than you, Anne, to put me right. You were indispensable to me. You will be missed enormously."

JS

"Since my first involvement in Better Life in Later Life there has been you Anne, efficiently and with good humour, making sure that every project was on track, all communications organised and in short being a powerhouse behind the other powerhouse that is Barbara. You will be missed more than I can say."

RG

"You were a font of knowledge, a fun friend and a calming influence. You were such an integral part of the Elders Council and you will be sorely missed."

CS

Reports

Doorbells

On 22 March, a packed audience enjoyed a performance of Doorbells – a thought-provoking play which challenged us to think about how and where we want to live in later life. Our audience stayed behind for a post-show conversation which included lively debates on the issues raised by the performance.

“A delightful and engaging way of dealing with the issue.”

“Acting is animated, humorous and music is fabulous really atmospheric music. Realistic and very true to life, very moving anecdotes about what an individual has gone through at such a young age. I love the doorbells being used as an instrument.”

We will be producing a short film based on the performance which can be used as a trigger to engaging people in conversations about how they plan ahead.



Doorbells was commissioned by Care and Repair England, and delivered by a partnership of Elders Council with Skimstone Arts and Northumbria University.

Reports

Age Friendly City – Child Friendly City

Several trustees attended the March meeting of the Age Friendly City group, when they heard Mike Catt, the Director of the National Innovation Centre for Ageing, speak about the role of the centre; he said that, among other things, it should be a regional centre for public engagement with opportunities to build wider collaborations and partnerships. He spoke of helping people to age well at whatever point they are in life (we are all ageing every day as he reminded us); in later life we need to look at solutions for multi-morbidity (this concerns the many of us who have two or more conditions that we live with). Finally, he said to remember the financial value older people bring to society. It was good to hear this latter remark as often it isn't mentioned at all. It's good to be reminded that many of us still pay taxes to support the Welfare State and have done so for many decades.

City Council Policy Cabinet

At the most recent city council Policy Cabinet the discussion was about Newcastle becoming the first city in England to participate in UNICEF's Children and Young People Friendly Cities programme. Over the next three to five years, Newcastle City Council and its key partners will work with UNICEF to progressively achieve the city's ambition to be recognised by UNICEF as a Children and Young Person Friendly City.

The leader of the council, Nick Forbes, did point out that he did not wish to have competing programmes with Age Friendly, Dementia Friendly and Child Friendly. And indeed, there are huge areas of similarity in that to be child friendly is for Newcastle to be a city that children and young people would choose to live and grow up in. Just as we want it to be a great city to age in.



Reports

Attendance Allowance

Later Life AGEnda tell us that “astonishing” figures released by the government show that the number of older disabled people receiving entitlements to help with their daily living costs has plummeted since 2011.

When the number of older people is increasing and the number of older people needing help is increasing, the number of people getting attendance allowance (AA) has fallen by 165,000 (just over 10%) since 2011. The fall in the lower rate of AA is most dramatic, falling from about 687,000 to 550,000 (nearly 20%).

AA is non-means-tested and is designed to help with disability-related daily living costs and is available to those 65 or over who do not already receive personal independence payment (PIP) or disability living allowance. Some other entitlements can also increase if a claimant is receiving AA.

Caroline Abrahams, charity director at the charity Age UK England, said: “Given that longevity is increasing, it is surprising to hear that the number of those claiming attendance allowance has fallen. This is a really important benefit for older people with a long-term illness or disability, helping them to pay some of the additional costs that they face and remain independent at home. We are concerned that many older people who should be receiving this vital support are missing out and would urge anyone who thinks they may be eligible to get in touch with Age UK to arrange a benefits check.”

Many people who are entitled to AA are not claiming it. So our advice is:

- Get a benefits check.
- Claim what you’re entitled to.

Reports

Choosing a care home



Our attention has been drawn to an article called *Ten things I wish I'd known before choosing a care home* by Rosie Carr. The ten things she lists are as follows:

- Find your inner pushy self
- Don't assume you'll have to sell the family home
- Put a financial power of attorney in place
- Know the get-out clauses
- State help is great, but there are downsides
- A deferred payment agreement
- Apply for entitlements
- Get a quote for an annuity
- Consider every financing option
- Consult a Solla (Society of Later Life Adviser)

And she reminds her readers that a place in a residential care home can cost more than £50,000 a year; so you really do need to do your homework before you finally choose.

For the full article, please go to:

https://www.ft.com/content/c274986c-1245-11e8-a765-993b2440bd73?utm_source=Age+Action+Alliance+Newsletter&utm_campaign=e21c138d5e-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_10_30&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_cdb196beb1-e21c138d5e-66839743 .

This quarter we thought we'd give you a summary of how people have used Information NOW (www.informationnow.org.uk) during 2017; for many years the Elders Council has helped support and develop the content of the website to make it a comprehensive resource.

The content on Information NOW is well used. Monitoring the most viewed and shared information on the website helps the team to build a picture of what people in Newcastle need help with and what concerns them most. Over the last year, the most read sections of the website [were leisure and lifestyle](#), [money](#) and [health](#). The trends do fluctuate depending on the season though; for example, as winter approaches visitors look at information on energy and winter fuel payments and in the summer, information on swimming pools and gyms is popular.

The team moved to a new web platform last March and this was partly to enable them to launch the [Events and Activities](#) section, which was developed following feedback sessions in 2016. The benefits of this section are that there are a number of lesser-known organisations that get an opportunity to promote their activities to a wider public through the website and that people can find something to suit their tastes and budget – from music to keep fit, from arts and crafts to gardening. The most popular searches have been on day/date as well as for fitness options including Tai Chi, line dancing and golf. Social activities are also popular, including: reading groups, community groups, food with friends and learning a new skill, including computer clubs.

The team gives a big thank you to the Elders Council for continuing to support this resource. Keep bringing your ideas and information to them. Contact: informationnow@qualityoflife.org.uk or ring on 0191 277 8814.

Did you know ...

...that only one in three people who are entitled to free eye tests at home actually ask for one? If you're over 60, you get your eye test free; and if you're unable to leave home unaccompanied because of physical or mental illness or disability, you can get the optometrist to come out to your home.



SHHH! Self-help for hard-of-hearing



This is a FREE support group which runs on the first Tuesday of every month at Newcastle Central Library. Deaflink aims to provide members with a range of interesting topics that link to hearing loss or opportunities that are accessible to people with a hearing loss.

The group is informal and offers members an opportunity to discuss shared experiences. It is also the forum where accessibility issues are discussed and challenged.

Doors open at 1pm and the talk or presentation begins at 1.30pm. A wide variety of issues is explored within this forum, followed by the opportunity for a coffee and chat.

Current programme:

Tuesday 5 June: Tara Herd from Newcastle Airport sharing the support that deaf or hard-of-hearing passengers can access.

Tuesday 3 July: Updates from Action on Hearing Loss.

If you would like to come along to the group, please contact louise@deaflink.org.uk or call 0191 281 2314.



This project also offers the opportunity for anyone with a hearing loss to meet Deaflink's project worker to discuss how their services might provide support. Services include lip-reading classes, a monthly social, and loop checking and challenging, in addition to the monthly SHHH! group.



In your locality ...

... West End

Don't miss the opportunity to take part in Active Voices – a new short course which aims to develop the skills and knowledge of people who wish to play a part in their communities. If you attend this **free** course, you will have the chance to develop new skills, explore a range of interesting and topical issues, carry out practical experiences and have some fun! The course will take place on Tuesday mornings from 10am to 1pm (lunch included) starting on Tuesday 17 April and ending on 25 May at the Carnegie Library on Atkinson Road, Benwell, NE4 8XS. To book a place, please ring 0790 005 1720, email shylands@wea.org.uk or call or call the Elders Council on 0191 208 2701. The course is being delivered by a partnership between the Elders Council, Workers Educational Association (WEA) and Newcastle University.

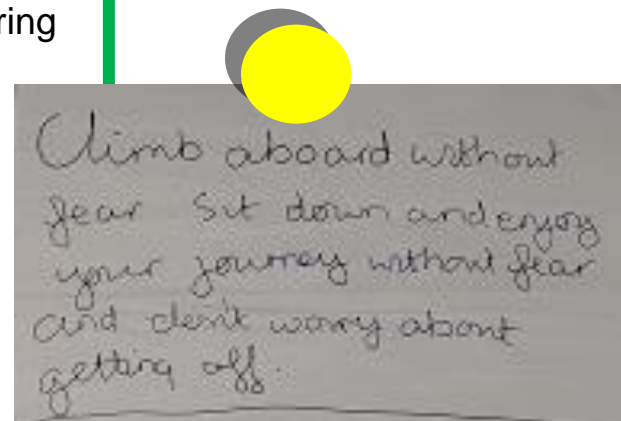
In February a second course of Active Voices started, this time held at St Martins Centre in Walker. This is a continuing collaboration between the Elders Council, Newcastle University and the WEA.

The people who attended the six-week course wanted to learn how to approach different local issues and to work together as a team to satisfactorily resolve these.

Aided by Moyra Riseborough (WEA), the group quickly identified what the most annoying problems were. After consideration, it was agreed that the main issues were to do with Stagecoach, passenger comfort and safety during travel, including access and egress from buses for those with mobility issues, punctuality and reliability of services, and what to do in the event of an accident or incident on the bus.

The group carried out research on bus matters, and reviewed the information gathered. Stagecoach was then invited to a meeting. The representatives who came along expressed their appreciation of all of the work that had been done and answered many of the structured questions presented.

As a follow-up to this, the group have been invited to the local depot to meet with staff and find out what happens in real time. We hope that an agreement can be reached to work together in the future.



In your locality ...

... Jesmond

Jesmond Community Festival is being held from 5 to 24 May, with events every day in different locations. The Elders Council is involved in two events:

Put a song in Your heart, Thursday 17 May, 2-4pm at Chapman House, Newcastle High School for Girls, Junior Department, Sandyford Road. Entertainment and afternoon tea are provided by the children and the school, and then everyone sings together. So come along for a fun intergenerational afternoon hosted by the Elders Council.

Fun and Fitness for the over-50s, Thursday 24 May, 2-4pm at Ouseburn Parks Visitor Centre, Jesmond Dene. This is an afternoon celebrating Ways to Wellbeing, by trying out some new activities that are healthy and fun.

Amongst many other events of interest (do look at the full programme if you can) is the **Jesmond Debate**, Newcastle Cricket Club, Osborne Avenue, Tuesday 8 May, 7-9pm. The event is sponsored by the N.E. Humanist Association, and the topic for debate is 'Are the present pensioners too well off?' Any views about that? **All will be welcome.**

... Spital Tongues

The Spitler Memory Box Project

Spital Tongues has changed dramatically over the last two hundred years. Have you ever wondered what life was like from the 1800s onwards? or what it was like to live or work there in the past? You are invited to join together to set up a local Memory Box Project designed to help others of all ages travel back in time. With the help of Tyne and Wear Museum Service and Chain Reaction, the Spitler Community Resource Centre are inviting anyone you to meet at their premises on Morpeth Street NE2 4AS each Friday morning from 10 to 11 to help gather and record memories, search out fascinating stories, text, maps, photographs, audio, film, and objects. The project hopes to create a guided history walk as well as enjoy some escorted visits behind the scenes of Newcastle's museums and art galleries. The Spitler Memory Box project began in March and will continue through till June. Tea and toast, coffee and biscuits available on arrival each Friday. Just turn up on Fridays; but for more information contact Annette or Jude at Chain Reaction on 0191 273 7443 or 0300 300 7070.

Information Board

Men's Pie Club

Men's Pie Club is a partnership project between the Newcastle-based social enterprise Food Nation and national charity the Men's Health Forum, funded by the Movember Foundation. It is a club for men to chat, cook and eat. The club is a welcoming place for men to expand their social circle and to help address male social isolation. For more information, please contact: 0191 276 0595 or visit the Food Nation website www.foodnation.org.

On yer bike!

A recent study has shown that cycling can hold back the effects of ageing and rejuvenate the immune system. The journal *Aging Cell* reports that researchers carried out tests on 125 amateur cyclists aged 55 to 79 and compared them with healthy adults who didn't exercise regularly.

Professor Janet Lord, Director of the Institute of Inflammation and Ageing at the University of Birmingham, said: "We now have strong evidence that encouraging people to regular exercise throughout their lives is a viable solution to the problem that we are living longer but not more healthily."

Do you need energy advice?

Just get in touch with an energy adviser at Newcastle Citizens Advice Bureau. Please ring 0370 145 1450, email powergrid@newcastlecab.org.uk or go to their website at www.citizensadvice-newcastle.org.uk.

Information

Newcastle Cathedral consultation

Newcastle Cathedral are asking you to join them for a community consultation of the Common Ground in Sacred Space project, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. From 4 to 7pm on Thursday 19 April, you can drop in through the southern entrance.

This community consultation is part of a series of sessions which began last year. At a previous session, the cathedral asked how their external spaces are currently used and what you think of the quality of the space.

Based on all the information you gave in November, they have developed a proposed design for the external space of St Nicholas Cathedral and they want to share it with you at this consultation event.

What is the Common Ground in Sacred Space Development Project? Their vision is to bring 900 years of history into the 21st century by reviving the medieval role of the building as a distinct space for worship, events and activities. The transformed Cathedral will be a dynamic hub for community engagement as well as a special place of prayer and spiritual discovery.

Silver Sunday 2018



Silver Sunday is just five months away – and we hope that **Sunday 7 October** is already firmly in your diary.

The Sir Simon Milton Foundation is currently putting together some new support materials to help plan and promote your fantastic events; but in the meantime please do take a look at their [updated information pack](#). We hope that it gives you a useful overview on the project and how you can get involved to help tackle isolation and loneliness amongst older people.

If you are interested in taking part or have any questions at all, please ring 0207 641 3609 or email the foundation at info@silversunday.org.uk .

Please let the Elders Council know of any activities that you are planning in Newcastle. Just ring us on 0191 208 2701 or email barbara.douglas@qualityoflife.org.uk .

When was the last time you tried something new?

***Ping!* Newcastle – table tennis for older adults**

Active Newcastle is looking to introduce informal table tennis playing opportunities across Newcastle targeting the city's older adult community. As part of Table Tennis England's national participation programme called *Ping*, they are looking for existing groups that might have the physical space and the desire to introduce, and in some cases reintroduce their members to table tennis!

Recent research is said to have shown that table tennis:

- sharpens the brain
- improves balance
- stimulates mental alertness
- is gentle on bone joints
- burns calories and
- offers an opportunity to socialise and meet people

So if you think Table Tennis would be a welcome addition to your group session and you would like to find out more, please contact Owen Jordan on 0771 273 6455 or email owen.jordan@newcastle.gov.uk .

Outdoor Fun

Spring is here, so what about a bit of fresh air and outdoor fun?

The next free Pushing the possibilities outdoor course starts on Thursday 3 May; there will be an information open day on Friday 27 April. Visit any time between 2pm and 5pm at WinG (Wayout in Gateshead), 13 Walker Terrace, Gateshead. NE8 1EB. It's 150 metres from Gateshead Metro and bus interchange.

The course is for people aged 55 or over living in Tyne and Wear who would benefit from improving their wellbeing by participating in outdoor activities. Activities can include hill walking and map reading, cycling, canoeing, rock climbing and forest school (fire lighting and cooking in the woods). All essential outdoor equipment is provided, and minibus transport and professional instruction are all included. Spaces are allocated on the first day of the course, involving fun team-building activities and informal chat.

The course lasts for four days spread over two weeks:

- Thursday 3 May from 1 to 5 pm,
- Friday 4 May from 9.30am to 5:30pm,
- Thursday 10 May from 9:30am to 5:30pm and
- Friday 11 May from 9:30am to 5:30pm.

To find out more or to register your interest, please ring Nick Coates on 0191 267 1579 or email him at nickcoates.wing@gmail.com

Active Ageing in Newcastle

Tai Chi

Mindful Therapies, Basement, British India House, 15 Carlol Sq. NE1 6UF

| | | | |
|-----------|--------------------------------|-----------------|-------|
| Monday | Tai Chi for Beginners | 10:15 – 11:15am | £4.50 |
| | Tai Chi for Absolute Beginners | 11:20 – 12:20pm | £4.50 |
| Wednesday | Tai Chi | 10:15 – 11:15am | £4.50 |

Denton Burn Community Association, Slatyford Lane, NE5 2UQ

| | | | |
|-----------|---------|---------------|-------|
| Wednesday | Tai Chi | 2:00 – 3:00pm | £4.00 |
|-----------|---------|---------------|-------|

Gosforth Garden Village Association, Rosewood Ave, Gosforth NE3 5DD

| | | | |
|-----------|---------|---------------|-------|
| Wednesday | Tai Chi | 1:10 – 2:20pm | £4.00 |
|-----------|---------|---------------|-------|

Dancing

Blackfriars Centre, New Bridge Street, NE1 2TQ

| | | | |
|-----------|----------------|-----------------|-------|
| Monday | Tap Dancing | 9:45 – 10:15am | £1:50 |
| | Line Dancing | 10:30 – 11:30am | £4:00 |
| Wednesday | Line Dancing 1 | 10:15 – 11:15am | £4:00 |
| | Line Dancing 2 | 11:20 – 12:20pm | £4:00 |

Keep fit

Space 6, Commercial Union House, Pilgrim Street, NE1 6QE

| | | | |
|----------|----------|-----------------|-------|
| Thursday | Keep Fit | 10:30 – 11:30am | £4.50 |
|----------|----------|-----------------|-------|

Yoga

Space 6, Commercial Union House, Pilgrim Street, NE1 6QE

| | | | |
|--------|------|--------------|-------|
| Monday | Yoga | 2:00 -3:20am | £4:50 |
|--------|------|--------------|-------|

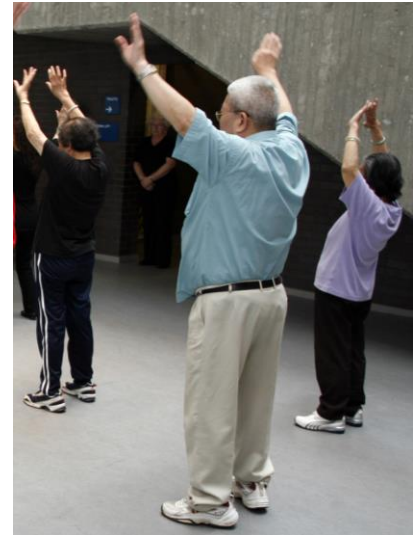
Let's try something new

Meet, dance, perform

Dance City are currently looking to develop dance workshops with local people/groups in Newcastle. They are keen for local community groups to use their facilities more; they can support this via transport and staff support.

If you have a group who would like to have a dance taster that may then lead on to a dance project/performance over time, they can support you.

Please contact Helen Kumar on 0191 269 5576 or email helen.kumar@dancecity.co.uk.



Great Exhibition of the North

Take part in the biggest cultural event of the year, right on your doorstep, in the Great Exhibition of the North. Plus, see creative exhibitions by leading artists at your local galleries. The Great Exhibition of the North 2018 is set to be a summer of amazing exhibits, inspired technology, vibrant street performance, cutting edge culture and magical experiences. It all happens between 22 June and 9 September 2018.

For example: the exhibition at the Great North Museum: Hancock tells the story of northern art, design and innovation through such loans as John Lennon's last piano and Helen Sharman's space suit. We'll keep you informed through *Fortnightly*, our regular ebulletin, so that if you need to book for events you'll hear in good time.

Meanwhile, you can look for news on their website: www.getnorth2018.com or volunteer to be a meeter/greeter by ringing 0191 440 5782.

Ageing Matters: Living well with multiple conditions

You are invited to this free public event

on Thursday 10 May, 10.30am to 2.30pm

Northern Rock Foundation Hall, TheSageGateshead

- Cutting-edge ageing research in Newcastle
- Launch of the top ten priorities on Multiple Conditions in Later Life
- Meet the scientists
- Listen to the Silver Samba Band (One of the players tells us that this band is very loud; the Sage provides ear-plugs to save your hearing!)
- Support and resources available to help you live well with multiple health conditions

The event is free but please register a place at <https://tinyurl.com/ageingmatters> or call 0191 208 1288 for further information.



BORN BEFORE 1950? with military service? living in Tyne & Wear?

Contact **Age UK Joining Forces** for more information:

Tel. Julie on **0191 477 3559** extension **217**

Email julie.innesnelson@ageukgateshead.org.uk

Examples of support that they can provide:

- Veteran's badge
- Medal entitlement
- MOD pensions
- Service records
- Benefits checks
- Attendance allowance
- Blue badge



Correspondence

Dear Editors

Sometimes, what begins as an ordinary day turns out to be anything but!

It started with a phone call from Anne Richardson. She had earlier been contacted by *Faithful Hound*, a production team working for Channel 4. Did she, by any chance, know of an older gentleman who had lived an interesting life, had many tales to tell and might be willing to share them? She immediately thought of Johnny. He had entertained and amused many of us on various occasions, during meetings and social events.

To cut a long story short, he agreed to be filmed and a few days later two of the team came to our home to chat with us and discuss the format of the interview. The next day we headed to Jesmond Dene House wearing bright colours, no stripes, not checks and no logos!

We had been informed earlier that, because of the dynamics between Johnny and me (we're husband and wife), they wanted to interview us both. So, although there were some questions and stories from Johnny's working life much focused on our relationship!¹ When and where we had met, how we had worked with the difference in skin colour and the obvious age gap. How had our friends and families reacted to the situation? What were our ambitions now for life as a couple? Did we have any regrets in life? It was quite a personal and thought-provoking questioning and I must admit to being thankful that Johnny often took the lead in responding.

We then headed out to our taxi and were driven around Newcastle, supposedly on our way to a meal out at Fujiyamas, a Japanese restaurant where we had enjoyed our first official date!

Many of the questions from the taxi driver were a repetition of the earlier interview and were being fed to him from the studio back at Jesmond Dene House. It was a fun and cheerful journey with a very friendly and welcoming driver. When we were returned to the studio, we were surprised with a cash payment!

At the time of writing this, we have not seen the production nor have a date for when it will be shown. We are curious as to how it will be edited, what will remain and what will be cut. We wait to hear and then to watch. When we know the date for viewing, we will inform the Elders Council and we hope you can watch and will enjoy our taste of fame!

Yours truly,
Cath and John Smart

¹ Cath and Johnny are married; Cath's family has British heritage and Johnny's has Nigerian heritage.



Donations and Gift Aid

Your generosity can help us make a difference

Some of you make individual donations to the Elders Council, and even small amounts add up and help us continue to provide the full range of activities which you can read about in the Newsletter.

Thank you!

If you would like to donate on a regular basis, how about setting up a standing order? We can help you arrange this through your bank or building society, and where possible can ensure that the benefits of Gift Aid can be taken. Please get in touch by calling 0191 208 2701.

Give as you live

Please help the Elders Council by logging on to www.giveasyoulive.com every time you shop online and nominate the Elders Council as your chosen charity.

It costs you nothing

But whenever you shop at one of the many participating stores or websites (for, e.g., hotels or rail tickets), the store or website gives a small percentage of the sale to the Elders Council.

Give as you live

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

No, I say

Death, we carry you in boxes
On our shoulders, and then
Cry with all who have gathered
Only to bury or set you on fire.

What's the point of any of this?
Remembering the good days and bad,
Bringing out in the open, from the memory-store
The details of living, warts and all?

"Oh, we must celebrate the past glory
So that the dead has a good exit."
Pretending we will be able to put together
All the broken pieces and reconstruct life

As if nothing has occurred, life must go on.
Those who are not dead carry on, some with tears,
Others shrugging their shoulders
And pursuing their daily chores.

No, I say. The dead escape from the boxes
Taking away with them all that mattered.
Left are the ashes for the living to cry over
Renewing the cycle annually year in and year out.

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

In our Feb-April edition, we wished Vera Bolter a happy 90th birthday and wrote a short appreciation of all the work that she has done for the Elders Council. She thanks us for that and responds with some verses:

Now I am 90, what will I be?

Now I am 90, what will I be
Lovely old woman – or cuddly grannie
Words of wisdom shall I try to impart
Or will I just be a boring old fart?

Must I say sorry for living so long
And accept the blame when things go wrong?
A & E queues have caused a sensation
And not enough homes for the next generation

Am I the cause of society's ills,
Using health services, and too many pills
Having a house and a pension too?
So now I am 90, what shall I do?

Family comes first, must see that they're well
Stories of the past I'll be sure to tell
And look out for friends and neighbours too
I could plant a new tree to improve the view

Still part of society, playing my part
Now is the time to make a fresh start
There's a lot to do before my demise
So I plan to stay healthy and happy too
- and if not wealthy, I can still try to be wise

Vera Bolter

Poetry

Newsletter Information

Newsletter Articles

If you would like to submit an article to be considered for the June to October edition of the Newsletter, will you please ensure that you forward it before Thursday 17 May.

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 the office know what format you would like (0191 208 2701).

Electronic Version of the Newsletter

It costs about £1.35 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 info@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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Email: info@qualityoflife.org.uk
Website: www.elderscouncil.org.uk
Registered Charity No. 1122424