

ISSUE  
09  
Spring  
2010

# The Voice

of older people  
in Gateshead

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# Generations Together



Sending me a text  
would have been  
just as easy, I can  
show you how.



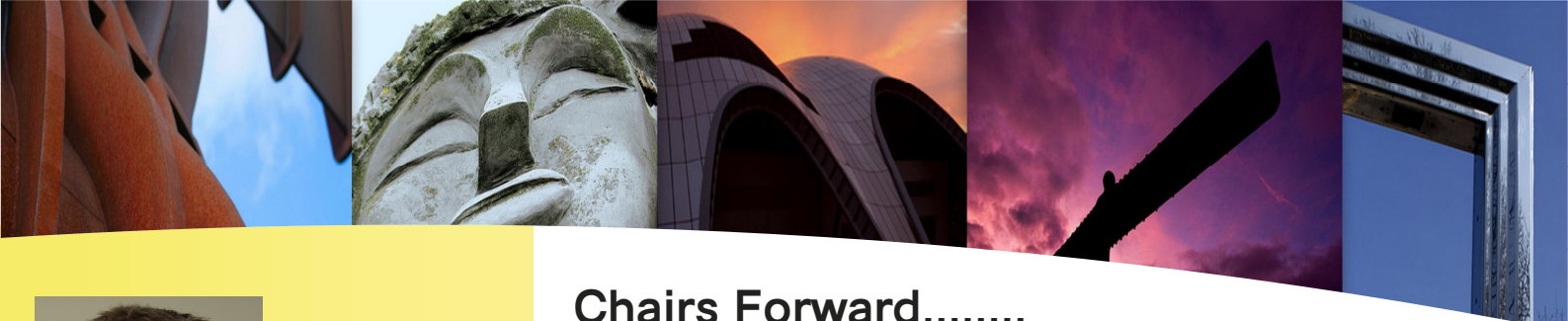
What can I do in  
my community and  
learn new skills at  
the same time?



Gateshead  
Older People's Assembly

## Why not volunteer?





## Chairs Forward.....



Chris Barker  
Assembly  
Coordinator



I hope you enjoy the new layout of 'The Voice'. We have decided to use a new format which gives you a closer look at how we are working on your behalf and the many ways we are involved in making sure your 'Voice' is heard in Gateshead.

We want to include you in the work we do and are looking at new ways to do this. We are planning a large research project this year to enable us to be more aware of the issues and concerns you have. We will need your help and support to ensure we have a true picture of the concerns of older people in Gateshead.

We also need to know what we are getting right or if we need to change the way we are doing things. You may feel we need to do some things differently or we are not doing the work you would like to see us do. Remember, this is your Assembly and your opinions count. When you receive the questionnaire, please take some time to fill it in and return it to us. It is the only way we can know what you want.

We will be doing many intergenerational events this year and we would like to see you becoming involved. Rachel our Coordinator will be telling you how you can do this in her article.

Kerry, who does a splendid job putting together 'The Voice' also wants to hear from you so you 'can have your say' in the articles etc, that make this Newsletter so interesting.

We are looking forward to the launch of the Older People's Strategy in Gateshead. You played a big part in this by filling in the questionnaire and giving your views at the launch of the Looking Forward Festival in October.

We are being asked to represent you in many ways, by arranging Focus Groups, attending meetings, seminars and conferences. We sometimes need to call on members to become part of this – if you want to be involved please let us know.

My very best wishes to you all  
**Esther Ward (Chair)**

Kerry Pattison  
Finance  
&  
Information  
Officer



Rachel Norman  
Generations  
Together  
Volunteer  
Coordinator

Helen Cowlyn  
Receptionist  
and  
Administrator



## **Your Voice in Gateshead**

As mentioned in the Chair's Foreword, you may have noticed that we have changed the format a little. We want to tell you about the meetings that we attend on your behalf and how the things you tell us can be directed to the organisations and agencies so that they can improve the way they deliver services to you.

We'd also like to tell you more about how and why we consult with older people, and explain how you can get involved, if you would like to. We'd like to tell you about events that we are putting on, and report back to you about the ones we've had.

But above all, we want you to feel supported by the services available to you in Gateshead, and one of the things that we do at the Assembly is to ensure that we are there whenever there are issues, changes to existing services or anything of interest for older people.

We also encourage you to make contact with the Assembly – as a member, you are part of us, your thoughts and opinions count, and may make real changes for the better, both for yourself and the other older people of Gateshead.

If you have a question, please ask, if you feel you might have an idea, please don't keep it to yourself. We also have many opportunities for those of you would like to volunteer a little time to the Assembly – this can be as much or as little as you like. There really is something for everybody.

**Chris Barker, Assembly Coordinator**

**Gateshead Older People's Assembly are looking for people to take part in a new survey aimed at gathering the views of residents aged 50 plus.**

**We want you to let us know what we can do to improve our organisation.**

**What services would you like us offer?**

**What can we do better ? What do we do well?**

**How would you like us to engage with local organisations and government?**

**How would you like to become more involved?**

**How would you like to be kept informed about the work we do?**

**Volunteers are also needed to join the steering group who will design and roll out a community research project. Help and support will be provided throughout.**

**Also:**

**Do you know any groups who would like to take part in the pilot survey?**

**If so then contact Kerry Pattison on 0191 438 1721**

**Or email [kerry.pattison@btconnect.com](mailto:kerry.pattison@btconnect.com)**



## Reminiscence

In conjunction with Gateshead Council Adult Learning and Skills, the Assembly has begun a learning programme aimed at older men, which is taking place in our meeting room every Thursday between 10.30- 12.30pm.

This informal session is led by a local history teacher from Tynedale, **Ray Wildsmith**.

Ray encourages the group to '**Reminisce**' about the area they were brought up in and the changes that have taken place.

The sessions are informal and friendly, and all men aged 50 plus living in Gateshead are welcome to attend.

The sessions are completely free of charge and include refreshments. There are plans to visit areas of historical interest in Gateshead, and all transportation and refreshments will be provided.

Places are still available, so if you think you might be interested in taking part, please contact our office on

**0191 438 1721.**

## Our Role in Personalisation

I hope you feel that this issue of The Voice tells you a bit more about the work of Gateshead Older People's Assembly.

In the last edition I focused on how the Older People's Assembly links with Gateshead Older People's Partnership, and the development of the new Older People's Strategy.

In this edition we look at 'Personalisation' and what it might mean for older people in Gateshead, as well as the ways in which the Assembly is involved.

Personalisation really means individuals deciding for themselves what services are best for them. Older people who are receiving care services are being encouraged to be assessed for their own 'personal budget'. This means discussing needs and agreeing what services are needed, but then choosing for yourself where to purchase these services from. In other words, you are given a budget to spend and you get to decide how it is spent, so that you can select services that are appropriate to your needs.

This can be a little daunting. But there is a lot of help out there to make it easier. For instance, Gateshead Council have their team ready to assist with the process, there are Peer Mentors – people who have experience of receiving personal budgets, to help out, and a lot of information and support is available.

The Assembly has been involved with the Personalisation process since it began. A representative sits on the Personalisation Partnership Board, as well as the various planning groups hosted by the Council. In addition to this, the Assembly is involved with an exciting project aimed towards getting a higher proportion of older people to take up a personal budget.

The Assembly is also on the Peer Mentoring steering group, which was set up jointly between Sight Service and Age Concern Gateshead. Feedback from those people who have taken up personal budgets and are now in control of their own care services, is very positive. If you would like more information about Personalisation or personal budgets, please call our office, or contact Gateshead Council Adult Services.

**Chris Barker, Assembly Coordinator**

## **Have your say on local bus links**

Residents will be asked to give their views on a major new review of bus services in Gateshead, aimed at improving local and socially-important links.

Nexus, which plans and promotes public transport in Tyne and Wear, is working with Gateshead Council on the Accessible Network Design Project.

It is examining the routes it subsidises directly – about 10% of the whole network – to see if improvements can be made.

A series of drop-in road shows in the borough will give residents the chance to see and comment on the Nexus plans, and talk to the people who drew them up, before any final decisions are made.

You can also view the plans for your area, as well as other parts of Tyne and Wear, online at [www.nexus.org.uk/busstrategy](http://www.nexus.org.uk/busstrategy) and give your views. You can also email Nexus about this at [bus.strategy@nexus.org.uk](mailto:bus.strategy@nexus.org.uk).

The central question Nexus is asking is: Do our buses get people where they want to go, and at the times they want to travel?

Bus services in Gateshead, mainly provided by Go North East as a commercial operator, are already very good in most cases.

The Nexus review will focus in particular on areas like better access to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and providing more buses during the evening.

### **Road show meetings near you**

Gateshead Civic Centre, Regent Street, Gateshead, NE8 1HH  
Wednesday 14 April, 11am-4pm

Gateshead@Blaydon, Blaydon Library, Blaydon Precinct, NE21 5BT  
Tuesday 27 April, 11am-4pm

Whickham Library, St Mary's Green, Whickham, NE16 4DN  
Wednesday 28 April, 9.30am-11.30am

**Do you live in the  
Low Fell area?**

The Assembly is seeking local residents aged 50 plus to become involved in their local community by joining our first Local Branch Assembly.

With our help and support we will ensure your opinions and the opinions of other local older people are heard where it matters.

Meetings are usually held on the second Monday of the month at 2pm at Lyndholme, Community Lounge, Beacon Lough Road including occasional guest speakers. Refreshments available.

**Next meeting: Monday 8th March**

To find out more information please contact: **June Heslewood 0191 421 5573**



## Wii Love it!

Generations Together are interested in hearing from anyone over 50 that would like to learn how to use the Nintendo Wii.

This is an interactive computer console where you can play games and keep fit at the same time. It's great fun and has the added bonus of improving balance and fitness, which has been shown to play a huge role in falls prevention.

You will be shown step by step how to use the console in a relaxed environment. Any age can have fun with technology and it doesn't have to be complicated.

Why not compete with the grandchildren next time they get their Wii out? Or simply improve your own levels of fitness whilst making some new friends.

Anybody interested in finding out more or who would like to have a Wii session near them then please get in touch with Rachel Norman on 0191 438 1721 or email

[rachel.a.norman@btconnect.com](mailto:rachel.a.norman@btconnect.com)

## Generations Together

Gateshead Older People's Assembly's Generations Together Project, is co-ordinated through Gateshead Council who are one of 12 local authorities funded by four Government Departments, providing £5.5 million up to 31st March 2011. The purpose of the national programme is to bring together older people (over fifty) and younger people (under twenty five) together in mutually beneficial activities to promote greater understanding and respect between generations and to contribute to cohesive communities.

The programme is designed to:

- \* Generate a wider interest in intergenerational work
- \* Increase the number of volunteers working on intergenerational activity by 20,000 across the UK by the end of the programme
- \* Encourage a more strategic and sustainable approach
- \* Provide robust evidence of the effectiveness of intergenerational initiatives and to develop evidence about effective models for delivering intergenerational activity

Gateshead Older People's Assembly Generations Together project will be delivered by our Intergenerational Volunteer Coordinator Rachel Norman.

### Action for Children, working with the Council, need your help.

We all recognise that there are some young people in Gateshead who need some support to help them raise their aspirations. As part of the Generations Together programme, Action for Children are looking for people aged 50 and over to act as mentors to young people in Gateshead.

The year long programme see mentors meet up with their mentee for a couple of hours each week doing activities which help the young person to meet their goals. If you would like to know more please contact: Jacqueline Robson, Action for Children, Tel: **0191490 1059** Email: **map@actionforchildren.org.uk**



## Generations Together 'Jobshop' for over 50s

In this time of economic downturn, many people over 50 have found themselves out of work. Writing CVs on the computer, filling in online application forms and registering with online agencies can be a daunting experience for those who are not computer literate, or who have been out of practice in using computers and need a refresher.

To provide support to unemployed over 50s **'Generations Together'** at Gateshead Older Peoples Assembly are running a **'Jobshop'** every Wednesday afternoon from 2pm until 4pm, starting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March.

This is a chance for people to get together over a hot drink, support each other and get help and advice on using a computer to search for jobs.

Volunteer tutors will be available to work with you one to one, guiding you through searching and applying for jobs online. No experience of using a computer is necessary, as our tutors can show you step by step from turning the computer on and using a mouse, right through to sending application forms and emailing.

All of this is done at your own pace and in a relaxed and friendly environment. So if you or anybody you know is over 50 and looking for work this could be the perfect opportunity to meet new people and learn new computer skills.

For more information please contact Rachel Norman on 0191 438 1721

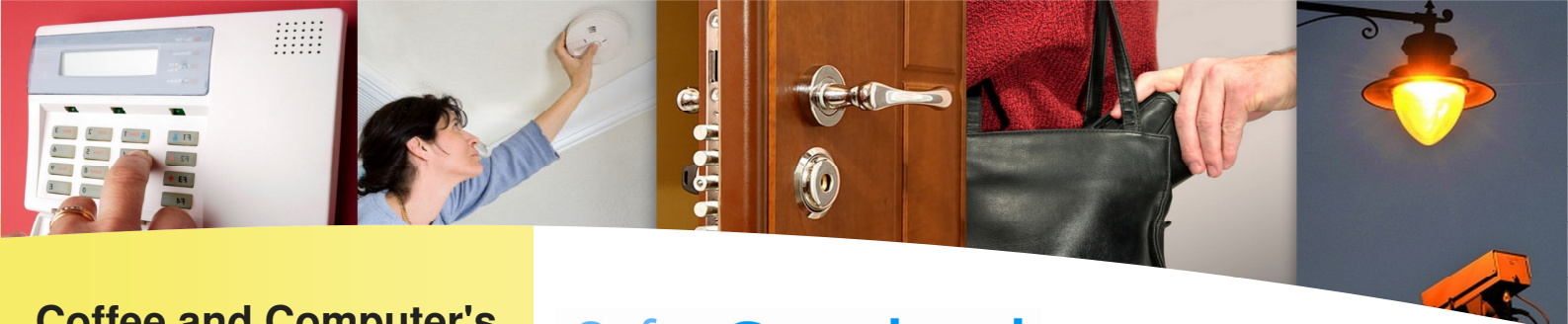
Sessions are on a drop in basis and there is no need to book.

## Nana Chic

Gateshead Older People's Assembly project **'Generations Together'** are teaming up with young people's charity **Eye of the Fly** to work on a fashion and film project. We are looking for people over 50 who are willing to talk to young people about the sort of clothes they wore growing up, and maybe even bring in a garment or some photographs of vintage fashion. Following this the young people will create and customise clothes in a retro style and showcase the items on a catwalk at the end of the project.

Throughout the project both younger and older people's views of the opposite generation will be filmed and anyone over 50 can learn how to use filming and editing equipment, to make a DVD about the project. The DVD will be shown widely across Gateshead and everyone involved will get a copy.

Places for this project are limited but if you have some time to spare, an interest in fashion or wish to learning about film making then please get in touch to register your interest. The project is anticipated to take place in June/July 2010. Contact Rachel Norman on 438 1721



## Coffee and Computer's Drop in Session

**Venue: Gateshead Older People's Assembly Office, 65 High Street, Felling.**

Would you like to learn about computers at your own pace?



Dates for 2010 are as follows:

Friday 12th March, 9th April, 7th May, 11th June, 9th July, 12th August, 10th September, 8th October, 12th November, 10th December.

Volunteers from The Princes Trust and GVOC volunteer centre will be on hand to help and guide you.

Contact: Rachel Norman on 0191 438 1721 or email: [rahel.norman@btconnect.com](mailto:rahel.norman@btconnect.com)

## Safer Gateshead

Safer People, Safer Communities

**Safer Gateshead Event:  
March 24<sup>th</sup> 2010 Gateshead Civic Centre**

Safer Gateshead will be holding a celebratory event at Gateshead Civic Centre on March 24<sup>th</sup> to launch the 'Partnership Plan and Priorities' for the next Twelve Months.

The event will also be used to highlight Gateshead's continuing drop in crime with almost 2000 fewer crimes committed in Gateshead last year, that's a 14% reduction!

Partners within Safer Gateshead work together on many community safety issues including anti-social behaviour, domestic violence, drugs and alcohol, hate crime, reducing reoffending, tackling violent crime and supporting victims of crime.



In addition to showcasing the work of the Partners, the event will also give members of the public the chance to meet some of the people who are helping to tackle crime and improve community safety in the borough.

The public will be able to question key agencies such as neighbourhood police officers and housing officers on issues that affect them and their way of life.

Safer Gateshead has been consulting widely on its community safety priorities for the year ahead and would like to share these with our residents and partners.

Between 2.30pm and 4pm on March 24<sup>th</sup> Safer Gateshead representatives including Northumbria Police, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service, Northumbria Probation, the Primary Care Trust, Northumbria Police Authority and the Local Authority will talk about what we have achieved over the past 12 months and our priorities for the future.



In addition to this meeting, information and advice will be available from 2:30pm onwards within the Bewicks restaurant on debt, housing support, welfare benefits, financial inclusion and illegal money lending.

Residents and partners will get the chance to meet and talk to a wide range of organisations including the Gateshead Older People's Assembly, North East Council on Addictions, the Young Peoples substance misuse awareness service SMART, Gateshead Council Domestic Abuse, Neighbourhood Wardens, Turning Point, Victim Support and the North East Regional Alcohol Forum and many more!



There will be lots of interactive and fun activities such as learning how to make non-alcoholic cocktails, representatives from Gateshead Older People's Assembly showing us how to use the Wii, getting your nails painted by young apprentices from the Gateshead Skills Academy and trying out a Drink Drive Simulator.

From 4.00 – 7.00pm there will be a series of workshops outlining particular areas of our work including anti-social behaviour, trading standards (including illegal money lending, money laundering and counterfeit goods) fire service, police and probation and drug and alcohol awareness.

**For more information on this event please contact  
The Safer Communities Team on:  
(0191) 4332304 or email [communitysafety@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:communitysafety@gateshead.gov.uk).**

## **Pie and Peas Fundraiser**

On Monday 15th February, Gateshead Older People's Assembly Generations Together Project and Brandling Hall Community Centre in Felling, hosted a joint Pie and Peas Fundraiser in aid of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award expeditions.



The evening's fun included tombola's, raffles, bingo, and learn to text and Wii sessions as well as a tasty supper.

A big thank you to Gregg's the Bakers for supplying the lovely pies and to everyone who came along to support the event.



## Garden Maintenance Scheme

The Anchor Staying Put new Gardening Service may be able to assist you with your gardening if you live in the Newcastle or Gateshead areas and you are over 60 (or over 50 and have a disability). We can help if your garden is overgrown or if you just need some regular help to keep it tidy.

The agency is also able to help you with improvements and repairs to your home, both large and small. The service is a social enterprise which means that all the money it makes goes back into running and improving the service. We do not make a profit and we try to keep the cost as low as possible for our customers.

## Gateshead Libraries Readers at Home and Mobile Library Service.

If you suffer from a mobility problem or you are a carer and unable to get to the library, we can come to you.

We can deliver books, including large print and talking books, directly to your home via our Readers at Home Service.

We also operate a Mobile Library, serving areas across Gateshead. For further information about this **FREE** service please contact : Sunderland Road Library on **0191 4336415**



## Crossroads Care, Gateshead Making a new name for ourselves.

It's not just the name and logo, it's everything about us. **Crossroads Care** is Britain's leading provider of support for carers, their families and the people they care for. In **Gateshead**, we work with 900 families, helping carers to make a life of their own outside caring.

We employ 63 trained professional staff providing flexible services, support, information and assistance for people of all ages, regardless of disability or health condition.

In November 2009 at our Annual General Meeting, we formally launched our new brand name "**Crossroads Care, Gateshead**, in line with our national membership requirements. There was a need to refresh the Crossroads image, so we could reach a wider audience and make ourselves famous – nationally and locally. We want to be distinctive and stand out from the crowd and reach more carers and be seen as leaders in social care. Our new brand is there to help us meet that challenge.

Do not be concerned if you hold old information about us. Our contact details remain unchanged. Any new information produced will be promoted across the organisation and will be available in due course for wider distribution. You will see that the brand name will become more prominent in all our information products during 2010.

We have already made a start at changing the way the building looks both inside and outside, as you will see, if you visit us here at:

**Crossroads Care Gateshead**  
**The Old School**  
**Smailes Lane**  
**Highfield**  
**Rowlands Gill**  
**NE39 2DB**  
**Tel: 01207 549780**



As a charity, we care for people, not for profit. We place Carers and the people we support at the heart of everything we do. Our staff share these common values and we hope in the year ahead, we will pass on these key messages, and continue to be proud to be part of Crossroads Care, Gateshead, providing quality services across Gateshead Borough.

**'Crossroads Care..... The people Carers turn to'**

**CROSS  
ROADS  
CARE  
ARE THE  
PEOPLE  
CARERS  
TURN TO**

**CROSS  
ROADS  
CARE  
FOR  
PEOPLE  
NOT  
PROFIT**

**CROSS  
ROADS  
CARE  
ABOUT  
YOUR  
QUALITY  
OF LIFE**

**CROSS  
ROADS  
CARE  
ABOUT  
RELIEVING  
CARER  
STRESS**

**CROSS  
ROADS  
CARE  
FOR  
CARERS  
AND THE  
PEOPLE  
THEY  
SUPPORT**

**CROSS  
ROADS  
CARE  
FOR  
YOUNG  
CARERS**

From Monday 11th January the Newcastle Trades Register service changed, becoming part of Anchor at Home. Gateshead and North Tyneside residents aged over 60 will now be able to use the service.



The new service will be a social enterprise like the gardening service and will eventually become self funding. It will be slightly different to the current register and so may be renamed.

Customers can contact Anchor at home with their required repairs, improvements and adaptations. Anchor will arrange for a vetted and approved contractors to visit. They will price the work through Anchor and we will tell you how much the work will cost. If you would like to go ahead Anchor will arrange for the work to be carried out and you will deal directly with Anchor staff throughout the whole process. The payment will also be made through Anchor so you don't need to worry about paying the contractor on the day and Anchor are there to help if you have any problems.

The change means that all customers will have access to an exclusive home repairs service, with a no hassle, one stop shop for a large variety of home repairs. The different types of work undertaken include roofing, guttering, electrics, damp and wood rot, fencing and gates, pointing, windows and doors, TV repairs, aerials, white goods repairs, alarms, joinery, locksmiths, carpet fitting, removals, decorating, gardening, heating, plastering, tiling, plumbing, handyperson jobs and more.

Their trades register co-ordinator will match your repair needs to one of the contractors on the list to ensure they have the right skills for the job. They will also let you know if one of the other Anchor services or another local organisation may be more suitable for you.

For more information please contact **Val Cox, Trades Register Coordinator** on **0191 495 6178**.

### **Message from Dr Lynne Corner. Institute for Ageing and Health, VOICE North.**

I am writing to say a big thank you to all members of Gateshead Older People's Assembly who have taken part in research studies at the University of Newcastle over the last few months. We very much appreciate the time that people have given to attend meetings and events, and answer questionnaires etc. and hope that you have found it enjoyable too!

This work is co-ordinated through VOICE North at the Institute for Ageing and Health (IAH) at Newcastle University. The IAH has an enormous programme of work which aims to understand the causes of conditions such as Parkinson's disease, stroke and dementia which touch so many of our lives, as well as developing treatments and services to support and care for older people. We are also looking at how to prevent many conditions and ensure people are healthy for as long as possible.

We are immensely grateful to you for sharing your experiences and hugely value your contribution. This partnership will mean that we are able to understand the priorities and experience of older people and focus on the key issues which matter. To date people from Gateshead have been involved in projects which cover everything from understanding what new products and services we need to develop for older people, to being healthy controls for a study on Parkinson's disease and also helping to develop a new vitamin-packed biscuit which will help to ensure a person gets all the nutrients they need when they are unwell and perhaps aren't feeling like eating.

Your involvement is making a tremendous difference. We are very keen that as many people as possible get involved - we hope there is something to interest everyone! We pay all travel expenses and give a voucher for taking part. **Please contact Sarah Armstrong or Lynne Corner at the Institute for Ageing and Health for more information - Telephone 0191 248 1353, or email [sarah.armstrong2@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:sarah.armstrong2@ncl.ac.uk)** Details are also available at [www.ncl.ac.uk/iah](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/iah) We look forward to hearing from you!



## Star for the Afternoon

Management Committee member, Margery Scott became a star for the afternoon, when she was interviewed by **Radio 4**.

Margery, who has volunteered to become part of **VOICE North** was asked to give her views on ageing along with Professor Tom Kirkwood, Director of the Institute for Ageing and Health at Newcastle University.

The interview is scheduled to take place for 2nd March, so please tune in.

To find out more information on how you can become part of **VOICE North** please contact **Sarah Armstrong on: 0191 248 1353**

**8th to 10th June: National Pensioners Convention Pensioner's Parliament, Blackpool.**

For more information from the **NPC (National Pensioners Convention)** contact [www.npcuk.org](http://www.npcuk.org) or telephone : **020 7553 6510**

## Are you 55+ looking for housing in Gateshead?

The decision to move home in your retirement years can seem like a big step, but staying put may mean living in a house that is too large, paying expensive bills and experiencing difficulty in maintaining your home.

“Johnnie” Johnson Housing Trust has been providing retirement housing for the past 40 years and has a number of properties in Gateshead that have been designed to ensure that tenants remain as independent as possible, safe and secure and with peace of mind.

Brian Renforth, North East Regional Manager for “Johnnie” Johnson Housing Trust commented:

“As a tenant your independence and well-being is something we regard very highly, and by providing you with a safe and secure home you are free to enjoy a friendly, supportive environment that aims to enhance your relaxation and quality of life.

Often people presume that there will be a long waiting list or that they will not be eligible and this is often not the case.”

Whatever the reason for moving home, we offer each tenant a warm welcome and encourage them to access the many services and facilities that are available.

These can include anything from arranged social activities such as enjoying a slice of cake and drink with neighbours or joining a T'ai Chi lesson. In addition tenants have access to spacious, well furnished communal areas. Many schemes have free laundry facilities and at some the heating and hot water is included in the rent. People are sometimes surprised to find that housing benefit is welcome!

Properties are self-contained and benefit from a 24 hour emergency call system and a professional scheme manager is on site during the week.

“We pride ourselves on providing quality, affordable retirement homes where tenants can maintain their independence and are free to come and go as they please, ultimately enjoying their retirement years.” Brian added.

**For more information or to arrange a viewing, call 0845 604 1095, or visit [www.jjhousing.co.uk](http://www.jjhousing.co.uk)**

The Charlie Crowe Scanner Appeal, was launched in March 2009, to raise the awareness of people suffering with Alzheimers. The appeal is named after Charlie Crowe, the last surviving player from the 1951 Newcastle United FC FA Cup winning team. Until last year he was speaking at meetings and active as a staunch supporter of NUFC. Alzheimer's disease has now taken its toll and his life has changed. He wants to support research into his condition to help find a cure.



Charlie is now on another of his famous determined runs. However, the goal this time is to raise £1.5 million to fund a new scanner to help speed the research.

Alzheimer's disease causes steadily increasing loss of memory and inability to carry out everyday tasks. It is the most common cause of dementia, affecting around 420,000 people in the UK. In early Alzheimer's disease people may experience lapses of memory and difficulty in finding the right words. As time goes by they may:

- frequently forget the names of people, places, appointments and recent events.
- become confused and more withdrawn
- experience mood swings and feel sad, angry, or frustrated by their increasing memory loss.

The money raise is for a new scanner at Newcastle University, Newcastle Magnetic Resonance Centre, that will allow doctors to press ahead with world-leading advances in Alzheimer's disease as well as in diabetes, Parkinson's disease and other chronic diseases.

The research can make a huge difference to the lives of many people. Newcastle Healthcare Charity provides support and works in association with the Appeal and this means that Gift Aid is claimable. You can pledge a donation via the 'Just Giving' website, or by sending a cheque payable to the 'Charlie Crowe Appeal' at the following address:

Charity Fund Office, Charlie Crowe Appeal, Room 203, Cheviot Court,  
Freeman Hospital NE7 7DN.

[www.charliecroweappeal.com](http://www.charliecroweappeal.com)

## **Changes to Pension Credit**

**Changes to Pension Credit capital rules could mean that more customers are entitled to extra help.**

**Prior to November 2009 up to £6000 savings / investments were ignored when calculating Pension Credit entitlement after that an income was assumed at the rate of £1 for every £500 over the £6000 threshold. From November 2009 up to £10,000 is ignored before an income is assumed.**

**For people already on Pension Credit these changes will happen automatically (computer systems will be updated to recalculate customer's entitlements). However, those who do not receive Pension Credit may wish to have a benefit check as they may be entitled due to the changes outlined above. For further information contact:  
The Pension Service on 0845 606 0265**



**Old wives' tales** have been around long before our grandparents were children. They are, in essence, part of our belief system only because the tales have been told to us all of our lives. Here are a few very strange ones.

If someone picks out a piece of thread from your hair, you will be receiving a letter.

If your eyes start jumping for a couple of days, you will be seeing a long time friend or someone you once met.

If you put the cold or mucous from a dog's eye in your own, you will be able to see ghosts.

It is bad luck to cut your fingernails on a Friday.

The dried body of a frog worn in a silk bag around the neck averts epilepsy and other fits.

It is bad luck to say the word 'pig' at sea.

If you say goodbye to a friend on a bridge you will never see them again.

**Don't think I will be in hurry to see ghosts !!!**

## **I would never trade my amazing friends.....**

my wonderful life, my loving family for less gray hair or a flatter belly. As I've aged, I've become kinder to myself, and less critical of myself. I've become my own friend. I don't chide myself for eating that extra cookie, or for not making my bed.

I have seen too many dear friends leave this world too soon; before they understood the great freedom that comes with aging. Whose business is it if I choose to read or play on the computer until 4 AM and sleep until noon?

I will dance with myself to those wonderful tunes of the 60 & 70's, and if I, at the same time, wish to weep over a lost love ... I will. I will walk the beach in a swim suit that is stretched over a bulging body, and will dive into the waves with abandon if I choose to, despite the pitying glances from the jet set.

They, too, will get old. I know I am sometimes forgetful. But there again, some of life is just as well forgotten. And I eventually remember the important things.

Sure, over the years my heart has been broken. How can your heart not break when you lose a loved one, or when a child suffers, or even when somebody's beloved pet gets hit by a car? But broken hearts are what give us strength and compassion.

I am so blessed to have lived long enough to have my hair turning gray, and to have my youthful laughs be forever etched into deep grooves on my face. So many have never laughed, and so many have died before their hair could turn silver.

As you get older, it is easier to be positive. You care less about what other people think. I don't question myself anymore. I've even earned the right to be wrong.

I like being old. It has set me free. I like the person I have become. I am not going to live forever, but while I am still here, I will not waste time wondering what could have been, or worrying about what will be.

**Sent in by Elizabeth Mills**

## THE WEEDS



I have a little garden and I dig it everyday.  
I water all the flowers and throw the weeds away.  
And yet, tho' flowers are very scarce,  
of weeds there are no lack.  
For when I'm fast asleep in bed,  
they all come creeping back.  
And this is most annoying, for, as anyone can tell  
They never come back alone,  
they bring their friends as well!!

Supplied by James FitzPatrick  
Low Teams

### Through the eyes of a child

A Grandmother took her granddaughter to the zoo. Her granddaughter had beautiful red hair and a face filled with freckles. She wanted to have her face painted like all the other children, so she stood in line.

When it was her turn, the artist looked at her and said, "Wow, look at that red hair and all those freckles, there's no room to paint". The little girl's face fell in disappointment.

Quickly, the Grandmother knelt down beside her and said, " When I was little I wished I had red hair and freckles, I can't think of anything more wonderful !!"

The little girl looked up and gazed into her grandmother's eyes and said, " Yes there is Grandma, you "

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### LET'S HEAR YOUR VOICE

**Would you like to submit a piece for our next newsletter?  
If so, we would love to hear from you.**

**Would you like to share a life story, maybe you spent time in the services or have a  
precious memory to share.**

**It may be a family recipe or old photographs of places or people.  
Do you have any tips or advice, poems, jokes, or points of view to share?  
Whatever it may be, please contact:**

**Kerry Pattison**

**Gateshead Older People's Assembly, 65 High Street, Felling, Gateshead,  
Tyne and Wear, NE10 9LU or Telephone: 0191 438 1721**

## Gateshead Older People's Assembly Membership Form

Name: Mr / Mrs / Ms:

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Telephone:

What is your Ethnic Origin:

For Monitoring purposes could you please complete the following:  
Please tick which age band you are in:

50-59     60-69     70-79     80-89     90+

Would you like to participate in any of the following?

Events     Committee     Office     Focus Groups

Other ( Please State)

Do you have any special requirements?

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How did you hear about us?

Many thanks, please return form to :

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