

ISSUE  
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# The Voice

of older people  
in Gateshead

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Photo by Louise Best

[www.gatesheadolderpeoplesassembly.co.uk](http://www.gatesheadolderpeoplesassembly.co.uk)





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**Or**

**Visit our website, address on  
front cover.**

**Cover photo provided by local  
photographer Louise Best**

## Chairs Foreword



Dear member

Hello to you all, I am Tom Bryden, Vice chair, standing in for Esther who is on her well deserved holiday. On her return it is expected that Esther will enter hospital for an operation, we wish her well and a speedy recovery.

You may recall that last year the Management Committee team met up with the Elders Council of Newcastle and the Lord Mayor of Newcastle and The Mayor of Gateshead.

This proved to be a very interesting meeting as we discussed the many concerns that we have received from you our members such as:

- Paths blocked by parked motor vehicles and bicycles being ridden on paths.
- Overhanging bushes and trees
- Uneven and broken paving
- Bus transport

It emerged that the same problems exist on the Newcastle side of the river. Further discussions are already underway to see if a joint working party could be set up to address these problems.

What would be, the most relevant subject to consider? I am sure that not all of us would agree on the same one.

As a visually impaired person my views on pavement parking may not be as important as someone in a wheelchair, or uneven paving stones to someone who uses walking sticks.

Whatever comes out of any discussion between our two organisations will be fed back to you, our member.

**Tom Bryden ( Vice Chair)**

## Changes Ahead

Every time we turn on the news at present, we hear about the economic turmoil Britain faces, and of course “cuts”. Cuts in budgets, cuts in services, cuts in jobs. On top of all this, we face huge price increases on everything we buy. It all feels very negative at times, but we have to hope that these cuts will eventually lead to a more stable economy and a brighter future in the long run. In the meantime there are few people who are not affected by the proposed cuts, and Gateshead will face its share of these. Gateshead Council will shortly be announcing how they propose to ride the storm, and will be setting their budget for the year ahead. Here at the Assembly, along with the other voluntary sector organisations, we too are affected by the recession.

Funding is becoming more scarce and subsequently more difficult to access, whilst rising costs in general are starting to take their toll. The Assembly has grown tremendously and quickly over the last 3 years, but we, like everybody else, need to look at how we will be affected and devise ways to ensure that we continue to support all older people in Gateshead. As a member of the Assembly you have a strong voice in Gateshead, and we will do everything we can to ensure that this does not change.

One area that may have to change is the format of ‘The Voice’. Our quarterly newsletter is expensive to produce in its current format and we may need to look at ways to reduce the cost of production. Postage to all our members is also a major cost, so please do let us know if you are happy to receive it electronically by email.

## Generations Together

The Generations Together project that has been running for the last 18 months sadly reaches its end on 31<sup>st</sup> March. Any of you that have been involved in the many activities that have taken place through Generations Together will know what a success it has been. These include ‘Coffee and Computers’, ‘Over 50’s Job Shop’ ‘Wii are Happy’, tree planting and digital photography trips to name just a few. We have involved hundreds of older and younger volunteers and participants, and we would like to thank everybody who has been involved in this excellent project.

One thing that has really been highlighted from Generations Together is how well the older and younger people work and play together. The project may be finishing but here at the Assembly we aim to continue the legacy of regular intergenerational working and look forward to plenty of future intergenerational activities.

**Chris Barker, Assembly Coordinator**

## Help Us Keep Our Mailing List Up To Date

If you have received this newsletter through the post, it is because the person named on the envelope is on our membership list. Like all charities, we want to make sure we do not waste valuable funding, so if you have received this mailing and you know the named member no longer lives at the address please let us know.

If you are a member and would prefer to receive a copy of The Voice via email instead please contact [admin.assembly@btconnect.com](mailto:admin.assembly@btconnect.com) and you will be added to our electronic list.

If you know of someone who is aged over 50 and lives in Gateshead and would like to become a member (it’s free!!) please ask them to complete the membership form on the back of this newsletter and post it to the address stated.



## Update on Habits and Pastimes Survey

Back in November, we were asked if we could assist student Paul Holmes to carry out a questionnaire on habits and Pastimes in the over 50's.

The study was carried out as part of Paul's Journalism and Broadcasting degree at Salford University.

"As I am a few years older than most of the people on my course I was shocked at how much my fellow students associated anyone over 50 with pensioner stereotypes. Anyone aged between 50 and 70 who has lived through The Beatles, Mods and Rocks, Flower Power, Glam, Punk are far more alive than kids of today will ever be... and I wanted to see if my research had resonance".

"The questionnaire confirmed my feelings. It seemed a lot of those questioned may be mature in mind but their spirit was as young and vibrant as ever. The results showed that the majority of people surveyed were interested in the same things that younger generations are, and active pastimes and challenging experiences are still very much the order of the day!! There is also a huge range of eclectic tastes out there..proving you don't all listen to Doris Day!!

I had quite a number of replies from Gateshead and may I extend a deep and glorious thank you to all who took part.

# COMIC RELIEF

## 3 year funding allows Assembly to 'Branch' out

It was the news we had been hoping for. After a successful bid, The Assembly has been shortlisted from hundreds of applicants to win three years funding from Comic Relief Older Peoples Programme.

The aim of Comic Relief Older Peoples Programmes is to support older people, so they can bring positive change to their communities by using their time, energy and skills to support individuals who are most in need.

Our bid to set up local Branch Assemblies across the borough impressed the funders . Our aim is to ensure local people are fully involved in their development, by leading, running and participating in the Branch Assemblies.

The intention of the Assemblies is to allow older people to bring about more positive changes in their local community. It is often felt that older people have very little say in the decisions that effect their lives and even less opportunities to participate .

The project started in February with the appointment of a new Branch Assembly Volunteer Coordinator Kerry Pattison. Kerry has worked for The Assembly for 4 years as their Finance and Information Officer and will no doubt be a familiar face to many of you who have attended our events over the years.

Kerry brings with her an understanding of the issues affecting older people across the borough and extensive knowledge of service providers in Gateshead.

Kerry will be spending time out and about across the borough meeting with local communities, in order to find the best areas to set up our Branch Assemblies.

The first Branch Assembly has already been set up by volunteer June Heslewood in Low Fell, which we hope with Kerry's support and the support from the community will continue to grow.

If you are a member of a local group or if you would like to get involved in helping at a Branch Assembly and would like to find out more information, please contact:

**Kerry Pattison on 0191 43871721, or 07817474397 or email [kerry.pattison@btconnect.com](mailto:kerry.pattison@btconnect.com) anytime.**





## Join us on Saturday 19th March to help us celebrate Comic Relief Red Nose Day

Come along and join us at Wesley Memorial Church, Durham Road, Low Fell from 10am to 1pm for a fun filled community event and help us raise funds for Comic Relief.

There will be craft stalls, bake sales, tombola, sweepstakes with £30 cash prizes, food and chocolate lovers hampers to raffle and much more!

We hope the event will raise awareness of the our Branch Assemblies project funded by Comic Relief and help bring the local community together ,as well as promoting the many groups and events held at Wesley Church.

We are appealing for donations for the event, such as good quality nik naks, books and games, packaged food for the hampers, toiletries, and toys for example. (Please note that we cannot accept electrical items or alcohol).

If any of you out there would like to help by baking for our cake stall we would be very grateful, pickles and preserves also welcome! Volunteers are also required to help out on day, so if anyone would like to give a hand on a stall then give me a ring on on **0191 438 1721**. Hope to see you there !!

**Kerry Pattison**

**Shoe Sense**

One of the biggest health risks that older people face is injury from falls. There is a wealth of information around the prevention of falls and Gateshead is now working on a new Falls Strategy. This is all good news, but the importance of footwear in relation to falls is often overlooked. If your shoes are comfortable and supportive, your risk of falls is greatly reduced. So what should you look out for?

**Size** – according to Clarks (2009) 90% of women and 68% of men wear shoes that are too small for them. This obviously will make them less comfortable but you will also be less stable on your feet – not to mention pain caused by blisters.

**Soles** – They should have some tread – otherwise they become very slippery in wet weather. Shoe shops sell ‘texture strips’ which add grip to smooth soled shoes.

**Natural materials** – synthetic uppers are cheaper, but leather and canvas will allow your feet to breathe, reducing skin irritations. They are also more flexible and they move with your feet. They usually last longer too.

**Less cushioning** – heavily cushioned shoes may feel more comfortable –at first, but pillowy padding will destabilise your feet which can affect your balance.

**Convenient fastenings** – laces are always best because they secure the shoe to your foot and allow for adjustment based on sock thickness, room for orthotics or swelling feet (did you know that everybody’s feet swell in the afternoon!) But do make sure laces are not too long to avoid tripping up. Velcro fastening is the next best if you are less dextrous with your hands.

**Heels** – 1 to 1 ½ inches is ideal according to Clarkes. Lower heels and wider floor contact give the lowest risk of falls.

Don’t forget about the latest ranges of walking trainers, which usually offer excellent support and comfort. If you’re unsure about what’s best for your feet, most chiropodists will give good advice too.



**just  
visiting.com**  
the online visiting room

**Justvisiting.com** is a **FREE** website which has been designed to support hospital patients and their families and save precious time for hospital staff.

Best described as an **online visiting room**, it aims to establish a support network for patients and their families and friends to share information and well wishes, donate to charity, send flowers and much more.

It is completely secure and confidential as well as easy to use and easily accessible. A visitor to the site simply opens an online visiting room and invites friends and family to view regular bulletins and post their own messages of support between one another.

Distance is no problem, even for friends and relatives overseas, and the room is open 24 hours a day, every day.

The website also contains useful links to a variety of medical, benefit, care and support services such as NHS Direct, Patient UK, Direct Gov and Carers UK

**Justvisiting.com** is a not for profit organisation who work closely with Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust.

Visit [www.justvisiting.com](http://www.justvisiting.com)

## Safer Gateshead

Safer People, Safer Communities

### Helping build more confident communities

Despite its best efforts, the bad weather at the end of last year failed to dent my enthusiasm for my new job! I am now settling into life at the Assembly and also into my task of engaging with groups of older people with the aim of improving confidence in community safety.

I have been made more than welcome when I've brought my "Roadshow" along to groups and meetings, and I've been given the opportunity to reinforce the message that crime is, in fact, dropping and Gateshead is a safe place to live, work and visit.

A major aim of the project is to give people confidence in dealing with rogue traders, bogus callers and even distraction burglars. Vulnerable areas which may attract bogus callers are bungalows within sheltered schemes, but with the help of the Police and Trading Standards, talks have been given to reassure folk and build up their confidence when dealing with these callers. This advice is always well received and usually develops into an "interactive" session where people get the chance to ask more direct questions about staying safe in their own homes. I also take with me a DVD issued by Trading Standards entitled "Your Home is Your Castle". This offers advice on dealing with doorstep traders and has proved very popular.

Over the next few weeks a "No Cold Calling Zone" will be set up in one of the sheltered schemes in Birtley. This is intended to deter potential uninvited callers using prominent signage to hopefully ward them off. The project will be closely monitored with the help of residents.

The Fire Service is also playing a major part in delivering home safety messages to both community groups and sheltered schemes. Talks given by fire safety officers include giving advice on getting free home safety checks and having smoke alarms installed correctly.

So there you have a snapshot of the first three months of my time on the Safer Gateshead project. It is a project with so much scope and I do hope that over the coming months I'm able to develop this more.

**Susan Byrne**  
Safer Gateshead Development Worker



## Let's talk Gas Safety

With all the cold weather we have had this winter, you will know the importance of keeping your home warm. You will probably have had your central heating switched on more. It's important to make sure your central heating and all of your gas appliances are working safely and correctly.

Did you know **Gas Safe Register** is the only official list of gas engineers who are legally allowed to do work on your gas boiler, gas cooker and gas fire? This list is there to help protect you from unsafe gas work. You might remember it used to be known as CORGI but now it's called **Gas Safe Register**. All gas engineers have to be Gas Safe registered by law.

Get your gas boiler, gas fire and gas cooker checked once a year by a Gas Safe registered engineer. Annual servicing not only helps keep your heating and hot water working properly, it helps keep you safe.

All Gas Safe registered engineers carry an ID card so they can show you they are Gas Safe registered when they turn up at your front door – if they don't show you then don't be afraid to ask to see it. Always check the card. You can also call **Gas Safe Register free on 0800 408 5500** and we can tell you if the gas engineer is on the list and qualified for the work you need them to do. If you have access to the internet visit **[www.GasSafeRegister.co.uk](http://www.GasSafeRegister.co.uk)** or ring us here at the **Assembly** and we can give you more details on **0191 438 1721**

**Depression Awareness Week™** is an annual initiative. Each year a specific campaign theme for the week is selected, raising awareness of the different aspects of depression. This year's dates are 18th to 24th April.



Depression can sometimes make every-day things such as speaking to friends, eating a meal or even just getting out of bed feel almost impossible. It can feel confusing when things you once took for granted become so difficult and many people can start to feel unsure of who they are and what they're good at. Sometimes people may have to take time off work, find it hard to spend time with friends or family and can feel too exhausted to do the things they used to enjoy.

Not being able to 'see' depression in the same way you could do with a broken arm or leg can often make it feel difficult to explain to others why you find it so hard to get out of bed or why you feel unable to concentrate. They might hope it will go away by itself, or that they just need to 'toughen up' and 'snap out of it'. Indeed, it's often something that can go up and down and can sometimes take a long time until it becomes manageable. Depression is different for everyone, but just like any other illness it can get better with the right help and support. There are many different ways of managing depression that can help you to lead a normal life.

Mind in Gateshead are a locally based Mental Health Charity who offer a variety of support services from counselling services to practical support. Contact them on 477 4545 for more information.





## Daffodil Eggstavanza

**Saturday 23rd April 11am  
to 3pm**

Family Fun Day  
Come along and make an  
Easter Bonnet, Decorate a  
Cake, Join in the Easter Egg  
Hunt.

Free entry  
Everyone welcome

Bensham Grove Community  
Centre  
Sydney Grove  
Bensham  
Gateshead  
NE8 2 XD  
Phone: 0191 433 6450

### Did You Know?

There are no words in the  
dictionary that rhyme with  
orange, purple and silver!

98% of the population cannot  
lick their own right elbow!

A raisin dropped in a glass of  
fresh champagne will bounce up  
and down continuously from the  
bottom of the glass to the top.

If you were to spell out numbers,  
you would have to get to 1,000  
before you would find the letter  
'A' (ignoring the word 'and'!

And finally...

75% of people reading this will  
by now have tried to lick their  
own right elbow!



## My Generation Event On Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> January

The Mayor and Mayoress of Gateshead came along and kindly opened the 'My Generation' event, which had been organised with the help of so many.

My Generation was a free drop in event for the whole community, which encapsulated many aspects of our lives; from the present day to past eras. The event was held to showcase what the Generations Together, (Technology Exchange) project had been working towards.

The project focused on highlighting ways to combat social isolation, but also on a more positive note, the steps taken to improve intergenerational and social cohesion within the community during our everyday lives.

My Generation included: theatre, provided by the excellent Little Cat Theatre Company, Councillor Peter Mole (Older and Younger Persons Champion) kindly presented the Gateshead Youth Assembly, who showed their skills through singing, dancing and so much more, and Beamish Museum, particularly Michelle and Ian, who demonstrated and commented on the changes in fashion over the last 120 years (with the help of the Gateshead Youth Assembly) and a variety of stalls - from jewellery, card crafting, digital photography, health issues -to nail painting!

The event was filmed throughout, and it was also published in the Newcastle Evening Chronicle and broadcast on the Sue Sweeney show, on BBC radio Newcastle.

The event was a great success; with everyone – participants, volunteers and public commenting on how much they enjoyed it.

I am grateful to so many for their help and support in the run up to this event; Pete Ross from the Little Cat Theatre Group, for his words of encouragement – and the more tangible use of their P.A system! And to Marium for looking after the catering (and for the teas and coffees!),

I would like to conclude by saying a particular thank you to all at the Gateshead Youth Assembly, without their help, support and enthusiasm, this event would not have been such a success.

**Stephen Scullion, Generations Together Volunteer Coordinator**



## Open space event

### Have your say on how hospital services are developed in Gateshead!

To make sure that hospital services in Gateshead best meet your needs now and in the years to come, we would like to invite you to a special event to have your say and input into how services are developed over the next three to five years.

The Gateshead Health open space event takes place on **Thursday 31 March** 2011 from 9.30am until 1pm at Gateshead Leisure Centre.

Senior nurses, managers and a variety of other staff will be on hand to hear your thoughts and answer your questions about what happens in the Queen Elizabeth, Dunston Hill and Bensham hospitals.

Yvonne Ormston, Director of Health Development and Modernisation, said: "This is the first time we have tried to hold an event of this size and scale and I hope it will be a very exciting morning. It is absolutely crucial that we listen to what patients, members and the public of Gateshead tell us about their experiences of using our services, what works well and what doesn't work so well. We also know that a hospital environment is a large and complicated place so this is your opportunity to ask questions of a large number of staff who will be on hand to help you. I look forward to meeting as many members as possible at the event."

To book your place either email [comms@ghnt.nhs.uk](mailto:comms@ghnt.nhs.uk) and state your area of interest or telephone the communications team on 0191 445 6120 or 0191 445 3561.

### "A Celebration of the Generations Together (Technology Exchange) Project"

**Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> March (St Patricks Day!) from 12 noon to 4pm**

To thank all who have participated, volunteered or those who may wish to celebrate the culmination of the work undertaken from the Generations Together (Technology Exchange) Project, we will be holding a celebration at Felling Social Club (Concert Room).

Come along and join us for an afternoon of music, fun and friendship.

**Free entry and refreshments**

For more information contact Stephen scullion on **0191 438 1721** or email [stephen.scullion@btconnect.com](mailto:stephen.scullion@btconnect.com)



## Church Chuckles

### *These sentences (allegedly) appeared in church bulletins*

- *The Fasting and Prayer Conference includes meals*
- *Morning sermon 'Jesus walks on the water' - Evening sermon 'Searching for Jesus'*
- *Weight Watchers will meet at 7pm at the First Presbyterian Church. Please use large double doors at the side entrance.*
- *Please place your donation in the envelope provided, along with the deceased person you wish to remember.*
- *This evening there will be hymn singing in the park. Bring a blanket and be prepared to sin .*
- *Potluck supper Sunday 5pm. Prayers and medication to follow.*
- *Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of your unwanted items. Bring your husbands along.*
- *The evening sermon tonight is 'What is Hell?' come along early and listen to our choir practice.*
- *Will the Low Self Esteem Support group which meets at 7pm please use the back door.*

## Census 2011

A census is a count of the population. We have had one in the UK every ten years to find out more about who we are as a nation. Everyone is asked to tell the government a bit about themselves to help census users decide how best to plan, fund and deliver the everyday services we all need, like housing, education, healthcare and transport. Census day **is 27 March 2011**. You need to complete your questionnaire on or around this date so that a snapshot of the population as it stands on one day – to give a consistent picture for the whole country.

## Census History

During the first 100 years of census taking, the population of England and Wales grew more than threefold, to around 32 million and a further 4.5 million or so in Scotland, where a separate census has been carried out since 1861. From 1911 onwards, rapid social change, scientific breakthroughs and major world events impacted the structure of the population. A fire that destroyed census records in 1931 and the declaration of war in 1939, made the 1951 census hugely significant in recording more than 20 years of change over one of the most turbulent periods in British history.

## Some Key Facts Throughout the Decades

- 1801** The Battle of Copenhagen
- 1811** The prince of Wales is named Regent to act for King George III, now insane
- 1821** Napoleon Bonaparte dies in exile
- 1831** London Bridge is opened by King William IV
- 1841** The United Kingdom formally occupies Hong Kong
- 1851** Window Tax abolished
- 1861** Martin Doyle is the last person to be hanged for attempted murder
- 1871** The Royal Albert hall is opened by Queen Victoria
- 1881** SS Ceylon begins first round the world cruise from Liverpool
- 1891** Jack the Ripper's last victim murdered on Friday 13th 1891
- 1901** Queen Victoria dies
- 1911** Roald Amundsen become the first man to reach South Pole
- 1921** Albert Einstein wins Nobel Prize for Physics
- 1931** Stanley Matthews makes his football debut with Stoke City
- 1941** No Census took place due to the Second World War
- 1951** Randolph Turpin defeated Sugar Ray Robinson
- 1961** The Beatles play at the Cavern Club for the first time
- 1971** The UK goes Decimal
- 1981** The first London Marathon takes place
- 1991** Rock group Queen singer Freddie Mercury dies aged 45
- 2001** Beatles guitarist George Harrison dies age 58



## **A NEW CAMPAIGN TO END LONELINESS: THE HIDDEN KILLER OF OLDER PEOPLE**

Five organisations are joining forces to fight isolation and loneliness in older people, which research suggests is as great a threat to health as smoking and as much of a threat as obesity.



The Campaign to End Loneliness was launched on February 1st by Independent Age, Age UK, Counsel and Care, and WRVS.

A survey carried out by the Campaign's found that fewer than 1 in 5 people have ever seen or heard information about loneliness as a health risk and fewer than 1 in 3 who work in the health and social care professions have. This hidden public health threat often goes untreated and it is vital that health professionals are alert to the two-way links between poor health and loneliness and are able to make connections in diagnosis and treatment.

Andrew Barnett, Director of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, the Campaign's founder funder, said: "Loneliness is something which affects us all but older people are particularly vulnerable to becoming isolated, through loss of friends and family, loss of mobility or reduction in income. We need to consider not just the practical but the emotional and psychological implications of growing numbers of older people within our communities."

"The problems of loneliness and isolation need to be put on an equal footing with any other condition associated with ageing. Ending loneliness should be part of the solution to the challenge of reforming care and support. Action is needed now to end loneliness. We look forward to developing strong partnerships with other committed groups to tackle this blight on society that is threatening the lives of older people today."

**This newsletter was produced with support from :**



### **Would you like to be famous... well almost!!**

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



## Centenary of The Felling Mine Disaster

The Felling Mine Disaster was one of the first major mining accidents in England claiming 92 lives on 25th May 1812.

An explosion in the John Pit erupted at 11.30am causing a fire which quickly spread to the William Pit.

After several rescue attempts were made, the pit was sealed on 27th May in order to extinguish the fire. By September 19th all of the bodies had been recovered including those of boys as young as 8.

Local resident and Assembly member **Tom Wood**, is campaigning to commemorate the centenary of the event next year. Tom is appealing for information on the whereabouts or drawings of the Felling Miners Banner in use during 1812.

Tom is also looking for any information to help him trace the family of the youngest boys who perished during the disaster.

They were:

Michael Hunter aged 8  
 Thomas Gordon aged 8  
 Thomas Craggs aged 9

Please contact Tom Wood on  
 0191 469 5461  
 or contact us on 0191 438 1721

email The Assembly at:

admin.assembly@btconnect.com  
 or  
 kerry.pattison@btconnect.com

## Breast Cancer Risk Rises to 1 in 8

New figures published by Cancer Research UK reveal that the lifetime risk of getting breast cancer has risen from one woman in nine to one in eight with the biggest rise in rates being seen among women aged between 50 and 69. In 2008 around 22,900 women aged between 50 and 69 were diagnosed with breast cancer – making up almost half of the total number of cases. Around 15,700 cases were diagnosed in women over 70 and 9,100 cases in women aged 25-49.

Cutting back on alcohol by keeping within the recommended limits of no more than 14 units a week (a small drink a day) helps. Taking more exercise and eating a diet high in fibre but low in saturated fat can help maintain a healthy weight – which in turn reduces breast cancer risk.

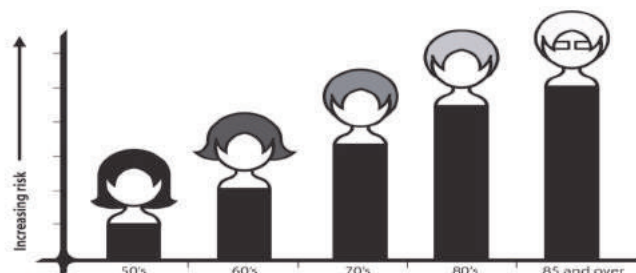
Women are advised to discuss hormone replacement therapy with their doctor as long-term use can raise breast cancer risk. Mammograms will pick up breast cancers early on before they can be felt as a lump or spotted through other visible changes and we know that the earlier a cancer is detected the more successful treatment is likely to be so women can benefit by taking up invitations to breast screening.

And there is also good news on breast cancer survival. Almost two out of every three women with breast cancer now survive their disease beyond 20 years. And more than three-quarters of women diagnosed with breast cancer survive for at least 10 years or more, showing the importance of early detection and treatment.

## Your risk of breast cancer increases as you get older...

Keep going for screening if you are over 50.

Over 70? Contact your local screening centre for an appointment.



Report any changes to your breasts to your GP.



## Have Your Say on Caring Today!

**CARERS** have the chance to contribute to a major piece of research by Gateshead Carers Association, which aims to influence policy and services. The survey aims to find out, who Gateshead's carers are, who they care for, what issues they face in their daily lives and what services they value. Information from the survey will support carers across Gateshead in a number of ways. It will strengthen GCA's ability to campaign on their behalf and help to attract funding to run new services for carers.

The survey asks carers a wide range of questions – from who they care for to what services they provide and access on a regular basis. It also asks how caring has affected carers' health, finances and quality of life – and how the current recession and plans to cut public spending affect them. Carers completing the survey have the chance to be entered into a prize draw to win £50-worth of shopping vouchers.

Judith Dunn, GCA's Campaigns and Development Officer, said: "The current GCA survey updates and broadens the work carried out as part of the 2006 Gateshead Carers Survey.

"It is estimated that 5.7 million people in Britain – and more than 20,000 people in Gateshead - are carers. Many of those people are "hidden" carers. They don't identify themselves as carers even though they provide support to a relative or friend who is ill, disabled, elderly, in need of emotional support or has a substance misuse problem. It is only by identifying and talking to carers in the community that GCA can truly provide the services, which carers value, and help to influence the policy makers, who can make a difference to their daily lives."

Gateshead Carers Association is also undertaking an in-depth survey into carers' household income and expenses. For more information and a copy of the surveys, please call: Judith Dunn on (0191) 490 0121 or email: [judith.dunn@gatesheadcarers.com](mailto:judith.dunn@gatesheadcarers.com).

To complete the survey, log on to:  
<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/gatesheadcarerssurvey2010>  
or [www.gatesheadcarers.com](http://www.gatesheadcarers.com)



Since the introduction of national crime recording standards in 2002, Gateshead has seen year on year reductions in the overall levels of recorded crime. Gateshead is currently ranked as second joint best performing local authority for all recorded crime compared to 15 most similar groups.

This year to date there were 694 fewer crimes in Gateshead—equating to a 8% reduction, which was on top of a 14.5% reduction during 09/10, 5.4% reduction during 08/09 and 15.6% reduction during 07/08.

This is reassuring news especially for older residents of Gateshead, who we know have express their worries about their safety. In a recent survey conducted by The Assembly 'The fear of going out at night' ranked highly as a concern with 67% of those surveyed.

Among comments received from our members, it is clear that local residents welcome information on just what is being done to make their community safer. 55% of those surveyed favoured discussing issues through regular meetings with the Police and Local Authority, such as improving local facilities including street lighting, 61% for those surveyed agreed.

Full details on crime figures can be viewed at: Northumbria Police Community safety update : [www.northumbria.police.uk](http://www.northumbria.police.uk)

For further information on our recent survey " Still Listening to the Voice" contact Kerry Pattison on 438 1721



## DOWN

# MEMORY LANE

### What is a Grandparent?

Taken from a class of 8 year olds. You'll love it:

Grandparents are a lady and a man who have no little children of their own. They like other peoples.'

When they take us for walks, they slow down past things like pretty leaves and caterpillars.

They show us and talk to us about the colours of the flowers and also why we shouldn't step on 'cracks.'

They don't say, 'Hurry up.'

They wear glasses and funny underwear.

They can take their teeth and gums out.

They answer questions like 'Why isn't God married?' and 'How come dogs chase cats?'

When they read to us, they don't skip. They don't mind if we ask for the same story over again.

Everybody should try to have a grandmother, especially if you don't have television because they are the only grownups who like to spend time with us.

They know we need a snack time before bed time, and they say prayers with us and kiss us even when we've naughty.

As mentioned in the last issue of The Voice, we have now set up two Reminiscence groups which meet on Thursdays at the Assembly.

- **Men's group** **10am to 12pm**
- **Women's group** **1pm to 3pm**

All of the sessions are FREE and FREE refreshments are provided.

One of our projects this term is to try to put together a 'Scrapbook of Memories' i.e. Personal reminiscences, stories, articles, poems, photographs and even recordings.

We would like to collect as many memories as we can from people in Gateshead and we would like as many members of The Assembly to send in their stories.

The following are some of the suggested topics for your reminiscence:

- *Home and family life*
- *The War and evacuation*
- *Schooldays*
- *Carnivals and street parties*
- *My first job*
- *Ration Books*
- *Childhood games*
- *The Co-op*
- *Wash Day*
- *The Pictures - the flea pit!*
- *Holidays, trips and outings*
- *Dances - The Oxford*

So if you are interested and have any contributions, please send them to us here at The Assembly office marked for the attention of Ray Wildsmith, Local History Tutor. If you have any items which such as original photographs which you would prefer not to post or other items which cannot be posted please contact us. All original items received will be returned.


Reminiscence groups run until 31st March, everyone is welcome to join. Please contact us on **0191 438 1721** for more information.



As part of the Safer Gateshead Project, we are currently working with the Tyne & Wear Fire and Rescue Service to try and establish how many homes in Gateshead have working smoke alarms and, if so, whether or not they were fitted by the Fire Service as part of a Home Safety Check.

We would be grateful, therefore, if you would kindly complete and return the tear-off slip below in the envelope provided. When all slips have been collected, the information will then be forwarded to the Fire Service. If you would like any further information, please contact Susan Byrne, Safer Gateshead Development Worker, at the Assembly.

**Please note: If you would like to arrange a FREE home safety check, please call Freephone 0800 032 7777**

----- *cut along the dotted line* ----- 

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**POSTCODE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please tick the appropriate box and return this slip in the Freepost envelope provided**

**Do you live in:**

Rented property	<input type="checkbox"/>
Private property	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sheltered accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/>

**How many storeys does your property have:**

**Do you have a working smoke alarm:** Yes  No

**If yes, how many:**

**Are they fitted:** Downstairs only  Upstairs only  Both

**Which room (s) are they fitted in:**

**Were they fitted as part of a Home Safety Check by the Fire Service:** Yes  No

**Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Gateshead Older People's Assembly Membership Form

Name: Mr / Mrs / Ms:

Address:

Address:

E-mail:

Signature:

Postcode:

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?

Vision     Speech     Hearing     Mobility

Other ( Please State)

How did you hear about us?

Many thanks, please return form to :

Gateshead Older People's Assembly  
65 High Street, Felling, Gateshead, NE10 9LU  
Telephone : 0191 438 1721 Fax : 0191 469 5648