

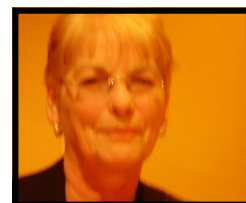
Gateshead Forum for Older People "The VOICE"



Word From The Chair

May 2007

Having been your Secretary for the past four years I have learned quite a lot about the issues concerning Older People. I feel I am able to use this knowledge now that I have been elected to the position of Chair with the Forum.



Our most grateful thanks must go to Reg Gregory for his devoted service as Chair of the Forum over the last three years, I am happy to say Reg is still part of the Management Committee.

Sadly, Maureen Pearson, who was a member of our Management Committee died in February, our deepest sympathy was sent to Maureen's family.

We are very pleased to be able to bring to you this Newsletter again with help from funding from the Tudor Trust. We will be sending this out to you every three months over the next two years.

We are moving forward with the plans for the launch in May of the Older People's Assembly. We hope you all support this as it will ensure our "VOICE" is heard in the right places.

We will be planning many events throughout the summer and we may be in your area during this time, so we look forward to seeing you all. An Older People's Festival is being held throughout Gateshead in September (24th - 28th). Many organisations will be holding events throughout the Borough. Watch out for more information. If you have any concerns - however small - please do not hesitate to contact us. My very best wishes to you all.

Esther Ward (Chair)

Focus Groups

We have held five focus groups in February as part of the Link Up in Gateshead Project. We had over 150 people attend these events. We want say a big **thank you** to everyone who took part. These focus groups were really important to identify what services are like for Older People in Gateshead are right now. We hope that with all the work going on within



the Link Up project that they will improve over the next year. If you would like to take part in any focus groups in the future please call me at the office, **Louise 0191 4206854**

Membership News

We now have **1181** members and would like to say hello and welcome to all our new members and hope you enjoy our newsletters. Please feel free to contact us if you want to make a contribution, Louise 0191 4206854

Help the Aged Update!

Help the Aged having been working closely with myself and the Committee to launch -The Research on Age Discrimination project "**ROAD**" and also their Just Equal Treatment "**JET**" campaign. We went to the Houses of Commons on the 27th of February for the Ministerial launch of the project by Meg Munn, MP.

As part of the Launch they also came to Gateshead on the 6th March 2007 at the Civic. We want to thank all those who attended the event! We had over 70 people registered. Andrew Crooks came from London to host the

event and he was very impressed by the large numbers who attended and their contributions to the discussions. If you would like to take part in any future events let



Have you had your screening check up!

Since coming to Gateshead I have been amazed to learn that once people get to seventy ladies don't get recalled for breast screening check's. 80% of all Breast cancers occur in women over 50, the latest figures show the breast screening programme is saving 1,400 lives in the England. Did you know that you can still get a check up, you only have to request one from your GP.

Gateshead is currently asking people to come forward for a Bowel Cancer Screening, again though the pilot scheme is only requesting people of a certain age to go from 60– 69 for these! Around one in 20 people in the UK will develop a bowel cancer during their lifetime. Regular screening has been shown to reduce the risk of dying from bowel cancer by 16%. All you need to do if you are concerned about your health is to request a check up. Terrible though that you have to request one and are not invited to a check up!

Older Peoples Assembly Update

The Older People's Assembly is still being discussed at the Council. The Forum is still very active in helping this become a reality and has met with Councillor Mole to discuss this. He is supporting all our work and believes the Forum is the best organisation who can be the "VOICE" of Older People's issues. We are not sure when the Assembly is going to be launched as we need to ensure everything is completed correctly to make the Assembly's launch a success and a true benefit to Older People.

There have been a few open meetings to discuss how Older People want the Assembly to run, if you would like to attend the next meeting please contact Dianne Graham on **0191 4332341**

Volunteering Opportunities

Gateshead Forum for Older People is always looking for people to volunteer this can be for Outreach work, Committee work or just assisting at our mail outs. If you would like to volunteer your time either regularly or just occasionally please contact me, **Louise 0191 4206854**

The Forum are being asked to contact members quite regularly for various organisations who are wanting to hold discussion groups about issues affecting older people. As a member of the Forum we know you are very interested in Older People having a “**VOICE**” and we may have already contacted some of you with details of events, if you said you were interested in volunteering when you registered. If you have not been asked to come to any discussion groups but are interested in attending please contact me at the office, **Louise 0191 4206854**

Carers experiences needed, Can you Help?

Do you receive care (such as help in dressing or washing) in your home? Do you attend a day centre? Do you live in a residential or nursing home? Or do you care for someone who does?

If so, are you happy with the service or do you have concerns?

Gateshead Carers Association is working with the Tyne and Wear Care Alliance to find out what people think about care services. We will feed those views back to those who provide care staff training. We would like to hear your story you can remain anonymous if you prefer. Please contact:

Janice Hall Tel: 0191 4900121 email:Janice.hall@gatesheadcarers.com.

The Forum will be at these places:

21st May- Kibblesworth Millennium Centre: 11am—2.30pm, with support from over 8 other organisations with refreshments.

7th June- Elgin Centre : 1pm—3pm

19th June-Muslim Society, 2 Westbourne Ave, Gateshead: 11am—2.30pm

26th June—Gateshead Civic Centre: 11am 2.30pm

11th August- Felling Fair

