

The Chair is stepping down



This year the Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held in September. At the AGM Mary Nicholls will be stepping down as Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Elders Council; it's an office that she has held for six years now and she says that it's time for her to go and for a new person to take the Chair.

Mary told us: "I'm using this opportunity to reflect a little on my time as Chair. Mainly I've enjoyed it and gained insights into how organisations work. I've met a wide range of people and worked with considerable numbers of partners. It hasn't all been sweetness and light: there have been times when I wished I was somewhere or someone else. – cont. -

Members – a date for your diary

This year's AGM will take place on:
Monday 5 September

Members who receive their Newsletter electronically will receive their invitation to the AGM electronically too. So please remember to check your email inbox.

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“One of the high points of my term of office was going to a World Health Organisation conference in Dublin. It was as a result of this conference that the City Council agreed to become an Age Friendly City. I was also invited to a garden party at Buckingham Palace, although I didn't actually meet the Queen!

“Low points have been the constant worry about funding; it never really goes away. The others are the minor irritants such as forgetting to include important items on the agenda of the Board meeting; or thinking you've explained really well only to find no, you haven't!

“In the six years since I became Chair a great deal has changed. Newcastle signed to become an Age Friendly City and an Age Friendly Group was created; the Elders Council has seats at this. We moved premises from MEA House to the Academic Quarter on the General Hospital site. Developments nationally with many reports, not least *Ready for Ageing* from the House of Lords, continued a growing interest in ageing. This means that there are ever - increasing opportunities to get involved in a range of partnership projects, initiatives and events.

“This does mean that there are growing demands on the Elders Council and members as we are often invited to participate in many very interesting and often exciting programmes.

“I know that some of you already willingly give your time and services to the Elders Council but I wonder if the great majority of you know of the range of tasks

undertaken by members. I hope they enjoy being involved: what they do is very valuable to the organisation and my thanks go to all of them.

“There are our 'posties', who deliver newsletters and the team who help put them in envelopes ready for delivery; the Mile Castle organisers, arranging monthly get-togethers. We also have our regular working groups members and those valuable people who co-ordinate these. There are those of you who come to focus groups, write articles for the Newsletter; interview people on the radio programme. Our hugely helpful 'Out and About using your bus pass' has to be planned and written and we have some experts to do this. Recently we've had a group helping with our 'Community Conversations', which you'll have read about in the Newsletter and of course there wouldn't be a Newsletter unless we had an Editorial Group working to produce it. I'm pretty sure I haven't mentioned everything here and my apologies to those of you who do help make a difference but haven't been mentioned in this long list. I do want to thank all of these people who work hard to help the organisation. We do need more. I hope that this list will have shown you the range of activity and help you think, 'I could do that.'

“One of the most important things I learned is that for organisations to flourish and grow members need to fully participate and ensure that the Board they elect to represent them properly understands the role they are agreeing to at that vote at the AGM. This means that members need to be clear what it is

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they want the organisation to do in their name.

“It’s easy to vote willing people to the Board and expect them to continue to be there year on year. It’s not good for any organisation to do this. Nor is it good for those willing members to carry the burden of the work; they should be able to step aside knowing others can take over. The organisation belongs to the membership and members need to participate to make it work well.

“Taking on becoming a Board member, let alone an officer, is a big task. Board members have big responsibilities, firstly to you, our members, but also legally to Companies House and the Charity Commission as well as to any partnerships we develop.

“The current Board is working to create a more robust governance structure that will enable the Elders Council to weather the continuing difficulties we face living with austerity. We’re also engaging with some creative minds at Northumbria University to help us look innovatively about how we work and what we can do better.

“It is the Board who take the responsibility for managing the organisation and they meet monthly to do this and they need my grateful thanks too for both the support given to me and the challenges made, life would be a bit dull without those.

“I’m looking forward to having a bit more time to do the things I enjoy: holidays like this one in Vienna (I’m the one on the right); keeping active; singing in a



choir and playing steel pans; and importantly staying connected with friends and family.

“As I reflect, I know with certainty that had it not been for Barbara Douglas acting as my mentor I would have failed. She has shown incredible patience and forbearance and her diplomatic skills are superb. To say ‘Thank you’, however framed and however often, just does not do justice to the debt I owe her.

“The other members of the staff team are: Anne Richardson, whom many of you know well as you are in regular contact; Anne too has offered support through her keenness to ensure that all goes smoothly and with her detailed knowledge of members; her organisational skills are those that many can only dream of.

“The three other members of the staff team, and some of you will know them, are Lauren Hoy, Faye Collins and Carol Carey, who mainly look after Information NOW and First Contact. Their support to me has perhaps been more covert but very welcome especially in times of stress and there have been a few of those too.

The Chair is stepping down

“I wish to express my gratitude to all of the staff team and gratefully acknowledge their contribution to my term as Chair.

“Finally, a wish for the future of the Elders Council: there are many opportunities but they can't be taken unless older people know about them. I would like people to know of them and to have the confidence to take part and help make the city a great place in which to grow old.”

The Elders Council would like to take this opportunity to thank Mary for all the hard work that she has put into her job as Chair. The organisation has moved forward and achieved considerable success during her period of office and we all owe a great debt of gratitude. We wish her well in her desire to do the things she enjoys; but we certainly don't want to lose her expertise and experience. Many many thanks, Mary!

Thank
You

Communication Working Group

Listen in to your own special radio programme

Everyone's tomorrow – today! is the Elders Council radio programme that goes out on the first Friday of every month between 2 and 4 pm on the community radio station NE1fm (102.5fm).

If you have difficulty in finding the wavelength 102.5fm on your radio, you can listen via the Internet on NE1fm Webplayer <http://ne1fm.net/webplayer> .

We are keen to get our members' views on our programmes, so please listen in and send in your comments. Email our co-ordinator at steve.whitley@phonecoop.coop or write to Steve at 166 Wingrove Road, NE4

9BX. Please include any suggestions for topics you would like to hear about.

We are also looking into setting up a Listeners Panel which can provide direct feedback to our radio team. If you are interested in being a member of the regular Listeners Panel, then please email or write to us and we will get in touch with you.



Elders Council at Work

Health and Social Care Working Group

The Future of Health and Social Care Services

Consultation papers continue to come and the Working Group will go on playing its part. We've just discussed *Home Care and Connected People, Connected Communities*; now discussion is switching to a review of the Information, Advice and Guidance Strategy, and the First Contact Referral Scheme. These are all vital issues for us as we grow older so it's important that we have our say. If you're not sure what this is all about, then come to our meetings to find out and to contribute your views.

Check with the Elders Council office for the date of the next meeting. Telephone 0191 208 2701.

Wellbeing for Life

Members of the Working Group are keen to promote wellbeing initiatives that enable older people to live independently at home for as long as possible, with adequate support for those living with long-term conditions such as arthritis or dementia, to name but a few of the possible afflictions of our later years. And then there's loneliness and isolation – both increasingly realised to be important influences on our health. So a whole range of issues for debate and for suggestions for ACTION. **Come and have your say.**

Wellbeing for Life Sessions

Wellbeing for Life sessions take place:

When: first Wednesday of each month, 10.30am – 12.00 noon

Where: 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: Tel: Jesmond Library on 0191 281 2385, or
Email: enquiries@jesmondlibrary.co.uk .

Elders Council at work

Jesmond Community Festival

Report from Chris Clarke, Friends of Jesmond Library:

The weather was relatively kind for this year's Jesmond Community Festival, and many events attracted record attendances. Amongst the highlights were several superb concerts, from folk to classical to jazz, and even a classic motor-bike rally. Several events were organised in conjunction with the Elders Council, including Put a Song in your Heart, an afternoon of entertainment at the junior department of Newcastle High School for Girls, and Fun and Fitness for the Over-Fifties, organised by Vera Bolter in Jesmond Dene, and including a talk by John Grundy. *(Read reports below and on pg 7-8)*. There was also a trial of a new short walk in Jesmond, a demonstration of flower arranging, and a new Teddy Bear Trail. All in all, around 100 events crowded into two and a half weeks.

'Put a Song in Your Heart'

.The Elders Council participate in the Jesmond Festival

One of the events in the first week of the Jesmond Festival is held at the Junior Department of Newcastle High School for Girls. The school provide the venue and make huge efforts to create a lovely mood with tables for groups of six or seven always with fresh floral decoration; this year it was sweet scented stocks, with sunshine streaming through the windows.

A dance troupe from one of the school clubs (so a mixed age-range) gave a very spirited dance to music reminding us of Rio de Janeiro, full of "attitude" and very well-choreographed by their teacher. They left before we had a chance to thank them properly.

This was followed by Kathryn Davidson (Kat). who is a folk and community musician leading everyone in some singing. There were around 30-35 older people and a dozen or so from one of Kat's choirs "West End Voices".



Elders Council at work

‘Put a Song in Your Heart’



Kat's very accomplished at working with a whole range of ages and quickly engaged all of us in warming our voices by getting us to make weird noises as well as massage our head and neck. Kat has a beautiful voice and there was absolute silence when she sang us the Gaelic song she was to teach us later. We started singing in unison but she soon had us singing a round in two parts; Kat's skill in engaging her "choir" and explaining plus using her hands to show us where to place our voices helped enormously.

By the end of the 45 minutes we'd learned three songs sung in four parts and one song was in Gaelic; we had nothing to read from either words or music: it was all by listening and copying. I think quite a number of people were amazed at what they'd done. One lady said, "I never thought I'd sing again; it was wonderful."

West End Voices sang three songs to entertain everyone after the hard work of learning and singing, thank you to all of them for adding their tuneful voices throughout the afternoon, they really helped.

After this there was an afternoon tea of sandwiches, scones and delicate cakes to enjoy made by the school chef and served by school staff. Don Perry provided a 50 question quiz which filled in any moments people had. No-one scored over 40! However three people won prizes.

Music was also provided from CDs with songs from shows and well known performers from the past. We found this a pleasant background to our tea.

Finally I heard nothing but positive statements about how much people had enjoyed the afternoon and if the smiles were anything to go by it was true. The absolute final accolade is to Kat she made it a remarkable afternoon.

Elders Council at work

Older Person Friendly City Working Group

Fun and Fitness Event, Jesmond Dene Visitor Centre, 19 May



Thanks to all members who responded to our invitation and participated in this event. And thanks above all to our patron, John Grundy (*pictured left*). His presentation about the history of Jesmond Dene, from prehistoric, and then later industrial times, told us that the Ouseburn Valley was an important travelling and trading route. The Ouseburn supported several mills along its descent to the Tyne, for the grinding of corn and then for flint required for the potteries further down the valley. Finally there was the landscaping of the Dene by Lord Armstrong, who created the park we see today and then handed it over for the benefit of the citizens of Newcastle.

A fascinating story and presented in lovely fashion by John Grundy, to whom we are indebted for opening our eyes to the wonder of the present landscape which we can all enjoy today. As

members walked with John through the Dene and to the remains of Lord Armstrong's Banqueting Hall (now a controlled ruin with the potential for revival into a community resource), there were poignant memories of past events in the Dene. Altogether an enlightening experience for everyone! We are grateful to John for an enriching experience for us all.

Parks

The Working Group has long held the view that Newcastle Parks are an important resource for older people. They are safe places to walk and enjoy the national environment like flowers, trees and birds, but also to engage in activities, bowling, tennis, croquet, to name but a few – and not forgetting adult outdoor exercise equipment in Exhibition and Newburn Parks. For this year's event, we concentrated on Jesmond Dene, and we must recommend the Visitor Centre as a place to collect information not just about Jesmond Dene but about what's on in other parks around the City.

So look out for the City's booklet on Parks and Countryside events – and also the latest programme from Park Lives.

The message from the Working Group is: wherever there is good weather, get out into a park, enjoy a walk and/or picnic with family and friends – or event just on your own – and let us know what you enjoy and would recommend to the rest of us.

Elders Council at work

Housing Group

Thinking about housing

A small group of Elders Council members are currently working on housing. Our main concern at the moment is that older people should take the time to think about where they want to live in later life and that they should be able to access the information to help them to make this important decision.

A recent report *Housing our Ageing Population – Positive Ideas* highlights the fact that it is not yet commonly accepted in this country that it is good to move before you are forced to for health or financial reasons.

And yet, as we grow older we tend to spend more time in our homes, so it is increasingly important that we feel safe and comfortable; that our homes are located close to transport, shops and the GP practice.

Many of us don't think about moving because we don't know what else might be on offer to us. With this in mind, the Elders Council teamed up with Newcastle City Council and housing providers to offer open days in sheltered housing and assisted living in different parts of the city. The Open Days are an opportunity for older people, their friends

and families to visit, to talk to staff and the people who live there. We are gathering feedback from the Open Days, which will help us to plan the next stage of our work.

In addition to organising the Open Days, group members have been visiting different types of housing in the city from general needs housing at The Rise in Scotswood to the building site that will become Tree Top Village in Walker. We will be writing up our reflections into a short report.

We are also engaged in two exciting projects with Age Friendly Newcastle which are both looking at new ways of thinking about housing for older people. On 28 June at the Baltic there was a conference on *Living creatively ... for life!* exploring different ways of living in later life. And a very exciting proposal to develop multi-generational demonstrator housing is gaining momentum.

If you would like to know more or have a story to tell us about housing, please call us or write in.

If you want to find out more about what might help you to start planning ahead, see the article on page 12.



Elders Council at work

Transport and Highways Working Group

Nexus Survey



Nexus is carrying out a public consultation called “Have your say – review of local transport services” from 6 June to 1 August in order to collect views from a wide variety of stakeholders, in particular users of their services.

Please access the survey online at <http://www.nexus.org.uk/consultation/item/have-your-say-review-local-transport-services> ; paper copies are also being sent to libraries and there is a supply in each Nexus Travelshop. Or you can obtain a paper copy by telephoning 0191 202 0747.

It is vital that Nexus knows exactly what you want, so please complete the survey and encourage your friends to do the same.

Nexus Cycle Trial

Nexus are in the middle of this trial of the carriage of non-folding bikes between Callerton Parkway and Jesmond, from Monday to Friday during the off-peak periods. Whilst it is early days and there has been limited take up, first indications are that there have been very few problems so we look forward to hearing the results when the full trial ends in September.

For more information on the trial ring Nexus Customer Services on 0191 20 20 747 or email customerservices@nexus.org.uk .

Nexus operating concession with DB RegioTyne and Wear Ltd.

As mentioned in the last Newsletter, Nexus has announced that they plan to manage Metro operations directly themselves from April 2017.

Internal discussions are under way and announcements about the future after 1 April 2017 are expected in the next couple of months. It is not expected that there will be major changes to the current operations but it is hoped that we will see improvements in operating performance for the benefit of the travelling public. We will keep you informed.

This proposal is one part of a four-point plan for the future of Metro, comprising as it does funding for new trains, arrangements for a new operating contract, continued capital investment and potential extensions.

Elders Council at work

Transport and Highways Working Group

Outings in 2016 with a Concessionary Bus Pass

Just a reminder that we now have copies of the latest edition of our “Outings with a Concessionary Bus Pass” leaflet.

The leaflet is still free to Elders Council members. The easiest place to access the leaflet is through the Elders Council website <http://www.elderscouncil.org.uk/Information-Leaflets> , or send us a stamped envelope and we will forward you a copy. Whether travelling by rail or bus, have a good journey and do let us know how you get on.

Alternatively, if you prefer a rail trip, why not try a day out at Carlisle on the train? Trains leave from Newcastle Central every hour and take one and a half hours for the lovely journey through the Tyne Valley and across the Pennines. Some of the finest scenery in the country. Bought in advance with a Senior Rail Card it costs only about £10 for the return journey and it's well worth it for a day in the historic City of Carlisle with its many attractions.

Wherever you are travelling to, have a good journey and do let us know how you get on.

Metro Gold Card

A single journey on the Metro costs £1.70; a **Metro Gold Card** costs £12.00, so if you make over seven single journeys on the Metro, it will have paid for itself.

Don't forget: if you have the **Metro Gold**

Card element on your bus-pass, you can use the Metro **all day** and **every day** during the months of **July** and **August**. This means that you do not have to wait until 9:30 am before you can use it.

If you do not have the **Metro Gold Card** element on your bus-pass and want to have it, just take your pass to a Nexus Travel Centre, where they will add the Gold Card element to it straightaway for £12.



A Good Day Out

Have a day out, go on the bus
Stand in line, but do not cuss
Lots of beautiful things to see
Use your bus-pass it's free

No, you can't go worldwide
But you can visit our lovely countryside
Flowers, birds and trees abound
Use your legs and walk around

Stop at the pub for a ploughman's lunch
Or take a baguette with a lovely crunch
If the weather's kind, and doesn't rain
Go back and do it all again.

Eileen De-Voy

Elders Council at work

Mile Castle Social Get Together

Another monthly social get together will take place Wednesday 20 July, 10.30am at the Mile Castle, the public house right on the corner of Westgate Road and Grainger Street.

It's a chance to meet with friends, bring friends, meet new friends and enjoy time together. It's also a chance to get that "grouse and grumble" aired if you feel like it! There will be something to do or someone to listen to as well as enjoying a drink or even a meal out at the Mile Castle.

The room for this session is on the third floor but there's a lift if needed. There'll be someone at the door to welcome you.

Why not pop along, get your bus-pass out (*no taxi available from our funds for this*) and we'll see you there.

You don't need to remember the date: it's always the third Wednesday of the month. Try and help to keep people connected and let them know it's happening or offer to "buddy up" with them if they feel a bit worried about coming alone. See you on Wednesday 20 July.

Information

Planning ahead – looking at your housing options

Making a decision during retirement years to move "into something more suitable" can be very hard. It can be difficult to know whether to stay put (and make the best of that through investing in a few home adaptations), or to move (and make the best of that through investing in a new home, new relationships and a new way of living).

Silverlinks is a scheme that enables older people who are facing life-changing decisions about their homes and living situations to make a well-informed decision about what is right for them. They have produced workbooks and a series of short videos designed to help people think about their housing choices. For more information, see:

<https://silverlinksprogramme.wordpress.com/resources-for-older-people/> .

For more local information and advice on choosing your housing options, visit Information NOW. On Information NOW you can read about the different options available to you, from sheltered housing, home adaptations and extra-care living, to care homes and moving in with family. Information NOW looks at the pros and cons of each option, lists the different housing schemes in the city and discusses the additional points to consider when moving home such as house clearance, removal firms and taking your pets with you.

Visit www.informationnow.org.uk and start planning ahead.

Canada – an opportunity ...

There are more than 100 different “Newcastles” or “New Castles” around the globe, in many different countries and in many different languages. The idea of bringing together places around the world that share the name “Newcastle” came in 1996 from the then Newcastle-based arts manager John Nicolaou. He created the “Newcastles of the World United” project, with the aim of fostering links of friendship, culture, education and tourism, hopefully leading to economic links and benefits. Check out their website: www.newcastlesoftheworld.com .

“Newcastles of the World” are holding their 2016 conference in Newcastle, Ontario, Canada from 19-23 September 2016. The themes of the conference are:

- How can we ensure that our towns and cities are age-friendly, capitalising on the contribution of older people to our communities?
- How can we share experience and work together to promote our Newcastles to tourists and investors?
- To ensure the continued vitality of our town centres.
- To promote cohesion and strengthen civic identity, harnessing volunteering, philanthropy and citizen engagement.

The Elders Council would like to ensure that at least one older person from Newcastle upon Tyne has the opportunity to attend this exciting event. We are proposing to try our hand at crowdfunding to sponsor someone to take part.

How will we find the lucky person?

If you are interested in taking part in the conference, and are available to attend the conference in Canada on from 19 to 23 September, you are invited to:

- complete an application form stating why you want to go and what you think you can contribute;
- find someone to support your application and ask them to complete a supporter’s form.

All applications will be checked by a small panel of Elders Council Board members and Cllr David Faulkner, just to ensure that they meet the essential criteria. All valid applications will be put in a hat, and the winning name will be drawn out. **Your application must be submitted by Friday 29 July 2016.**

Important Notice:

The Elders Council will be able to sponsor someone to go to this conference **ONLY** if our crowdfunding efforts raise enough money. So we will be relying on members to promote our crowdfunding webpage as widely as they can.



Information NOW, www.informationnow.org.uk, Newcastle's older people's information and advice website, has grown from strength to strength. It is reaching more people than ever before with an average of 14,300 visits per month and now the site holds even more information, with over 1,200 organisations and 270 articles.

Due to this success, the website must continue to develop to ensure that useful information is available in the most user-friendly way. The team is already planning to upgrade the website to improve your experience even further.

They need your thoughts and views on how Information NOW should look and feel so they can continue to improve the website. Please take part in their [online survey here](#) or copy and paste this address into your browser:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/5DB2CVL> .

Would you like to get involved further? The team is looking for individuals who use Information NOW to participate in some focus groups. Interested? For more information contact lauren.hoy@qualityoflife.org.uk .

Thank you in advance for your help. Your thoughts are really valuable to help ensure that Information NOW continues to deliver excellent information and advice, helping older people to stay informed, make choices and have a good quality of life.

Information NOW competition: design an icon!

We're giving you the chance to design (or suggest an idea if you don't feel like drawing) an icon for the new improved [Information NOW](#) website. The winner will receive a £25 Love to Shop voucher.

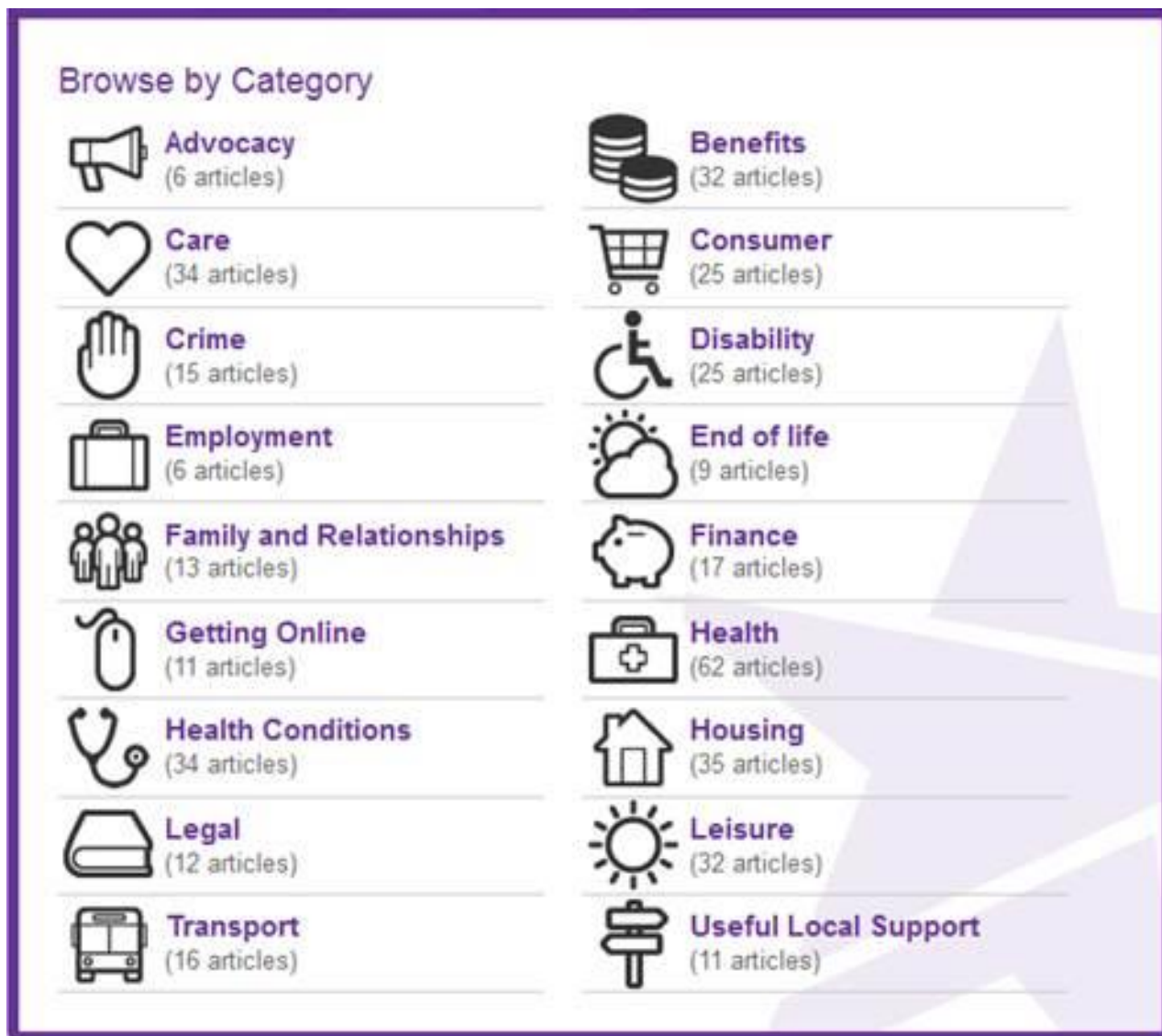
We are looking for an icon that sums up the 'End of Life' category in a positive and easy-to-understand way. This topic has always been tricky to explain and we want to involve you in creating a new one.

Our 'End of Life' category includes practical information on how to plan ahead to make sure that your wishes are followed when you die; how to donate your body to science; and what to do when someone dies.

We use icons on the Information NOW home page to illustrate the categories of information to make it easier to understand at a glance the type of information that's



available on the website. Currently the icons look this:



Please send your suggestions or sketches for a new 'End of Life' icon along with your name, email (if you have one) and contact number by Friday 22 July. We'll be taking your suggestions to our focus and steering groups to decide a winner.

Email: lauren.hoy@qualityoflife.org.uk

Post: Lauren Hoy, Quality of Life Partnership, Room 2.36 2nd Floor, Biomedical Research Building, Campus for Ageing & Vitality, Nuns Moor Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 5PL

You may want to explore www.informationnow.org.uk to get a feel for the information that's in the End of Life category to help inspire you.

Information

Roll out of Universal Credit in Newcastle

Universal Credit is a means-tested benefit for working-age people who are on low incomes and working, seeking to work or unable to work. It replaces the following benefits and tax credits:

- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income Support
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit

From 25 May 2016 Universal Credit was rolled out for all new claims to all of the above benefits and tax credits for claimants living in the Newcastle City Jobcentre (Cathedral Square) area.

Universal Credit is generally paid monthly and includes an element for housing costs which previously would have been paid direct to social landlords. Claimants need to manage their Universal Credit claim digitally with an online account which has information that is visible to both the claimant and Jobcentre Plus staff.

For more information on Universal Credit, visit Information NOW at www.informationnow.org.uk or go to a special session on the benefit run by Your Homes Newcastle (YHN).

YHN will be visiting the Cowgate Centre at Houghton Avenue on Tuesday 12 July 11am-1pm to show anyone who needs to know how to get Universal Credit.

This is a free event, but it would be useful to know how many people to expect, so please contact oscar.watson@daybreakcentres.co.uk or call 0191 484 1294 to book your place.

Streets for People

The Council's Community Services Section has written to us to tell us about **Streets for People** *Arthurs Hill & Fenham*. It's a new community project which is looking to access funding to make improvements that will make it safer and easier to walk and cycle round that area.

The first stage of the project is about gathering information from as many people as possible. The organisers want to hear from people who live, work, learn and spend their free time in the area. They want to know what's good, bad or indifferent about getting around places or using routes to local destinations and what your thoughts are about how to make it better. They have got a website with an interactive map and short survey to complete; it's quick and easy to do on your phone or other device and there's no limit to the number of observations you can make. You'll find the website – cont. -

Information

with the map and survey for Arthurs Hill & Fenham, and more information about *Streets for People* at www.newcastle.gov.uk/streetsforpeople .

If you don't have access to the internet, you can still contribute: ask a friend or relative to help you or visit your local library and ask a librarian to help. Your contributions are really important. If you've been involved in consultations before and you've got ideas at your fingertips that's great; if you're new to this, and you just want to record an issue, that's just as valuable.

You can contribute to the map and survey until 1 September but please don't wait till then; do it now, and pass on the link to as many people as you can!

If you want to send us any pictures to illustrate your issue, you can email them to S4P-arthurshillfenham@newcastle.gov.uk . You can also use that email address to ask any questions; or ring Ruth Baddoo on 0191 277 7541.

Accessible Information

If you have a sensory loss or a disability, a new accessible information standard comes into force from August. It requires all NHS and publicly-funded social care services to provide accessible information and communication support (e.g., if you need everything in large print or having a BSL interpreter at a medical appointment). Services are expected to provide this support through a professional. It also applies to carers who have accessible information needs (e.g., a sighted patient or service user who has a visually impaired partner).

The standard reinforces your rights under the Equality Act 2010. Services must:

- find out your needs;
- record them in a set way;
- highlight them in your records so that staff respond to needs every time you use services;
- share information needs with other services (e.g., if you give details at your GP, then these can be shared with any hospital service you may be referred to);
- make sure that you get the support in the format you need.

The standard includes when your needs might vary (e.g., a person who can read a short appointment letter in large print but who needs longer documents on audio). Services must also ask on a regular basis if your needs have changed.

In Newcastle we have some resources to help make the standard happen including a form to capture people's needs when they are quite complicated, prompt questions for staff to use, a credit-card-sized alert card and a specially commissioned training video. These will be launched later in the year. In the meantime, tell your GP, hospital or social care service your needs and that they must respond.

If you want to know more about the standard, please go to <https://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/patients/accessibleinfo/> .

Reports

Men! Walk for health!

Newcastle's Director of Public Health, Dr Eugene Milne, has presented his 2015 report to the Council's Health Scrutiny Committee.

And it contains some bad news. Whereas over the last few decades life expectancy has shown a steady rise, the statistics for 2012-14 show a decline. In 2011-13, men's life expectancy was 78.2 years; the latest figures show that it has dropped to 77.9 years. And that widens the gap between Newcastle and the rest of England – from 1.2 years to 1.7 years. More worryingly still, perhaps, healthy male life expectancy (the average number of healthy years a baby will have) has dropped from 59.8 years to 57.8 years.

Studies have shown that those who keep active as they age are more likely to avoid cancer, heart disease and strokes. Dr Milne wrote: "If walking were a drug, being promoted to improve the health of older people, it would be the most valuable and profitable drug in the world. Small increases in walking, brought about by changes in our living environment, have the potential to bring about substantial change in the health of the population."

He asks the Council to have a healthy city plan: the promotion of parks and green spaces; control of motor vehicles to encourage more walking and cycling; and more pedestrianised spaces.

But he also stresses that it is up to each individual to adopt a healthier life-style: walk more, adopt a healthy diet, and don't smoke. And it's never too late to start.

Walking for Wellbeing

We all know that a daily walk is good for our health; but it can be a bit boring around the same old streets. Elders Council members have joined with the Friends of Jesmond Library to produce some attractive leaflets describing short walks in the neighbourhood. A local historian has added interesting details about the features which can be observed along each route. So it is possible to keep physically active by taking a walk, but at the same time to be mentally alert by noticing our surroundings – thus fulfilling not one, but two of the Ways to Wellbeing, by being active and taking notice. The first two walks are currently being tried out by members attending the Wellbeing session in Jesmond Library (first Wednesday of every month, 10.30am-12.00 noon). So far the walks have provoked many memories, but also given people new information about their neighbourhood. The leaflets certainly add interest whether used by individuals on their own or with friends in a group. Either way, the important thing is to keep walking and keep interested as we go about our daily lives. There are four more walks leaflets pending and all will be available at Jesmond Library and at the Wellbeing sessions. If you are interested in developing this idea in other neighbourhoods, please contact the Elders Council for a sample copy of the short walks Jesmond leaflet.

Information

Community Conversation in Westerhope and Denton

You will have read about the Elders Council's Community Conversations in Kenton, Fawdon and Dinnington in previous newsletters. Our next conversation will be held at the West Denton Community Association on Thursday 14th July 10.30 am – 12.30 pm followed by a buffet lunch. If you live in Westerhope or Denton and would like to join us, please put the date in your diary and contact anne.richardson@qualityoflife.org.uk or call 208 2701 to let us know you are coming! We will send out further information to members and groups in the area in the next few weeks.



LOTTERY FUNDED

A new venue has opened in Westerhope ...



The Wicker Chair Coffee House and Bistro say that they serve fresh, local and healthy food with love and passion.

Being a charity, they not only have a brand in the local area, but they also don't just want to use this space as a working café; rather, they want to use it for training of those local residents needing to upskill and as a hub for the local community where people can come together to enjoy wholesome food in a warm and friendly atmosphere.

They claim to offer a wide range of home-made sweet and savory treats, including cakes, scones and pastries. For those wanting something more substantial, they have an all-day breakfast menu, or other dishes including soup, paninis, fresh salads and burgers.

If you want to arrange for a group to come along, or a special lunch club or afternoon tea event, they are happy to provide bespoke services wherever possible.

Open: Monday to Friday 8.30am to 3pm and Saturdays 9am to 3pm.

For more information: tel. 0796 818 4190 or email julie22@jetnorth.org.uk .

Address: Palatine Beds, Stamfordham Road, NE5 5HH..



JETS • EDUCATION • TRAINING

Helping you find your way in the UK

Things to do...

Indoor Tennis at St. Martin's Centre

Go along and have a try!

When: Every Wednesday, 1-2pm

Where: St Martin's Centre, Roman Ave, Byker, NE6 2RJ

Cost: £1 per session

For further information: Tel. St Martin's Centre on 0191 276 4002 or Age UK Newcastle on 0191 232 6488.

Coffee and chat for older people in the west of Newcastle

Search, the charity for older people in the West of Newcastle, is now hosting three different coffee and chats in Benwell, Blakelaw and Westerhope. All three events are for older people with the opportunity to find good company and refreshments close to home. Some of the dates will have a specific theme or talk:

St James Church, Benwell Lane: every Thursday 10.30 to 11.30 am

Weekly coffee morning with monthly talks or special events.

Mrs T's Café, Blakelaw Community Centre, Binswood Avenue

First Tuesday of each month, 1 to 3 pm. All older people and family, friends or carers welcome.

**Post Bocs: Westerhope Community Centre, Hillhead Road-every Friday
1 to 2.30 pm**

Search Chain Reaction Pioneer team are working with the Healthy Lungs programme to provide weekly drop-in sessions for people who have completed their BOC course. All previous BOC referrals are welcome, including family members, friends and carers.

For more information: call Annette, Adam or Karen at the Search Chain Reaction Team: 0191 273 7443.



Things to do in Cowgate ...

Cowgate News: Seeking Volunteer Creative Writers

If you fancy yourself as a bit of a journalist or a *paparazzo*, OR if you'd like an opportunity to tell Cowgate residents about things you/your organisation does that might interest them, why not get involved yourself? They plan a monthly newsletter to be delivered to all addresses in Cowgate.



Cowgate News: writers (and would-be writers), interviewers and photographers wanted to help produce a newsletter for the residents of Cowgate estate. They want to capture real stories happening to real people. They need people able to listen to older people's memories and younger people's aspirations and to put the best bits down on paper. Training and support will be given at editorial meetings at Cowgate Centre.

Interested? Contact: oscar.watson@daybreakcentres.co.uk, 0780 877 3827.

Keep as busy as a bee

Looking for a new hobby in your retirement? Then why not try bee-keeping?

If you join the Cowgate Bee Club, you'll learn about bees from two experienced beekeepers. They'll show you how to look after your bees, how to harvest wax and collect honey and what you can do to help your bees (and your neighbourhood) by planting a bee garden.



The club meets every Wednesday from 5.30 to 7.30 pm at the poly tunnel by the Cowgate Centre car-park.

For further information, please ring Oscar Watson on 0191 484 1294 or 0780 877 3827 or email him at oscar.watson@daybreakcentres.co.uk.

Information Board

Stairlifts no longer to be serviced or repaired by Newcastle City Council

Newcastle City Council are no longer able to provide servicing or repair on your stairlift. The following is a list of organisations that you can contact if you have a stairlift breakdown; they will explain the cost of call-out and repair.

Direct Services, Durham CC

Tel: 0300 026 7890

Dolphin Stairlifts

Tel: 0191 271 2600

Easy Lift

Tel: 0120 750 3600

Stannah Stairlifts

Tel: 0191 460 0010

TKEncasa

Tel: 01642 704 850

If you can't resolve your stairlift repair after making contact with one of the organisations above, you could contact Community Health and Social Care Direct, who will be able to advise further.

Phone: 0191 278 8377 or email: scd@newcastle.gov.uk.

. The £50 pound note

A well known speaker started off his seminar by holding up a £50 note. In the room of 200, he asked, "Who would like this £50 note?" Hands started going up. He said, "I am going to give this £50 note to one of you, but first, let me do this." He proceeded to crumple the £50 note up. Then he asked "Who still wants it?" Still hands went up in the air. "Well," he replied, "What if I do this?" He dropped it on the ground and started to grind it into the floor with his shoe. He picked it up, now crumpled and dirty. "Now, who still wants it?" Still hands went up in the air. "My friends, you have all learned a very valuable lesson. No matter what I did to the money, you still wanted it because it did not decrease in value. It was still worth £50. Many times in our lives we are dropped, crumpled and ground into the dirt by the decisions we make and the circumstances that come our way. We feel as though we are worthless, but no matter what happened or what will happen, you will never lose your value.



You won't believe what you can do!

Volunteers needed for a research study

Researchers based at the RVI and Newcastle University are looking for volunteers to donate a small amount of blood as part of a research study investigating why some people on intensive care units get chest infections.

They are specifically looking for people aged 65 years or older who are generally in good health (i.e., no chronic autoimmune disease or significant recent illnesses or surgery).

Volunteers will be asked to attend the Clinical Research Faculty, Level 6, Leazes Wing, Royal Victoria Infirmary, NE1 4LP for about 15-30 minutes, at 10am on a weekday to be agreed.

If you would be interested in finding out more, please contact Linda Ward on linda.ward@ncl.ac.uk or telephone 0191 208 7770.

Northumbria University is seeking DoLS Experts by Experience. Could you help?

The Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) relate to people who are placed in care homes or hospitals and who lack capacity to consent to being there for their care or treatment. DoLS are intended to protect the rights of vulnerable people by making sure that limits are put on their liberty only when it is absolutely necessary and in their best interests to do so. Northumbria University provides training for social workers, occupational therapists, nurses and psychologists who act as Best Interests Assessors under the DoLS. The University has run this course for a number of years, but feels that whilst they equip their students legally and academically, they would really like to involve some experts by experience, who can shape future practice by sharing their perspectives.

The tutors are very keen to talk to anyone with personal experience of the DoLS process to develop ways of including them in their teaching. If you feel that you might be interested, and would like to find out more, please contact Cat Meredith in Northumbria University's Department of Social Work and Communities for further details: ring 0191 215 6362 or email cat.meredith@northumbria.ac.uk .

All volunteers receive an hourly rate of pay for the contribution that they make.

Information Update

Stop nuisance calls

If you don't want to receive marketing calls, sign up your home phone and mobile to the Telephone Preference Service (TPS). It's then illegal for firms in the UK and the rest of the EU to call those who've registered, unless you've opted in to receive them.

How to add your number to the register depends on if it's a mobile or landline:

- **Landlines.** Add your landline number [via the TPS website](#), or by calling 0345 070 0707 (it costs the same as a standard landline).
- **Mobiles.** Text 'TPS' and your email address (required to verify your identity) to 85095; or you can sign up [online](#) or by calling 0345 070 0707.

TPS is a register, not an automatic blocking device, so registering won't stop every call. While being on TPS means that you'll no longer receive cold calls from more reputable companies in the EU, unfortunately it's unlikely to deter rogue firms.

TPS also won't stop automated messages – no matter how legit the firm is or where it's based. If you're receiving recorded messages and you haven't given prior permission for these, you can complain to the [Information Commissioner's Office](#) (ICO) on 0303 123 1113. Give it as much info as you can, including the organisation's name (if you've got it); the number the call came from, the date and time, and what they were flogging.

If you're being plagued by calls that ask you to phone a premium rate number (e.g., for competitions), complain to the regulator [PhonepayPlus](#).

How to stop silent calls

Silent calls, when you pick up and hear nothing, can be generated by automatic equipment in call centres. If you're getting them, register with the free [SilentCall-Gard](#) service. You must renew it every 12 months.

It adds you to a database used by the major telemarketing firms and makes clear you don't want to be contacted, so should cut the number of silent calls. If the calls continue, you can complain to Ofcom, which can fine companies. Here's what to do:

1. After the call, dial 1471 and see if you can get the number.
2. If the number is withheld, note the call's time/date and contact your provider's nuisance call department. Try BT's nuisance call advice line or Sky's nuisance calls advice.
3. Complain to Ofcom online. The regulator fined phone and broadband provider TalkTalk £750,000 for plaguing customers with silent and abandoned calls.

Or you could subscribe to a blocking system. Systems cost between £40 and £120 and can be very effective: in a recent trial by Trading Standards the trueCall system blocked 98% of unwanted phone calls.

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 (✓).

Correspondence

Dear Editors

I wonder if you'd like to hear about my volunteering as a "patient" for the Medical School in Newcastle?

I have been going along for about four years now. I think that I first heard of volunteering for this through the Elders Newsletter. I am part of a group, and we are able to sign up for various examinations (for example, blood pressure and pulses, cardiovascular, examination of the eye and vision, ears and hearing, shoulder and knee examination). We are not there to be diagnosed, but to help the 1st- and 2nd-year trainee doctors gain confidence in practising their skills, listening and talking to "patients". I am able to comment on how I thought the examination went and how well they communicated with me.

I really enjoy participating and have made several friends over the years. It is nice to meet up and have a catch-up over the tea and biscuits that are provided for us!

I would recommend anyone to give it a go and have an input in helping to train our future doctors.

Yours truly,
Irene Soulsby

Editors' note: If you want to help next academic year, please ring 0191 208 7892 and ask for Rachel Purvis.

✂.....

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.

The Caring Role

Please give thought to caring need
For caring role is priceless yes indeed
To gently offer that helping hand
Though sometimes this may seem so grand

For peace of mind that gentle touch
Kindness can mean so very much
To a friend or neighbour feeling low
That quiet word will help them know

For sickness comes in so many ways
A carer's duty will ease the days
That quiet voice to guide or show
But careful carer will help you know

There's a time for silence, a time for peace
As distant church bells may help release
Tensions within dull dark winter days
As careful carer passes through another phase

To improve someone's life is the goal
In passing time to save their goal
While giving thought to new ideas
Always look ahead to summer cheers

Though a carer's time is always taken
Just keep ahead then no one's forsaken
Always take that timely worthwhile rest
Then care and cared-for will allow life's best

Thank you to all those folk who care
If family, friend, neighbour with some time to share
To help that person, to talk or guide
It always takes lots of Geordie pride

John Reid

A fleeting thought

A thought comes to me
And says, 'Can we have a chat?'
I wait. She continues, 'I'm restless.'
I frown meaning couldn't care less.
Then realising she won't
Go away, say 'Don't
Worry, let's discuss it over a drink.'

Sipping my pint I ponder
How to lift her mood, and consider
A holiday in Spain, Italy, Far East –
New scenes, warm weather, exotic feast.
I go to a High Street Travel agent
And get bombarded with glossy brochures
Sun, sea and a dose of culture.
It knocks me and my senses numb,
Struck by information cluster bombs.

I take a deep breath and ask,
'Will any of these satisfy
And calm your restless urge?'
Where is she? I search.
She's gone, a fleeting thought
That never lasts long.

Asit Maitra



Newsletter Information

Newsletter Articles

If you would like to submit an article to be considered for the September/October 2016 edition of the Newsletter, will you please ensure that you forward it before Thursday 9 August.

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

Elders Council of Newcastle
Room 2.36, 2nd Floor, Biomedical Research Building
Campus for Ageing and Vitality
Nuns Moor Road
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE4 5PL

Tel. 0191 208 2701 Fax. 0191 208 2705
Email: info@qualityoflife.org.uk
Website: www.elderscouncil.org.uk
Registered Charity No. 1122424