



The Elders Council of Newcastle

Development Plan 2019-21

THE ELDERS COUNCIL OF NEWCASTLE

Development Plan 2019-2021

Section One: Context, Mission, Vision, Position, Strategic Objectives

Context

Our population is ageing. The number of people aged 55+ in Newcastle is forecast to rise from 74,100 in 2018 to 83,000 in 2030 – a rise of 9,000 or 12%.¹ There are significant inequalities in ageing with a 10-year difference in healthy life expectancy between the more affluent and poorer parts of the city.²

Newcastle is committed to becoming an age-friendly city as part of the WHO Global Network of Age Friendly Cities and Communities. A core principle of this programme is that older people should be involved at the heart of the programme. The Elders Council provides a citywide mechanism through which older people can engage, learn and contribute.

Mission

In order to fulfil our charitable objects, our mission is to be recognised as Newcastle's member-led organisation working for the city's older people³, so that they may live a respected, fulfilled later life.

¹ Office of National Statistics

² Healthy Life Simulation CIC and Nexus. Office of National Statistics Healthy Life Expectancy data 2009-2013

³ "older": anybody over 50

We will:

- listen to the concerns, experiences and aspirations of Newcastle's diverse older population and relay our insights to those who have the power and resources to meet them;
- support improvements to their wellbeing;
- publicise their continued and valuable contribution to society;
- keep them informed of opportunities to live a fulfilled later life and of relevant research;
- present a positive image of older people in all their diversity;
- encourage older people to acquire new skills to enable them to be confident, articulate and fulfilled in their own later life;
- develop intergenerational partnerships to improve quality of life for all;
- participate in research to improve the quality of life for older people;
- play a lead role in delivering Newcastle's ambition to become an age-friendly city by working with partners to make Newcastle a good city in which to grow old.

Vision

Elders Council will be known to older people and local and national agencies that work with older people and on ageing for:

- the quality of the information it provides to keep older people in touch with services, activities and issues in Newcastle upon Tyne;
- its creative approaches to engaging with older people to be active citizens;
- its peer-led research;
- the quality of its insights into where change and improvement can be made to improve the quality of life for older people;
- its partnerships with other organisations in the city to deliver the change and improvements which make Newcastle an age-friendly community;
- its impact on being a catalyst for change and improvement in making Newcastle a more age-friendly and healthier city.

Position

The Elders Council holds a unique position in that it is the only organisation in the City which is led by older adults on issues directly affecting them – speaking up for older people. Elders Council works closely with Voice Global⁴ – an on-line, international platform through which people of all ages engage in research and innovation on ageing. Elders Council also works with a range of community-based organisations which provide services to older people such as Search Project and Independent Age.

Governance

The Elders Council is a Charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee. The Elders Council is an older-people-led organisation. The work of the organisation is delivered by volunteers with the support of a small staff team.

The Board of Trustees is made of up 8 members who meet monthly to direct and co-ordinate the work of the organisation. The current Board members have a range of skills including finance and fundraising; community development; communications and project management.

The work of the organisation is delivered by action groups which currently include Finance and Funding; Health, Housing and Social Care; Communications; Transport and Older Person Friendly City. Action Groups are on-going or time-limited depending on the nature of the work.

Examples of Elders Council's achievements are given in Appendix 1.

⁴ Voice Global is an organisation that aims to capture the public's vast experience, ideas, opinions and expectations about research, innovation and policy developments which affect their lives. It was established by Newcastle University in 2007.

Strategic Objectives 2019/21

To achieve our Mission and Vision the Elders Council will:

Development

To ensure that the Elders Council is meeting its targets and in order to secure its future sustainability, the Board will regularly review its Development Plan and Fundraising Strategy.

Refresh EC Communications

We will re-fresh the organisation's key communications tools (i.e. Magazine, e bulletin, Facebook page and website) to make them more appealing to and inclusive of people aged 50+ and reflect the changes in language and attitude towards ageing which have taken place over the last 10 years.

Develop the membership

We will increase the membership to a target of 2,000 by 2020. We will diversify the membership to be more representative of the older population of the city. We will work towards increasing the number of active members by offering people more tailored opportunities to support the work of the organisation.

Develop core partnerships

We will:

- develop a core partnership with Voice Global to complement its work on engaging people of all ages in ageing research and innovation by offering a more diverse range of insights and perspectives from older people;
- strengthen our partnerships and joint working with grassroots community organisations to reach a more diverse range of older people, particularly in disadvantaged areas;
- strengthen existing partnerships with Northumbria and Newcastle Universities to draw on their expertise to support the delivery of the Elders Council's development plan and to reciprocate by offering the organisation's support for undergraduate and graduate research;
- engage with Tyne and Wear Citizens to share learning about approaches to engaging older citizens;

- strengthen the Elders Council's partnership with Newcastle City Council and develop a model for working with other older people's forums in the region.

Listening Exercise

We will:

- deliver a Listening Exercise by engaging with 3% (c 2,700) of the population of people aged 50+ in Newcastle across all wards of the city and including BAME communities to listen to and understand people's experiences and share information;
- Identify through this process key 'movers and shakers' in localities who can act as anchor points for maintaining the dialogue with the Elders Council;
- develop a team of 5 older people as peer researchers to design the methodology for the Listening Exercise and analyse the data, with the support of one of our academic partners;
- develop a toolkit of different processes of engagement including: mini information events; performances (e.g. Doorbells: Dreaming for the Future⁵; capacity building (e.g. Active Voices⁶);
- work with our academic partners and others to evaluate the most effective processes of engagement.

Communication

We will:

- develop a team of 10 older people to co-ordinate and drive the communication programme and support the Mission and Vision of the organisation;
- develop a core communication programme across different media (magazine, radio, facebook, bulletin, website) to support the overall aims of the listening exercise.

By 2020 the communications programme will reach more people than in 2018/19:

⁵ 'Doorbells – Dreaming for the Future' is a performance, film and resource pack developed by Elders Council with Northumbria University and Skimstone Arts with funding from Care and Repair England. The performance is designed to stimulate people's thinking about where and how they live in later life.

⁶ Active Voices is a course aimed at building the capacity and confidence of older people to become active citizens. The course was developed by Prof Tom Scharf of Newcastle University and is being delivered in partnership with the Workers Educational Association.

- 1650 older people will receive the hard copy magazine (currently 1491 individuals receive a hard copy). We are working to decrease the number of people receiving a paper copy of the Magazine and to encourage more people to receive information from us on-line. This is in line with national statistics that show the increase in the numbers of older people using the internet⁷. However, we recognise that many older people prefer a hard copy Magazine and we are committed to making this option available to them.
- 600 older people by direct electronic mailing (currently 494);
- 100 Facebook followers (currently 79);
- 500 (currently c 300) website visitors per month.

It is not possible to quantify the radio programme audience, except through podcasts available on YouTube. These will reach an audience of 100 (currently 90).

In addition to older people, 185 professionals (currently 166) will receive direct electronic mailings from the Elders Council.

Driving change

We will:

- develop a manifesto of key areas of action to be taken by the organisation based on the insights gathered;
- set up time-limited action groups led by older people with input from partner organisations to develop a plan to deliver on each of the key areas of action and document impact;
- continue to work through our existing working groups to sustain relationships with key agencies in the city; respond to consultations; raise awareness; undertake research and promote improvement in services for older people;
- actively engage in key local and national consultations which are relevant to older people (e.g., housing; health; care; planning; transport);
- contribute insights to multi-agency partnership groups (the Elders Council currently participates in 14 groups on a regular basis);
- support six student research projects by arranging focus groups and/or responding to questionnaires;

⁷ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/itandinternetindustry/bulletins/internetusers/2018>

- be alive and responsive to partnership opportunities with local and national organisations and contribute to local, regional and national policy changes which can improve the lives of older people.

Evaluation

We will:

- evaluate individual projects (e.g. Doorbells);
- conduct an overall evaluation of progress against our strategic objectives.

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Section Two: Background to the Elders Council of Newcastle

1. Who are we and why are we here?

The Elders Council is an organisation led by older people for older people. It is an opinion-forming advocacy organisation which draws its expertise from the lived experiences of older people.

Our population is ageing. The success of the extra years of life brings its challenges. Some of us are ageing in good health; others, particularly those from more disadvantaged areas, often spend our later years in poor health and die at an earlier age than our more affluent peers. Society as a whole is not well prepared for the implications of an ageing demographic in the way in which plans and designs are formed for the built environment, housing or services. Many individuals are not particularly well prepared to take up the opportunities that later life offers or to face up to the decisions that they may have to make.

Therefore, neither society nor many individuals are creating a good environment in which more people can age well. In order to be better prepared for the future, it is vital that those responsible for shaping the functioning of the North of Tyne area in the 21st century take account of the experiences of older people now. The Elders Council can help in this critical preparation.

The Elders Council was established in 2001 to provide a platform for older people⁸ to come together; share their experiences; identify the areas where they consider improvements can be made; and act with others on developing solutions. The Elders Council develops effective ways of alerting policy makers and service providers to the issues, needs and gaps in current provision as these affect older people.

Through its work, the Elders Council has identified that many older people do not know about the opportunities and services available to them. The Elders Council addresses this issue through a broad communications programme.

⁸ The definition of an older person used by the Elders Council is someone who is aged 50+.

1. What has the Elders Council achieved?

1.1 'Nothing about us without us'

The Elders Council has succeeded in establishing the principle that older people must have a seat at the table, directly engaging in the development of policies, service developments and research. This principle is now more widely understood, particularly in innovation and academic circles as illustrated by the success of Voice Global⁹.

As a matter of course, Newcastle City Council engages with the Elders Council in relation to major developments, including relevant budgets, planning, specialist housing and transport policies and, in particular, the development of care and support services; we have members on the Age Friendly City Group¹⁰ and a director on the Future Homes Alliance¹¹. The Elders Council also engages regularly with both primary and secondary healthcare providers and with Nexus¹².

Our academic institutions frequently call on the Elders Council to partner in a range of research projects ranging from undergraduate student projects through to PhD studies and major research projects.

The Elders Council is a member of Care and Repair England's¹³ Housing Champions initiative, which aims to improve older people's housing by innovating, developing, promoting and supporting practical housing initiative and policies.

⁹ Voice Global is an organisation that aims to capture the public's vast experience, ideas, opinions and expectations about research, innovation and policy developments which affect their lives. It was established by Newcastle University in 2007.

¹⁰The Age Friendly City Group is a partnership group which leads on Newcastle's commitment to the WHO Global Network of Age Friendly Cities and Communities.

¹¹ The Future Homes Alliance is a partnership which aims to provide housing which is fit for the future, using the best of new technologies to develop housing which responds to both demographic and climate change.

¹² Nexus is the Tyne and Wear Transport Executive

¹³ A national independent registered charity

1.2 Innovation

The Elders Council has both initiated and been a core partner in a number of different innovations in the city. Examples include:

- the development of dementia-friendly screenings at Tyneside Cinema as part of their core offer;
- the establishment of an IT drop-in programme with Northumbria University Students Union which tailors IT support to the needs of older people, whilst at the same time providing an opportunity for intergenerational contact. This programme supported 18 older people in 2018/19;
- engagement of citizens in the co-design of Future Homes and on-going engagement as a partner in the Future Homes Alliance delivering new models of housing to meet the challenges of demographic and climate change;
- developing new models of citizen engagement including:
 - the use of the arts as a way of engaging different audiences and tackling difficult issues (most recently, developing and touring a theatre production and film (Doorbells – Dreaming for the Future) exploring the housing and support needs of those ageing without children and those with primary responsibility for their ageing relatives);
 - testing the Active Voices course, which aims to build people's skills and confidence in being active citizens and is particularly aimed at people in transition towards retirement.
- delivering a small-scale grants programme (Staying Connected) which enables grassroots groups to try out new ways of engaging older people. Grants of up to £300 were awarded to 46 organisations over a period of 6 months. Successes include the thriving TAGON Facebook page in Throckley and the Elderberries Group in Scotswood Community Garden.
- crowdfunding to enable two members to attend the Newcastles of the World Conference in Canada in 2016;
- the establishment of a monthly radio magazine programme which we understand is the only one in the UK run exclusively and explicitly by and for older people.

1.3 Information, information, information ... and advice

Through its work, the Elders Council quickly identified that many older people and their families do not know about the range of

activities and services which are available to them. In response to this, the Elders Council dedicates a significant amount of its resources towards keeping older people informed and is contributing to the information and advice infrastructure for older people and their families in the following ways:

- Supporting the continuous development of Information NOW as the key on-line platform for information and advice.
- Supporting Newcastle City Council's partnership with First Stop to make their housing options service available to older people in the city.
- Developing the Elders Council's channels of communication including a quarterly magazine; a fortnightly e-bulletin; a monthly radio programme; a Facebook page; and a website.
- The Elders Council also provides face-to-face opportunities for older people to enjoy social contact at the same time as being informed through its monthly Mile Castle¹⁴ and Jesmond Wellbeing for Life coffee mornings which have an average attendance of 30/50 people.
- Annual publication of our popular booklet 'Outings with your concessionary bus pass'. 800 hard copies are distributed and it is also available to download on the website.
- The Elders Council also has a track record of holding information days to which a range of partners are invited.

27.5.19

¹⁴ Mile Castle is a regular monthly informal session held in a city centre venue.

List of partners:

Care and Repair England

Carers Centre Newcastle

Healthwatch

Newcastle City Council

Newcastle University

Nexus

Northumbria University

Search

Skimstone Arts

Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums

Tyne and Wear Citizens

Voice Global

Workers Educational Association

Appendix 3

Table of groups on which the Elders Council is represented

Name of group	Number of EC reps	Number of meetings per year
Transport		
Newcastle Transport Forum	1	4
Tyne and Wear Public Transport Users Group	1	4
Health		
Clinical Commissioning Group Public, Patient, Carer Involvement Forum	2	6
Clinical Commissioning Group Community Forum	2	4
Disability Forum	1	
Health and Race Equality Forum	2	4
Health and Wellbeing Forum (Newcastle Council for Voluntary Service)	1	4
Housing		
Housing champions (Care and repair England)	2	4
Future Homes Alliance	2	12
Diversity		
NHS Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals Trust: Equality and Diversity Group	1	
Communication		
NHS Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals Trust: Patient Information Review Panel	1	10
Police		
Police and Crime Commissioners Age Advisory Group	2	4
General		
Age Friendly City	3	4
Newcastle City Council Policy Cabinets	2+	As needed
North East Forum on Ageing	1	

EC Budget 2019-20

Attached as a separate pdf.

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