



**November/December 2014**

**eNewsletter, Issue 3**

**CIO number 1155832**



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## **Message from Our Chair: Esther Ward**



Hello, I hope you are all keeping well. The Assembly has moved to new premises, these are just across the road from where we are at present. We will still be holding our Friendship Group, Art Group and Reminiscence sessions in the new premises, so don't worry if you come to one of them.

We are also planning new activities that you can be involved with, so let us know if you have any ideas for new groups.

We will be expanding our Friendship Groups in the New Year and we would love you to be part of those. We will be giving you further information soon.

Winter will soon be with us, please look after yourselves during this time. Our winter wardens will be available again this year, just phone the office for more information about this project. WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU.

We have said goodbye to our Co-ordinator, Chris Barker, who is moving to another job. Chris has been with us for 6 years and we will miss him. Good Luck in your new job  
Chris xx

Very best wishes to you all for Christmas and New Year!

Esther Ward (Chair)

We are "The Voice" of Older People in Gateshead – let us know your issues and concerns. This will help us to take these forward to the relevant departments, and enable your "Voice" to be heard.



## Congratulations!



Our Secretary, Iris Dodds, was nominated as '**Volunteer of the Year**' in the Gateshead Awards by a number of our members.

The winner was announced on 13th October at a ceremony at the Civic Centre. Iris didn't get the Volunteer of the Year award but she did get a certificate, and we are all very proud of her. Congratulations to Allison Bellinger of Arthritis Care who won the award.

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## Volunteers Needed!

Gateshead Older People's Assembly is currently looking for volunteers. We have a wide range of volunteering opportunities to match your skills and interests.

However much or little time you have to spare, you can get involved in the work of Gateshead Older People's Assembly.

Come along and meet other people who share your interests and be a part of what we do.

We welcome anyone over 18 as a volunteer, use your skills gained at work and at home or learn something new.

Drop in for a cuppa and a chat about volunteering and what we do for older people in Gateshead.

Please contact us on 0191 438 1721 If you would like more information on any aspect of volunteering with us.

Charity Reg no 1155832

**RECEPTIONIST NEEDED  
ANY VOLUNTEERS?**

**Gateshead Older People's Assembly are seeking  
*Volunteer Receptionists***

**Based: The Felling Hub, 58 High Street, Felling, NE10 9LT  
Monday to Friday 12 noon to 4 pm**

**Contact Kerry Pattison on 0191 438 1721  
Or email [kerry.pattison@btconnect.com](mailto:kerry.pattison@btconnect.com)**

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## Winter Wardens

### Winter Wardens are here to help you stay warm this winter!

During the cold winter months it is really important to keep warm. Cold weather can lead to serious health problems, but keeping your home warm and dry will help combat the effects of the weather outside.

When things go wrong with our heating, whether it is run by gas, electricity or oil, it can be confusing to know who best to contact.

Gateshead Older People's Assembly have recruited and trained 'Winter Wardens' who will be available at the end of the phone day and night to advise you who to contact if you are having difficulty staying warm.



The Winter Wardens are all older people, who understand the needs of other older people, and are there to help.

If you are unable to keep warm, or have a problem with your heating system and do not know who to speak to, ring our Winter Warden Helpline on 0191 438 1721 at any time.

Outside office hours, you will be given a contact number of the Winter Warden on duty.

Winter Wardens will be available until the end of March 2015.

### Did You Know..?

Energy suppliers are obliged to offer a range of free services, known as the priority services register, to their most vulnerable customers. These services are free to join and are available from all mains gas and electricity suppliers.

The scheme is available to all household gas and electricity consumers who are any of the following:

- of pensionable age
- have a disability
- have a hearing and/or visual impairment
- have long-term ill-health

Contact your energy supplier to join the register.

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## **Regular Activities**

Gateshead Older People's Assembly has a number of regular sessions, which everyone over 50 is welcome to attend. For more information on any session please contact Helen Cowlyn on 0191 438 1721.

## **Art Group**

These friendly 2 hour sessions run every fortnight, and you don't have to be an artist to take part— even if you have never held a paintbrush you will be made welcome, so why not give it a try. If you have art equipment, by all means bring it along, and if not, don't worry—we will provide you with what you need.

## **Reminiscence**

If you have ever said 'I remember when.' you may be interested in attending our Reminiscence sessions which run every fortnight on a Thursday morning. The group is very informal; topics and themes are decided by the group and have included bringing in old photographs and watching films of old Gateshead. They have also been on trips out and had guest speakers. There is a small charge of £1.50 to cover refreshments and trips.

## **Friendship Groups**

Gateshead Older People's Assembly now has three Friendship Groups running in the borough. They are at St Helen's Church Hall in Low Fell, St Joseph's Parish Centre in Birtley and in Felling. We are also hoping to start a new group soon in Lobley Hill. If you would like to start in group in your area please contact us. We are looking for more venues to hold Friendship Groups. Come along and meet other people over a hot drink. Perhaps you'd like to get involved in a new activity, or just come along for a chat—it's up to you. All groups meet once every two weeks. For more information on meeting times, please contact the Assembly on 0191 438 1721.

## **Get Together Groups**

Gateshead Older People's Assembly has two Get Together Groups running in the Borough. These are based at St Peter's Church Hall in Low Fell and Whickham Community Centre. They give people over 50 the opportunity to make new friends and catch up with existing ones. There are a variety of activities including Guest Speakers, trips, Christmas outings and a chance to find out what is going on in your community. These groups meet once a month, for information on meeting times, please contact the Assembly on 0191 438 1721.

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## Little Cat Play

We will be working in partnership with Little Cat Theatre to host an audience participation play based around the Police and Crime priority area of 'Domestic and Sexual Abuse'. The production will explore five personal journeys and will focus on the topics of Physical, Sexual, Psychological, Neglect and Financial Elder Abuse. After the performance audience members will have the opportunity to talk to related organisations should they wish to discuss the topic further. The performance will take place in February, we will have the exact date by the next newsletter so stay in touch.

## A Great Place To Grow Older

Three of our Members recently took part in a General Election film for Age UK England. The film is called 'A great place to grow older'. They had to walk over a muddy field to sit on a sofa with a view of The Angel of The North - a great laugh was had by all! We are all looking forward to see the finished product.

## Radio 4 Programme

Several of our members recently took part in a recording for a BBC Radio 4 documentary, with Matthew Sweet and Catherine Carr. The programme, about getting older, will be broadcast on 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> December at 8pm on Radio 4.



Esther Ward and Iris Dodds with Matthew Sweet and Catherine Carr

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## Happy To Help

Happy to Help is a service for local older and disabled people to access home care support for assistance with cleaning, shopping, paying bills and pension collection.

They also have a service to help users go out and about with fully trained, insured carers to provide reassurance and company to attend appointments, take part in leisure and social activities to maximise opportunities to be independent, sociable and active.

There is a charge for both of these services and they never ask clients to sign contracts to ensure people have freedom of choice.

Contact Natasha or Nancy on 0191 4900945 for more information about the service.

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## Gateshead Care Call

Gateshead Care Call is an emergency telecare alarm and response service for older, disabled or vulnerable people living in Gateshead.

It enables you to live safely and independently in your own home and provides emergency cover 24 hours a day, 365 days a year from trained staff who are available to respond to a variety of situations.

You wear a pendant or wristband which when pressed, triggers a phone alarm system that connects you directly to Gateshead Care Call.

Staff are trained to quickly establish what help is needed. They immediately know your name, address and other relevant information and will call for any help required.

It costs from £4.07 per week (excluding VAT) to rent the alarm unit and pendant and to connect to the monitoring service.

For further information or for a free demonstration in your home, please contact Gateshead Care Call on 0191 478 7666.

## Getting Your Flu Jab

**Have you had your Flu Jab yet?**

**Don't put it off, flu season is upon us and many older people end up in hospital because of flu. It's worth taking a bit of time to ensure you are protected this winter.**

**Contact your doctor if you haven't already been invited to have the flu jab.**



## Patient Transport Services

Did you know that from 1st October GP practices will no longer book patient transport services? Patients or their carers need to phone 0191 3017687 where they will be taken through the eligibility criteria by an ERS call handler, to ensure there is a medical need for transport.

### **What type of questions will I be asked?**

The questions asked relate to how you usually get out and about. In many cases, if you have a car or are able to make shopping trips out on public transport independently, it is unlikely that you will qualify for Patient Transport Services. If you are normally housebound due to ill health and poor mobility, you would qualify for transport as it is unlikely that you would be able to attend for any medical treatment without the support of the Patient Transport Services.

### **What happens if I have access to a car but the treatment I am having means that I will be unable to drive?**

If the nature of the treatment means you will be unable to travel home independently, then you may qualify for Patient Transport Services if you have no friends or relatives who can assist you.

### **Can I have an escort?**

You must have a medical need for an escort. If you request an escort during the booking, then further questions will be asked to find out if the escort is required on the transport vehicle or can meet you where you are going to be treated. An example would be someone who requires ongoing treatment during a journey.

The NHS requests that you ask for transport only if you have a medical need for transport or a medical need for an escort.

### **Christmas Scam**

Be careful if you get a card through the door claiming you have a parcel to collect. There are bogus schemes which ask you to phone a number to arrange re-delivery of a parcel and the calls cost hundreds of pounds.

If you are in any doubt don't call, especially if you are not expecting anything.



## Contact us:



By Telephone: **0191 438 1721**



By email: [admin.assembly@btconnect.com](mailto:admin.assembly@btconnect.com)



Find us on  
**Facebook**

[Facebook](#)



[Follow us on Twitter](#)



By post:

**The Felling Hub  
58 High Street, Felling, Gateshead,  
Tyne and Wear,  
NE10 8LT**

The office is open:



**Monday - Friday 9:30am – 4:00pm**

[Click for map and directions](#)

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**As you know, due to funding restrictions, we are no longer able to post newsletters to you, but if you have access to email we could send the newsletter to you electronically.**

**If you would like us to do this please email**

**[admin.assembly@btconnect.com](mailto:admin.assembly@btconnect.com)**

**and we will add you to our email list.**

**Advantages to email delivery include: not missing a copy of the Newsletter, being the first to know about events, and seeing the various images in colour.**

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