



The Elders Council of Newcastle

Annual Report & Accounts 2020/21



Photo Jack Foster

Foreword by the Chair of the Elders Council



On behalf of the Board of Trustees I am once again privileged to share with you the Annual Report of the Elders Council.

We do hope that you enjoy reading about our work. I am proud of the way in which we have sustained the work of the Elders Council over the last 12 months.

As an organisation, we did not stand still but quickly re-organised ourselves. Staff and key volunteers have worked from home to ensure that we carried out our statutory responsibilities, kept in touch with our members in whatever way we could and continued to deliver the work of the organisation.

We have kept our membership informed through the Echo, our quarterly magazine, twice a month e-bulletins and the twice a month radio programme, Older Voices, as well as telephoning the members who are not on line, to let them know we were thinking of them and supporting them if they needed any help. We successfully applied for funds to enable us to support older people to get on line, realising what a vital life line this has been for many of us.

All of this happened because the teams of Elders Council members who do this work built up new skills. We have learned how to have meetings on Zoom or Teams and to deliver webinars. Many of us had never heard of any of these mechanisms before March 2020! We joined efforts with other local organisations, and even across the UK, to discuss important issues and work together for the benefit of our members, and all older people in Newcastle.

In this Report you will find the Annual Accounts, which have been Independently Examined and approved. You will also note that as a result of careful financial management during this pandemic year, a reserve has been built up. This enabled us to second a part time member of staff for six months, to help focus on our future development plans and resources, and demonstrated the need for

more staff and volunteer capacity at the heart of the organisation to enable us to achieve our mission, which is to enable older people to have a voice and develop a city that is a good place to grow old in. We are now considering how to reshape our core programme so that we can meet many more people, and gain a better understanding of the issues of those who have a limited voice or none at all.

We are now in a position to look forward to 2021-2022 but we do not yet know how the future months will develop. We know that some of you are raring to go out but many others are not so confident.

Many of the meeting places of old have not re-opened or if they have there are very strict regulations still in place to protect us, such as mask wearing, limited numbers and social distancing. We will pay close attention to how the situation develops and, in whatever way we can, we will continue to raise the voices of older people to fight to ensure that we can all enjoy a better, later life. We very much look forward to future opportunities to meet up with you all. to hear your stories and ideas and to continue our work to make Newcastle a great place for older people. **Anne Raffle**

Thank You

Nick Lambert, Trustee and Treasurer of the Elders Council for the last 4 years, has stepped down from the Board for personal reasons.

We wish to thank Nick for this commitment to EC, and the way in which he steered the Board of Trustees in all matters of finance, ensuring stability for the forthcoming year.

John Telfer, Older People Friendly City lead, will be stepping down as a Trustee in July, after completing 9 years. We thank him for his contribution to the Elders Council and older people of Newcastle.

On behalf of EC members, I would like to thank **our Board of Trustees & staff** for ensuring that the Elders Council continued to function successfully despite the restrictions imposed by Covid.

Our Year in Numbers

361
members
reached by
telephone

3
'Doorbells'
Webinars to
90 people

10
Board
Meetings
All online

22
Older Voices
broadcasts
many online
via Zoom

3
Magazines in
hard copy and
1 online + 1
Creative Pack

29
e-Bulletins all
online

1 Creative
Writing
Residency
of 15 sessions

13
Wellbeing for
Life Sessions
all online (at
Jesmond)

EC
represented
on **22**
Stakeholder
Groups

EC
represented
on **5**
Research
Projects

EC
represented
on **2**
Research
Networks

2
EC Project
Reports
Published

SPOTLIGHT

In this section of the report, we are shining a light on examples of our work which illustrate how we adapted to the challenges we faced during COVID 19.

They demonstrate our commitment to continuing our work, despite the challenges, and to learning new ways of doing things.

Managing the Home Care Circus is the title of our report on the investigation we undertook into older people's experiences of home care. We completed our face-to-face conversations with older people and carers prior to the pandemic; worked on the analysis of the data and launched the report at the end of 2020.

The feedback has been remarkable and has led to a number of invitations to join other national research groups having similar conversations.

We also worked with Digital Voice on producing an animation of the key messages from the report. We thought this would be a more interesting way of engaging both older people and professionals in improving our access home care.



Our 'Older Voices' show must go on ...

Our Elders Council radio group has been running since 2007, broadcasting once a month with a programme devised and presented by Elders Council members. When the pandemic hit, the group quickly learnt how to deliver the programme on Zoom rather than from a studio and now deliver a 2-hour programme twice a month. The show, which is broadcast on NOVA radio, includes interviews with guests on a very wide range of topics as well as regular features on green issues, Gardening, culture, notices of events & 'thought for the fortnight'.

Elders Council is also a member of the **Later Life Radio and Audio Co-operative (LLARC)**, an international network of community radio stations combatting ageism and increasing the representation of older adults in broadcasting. All the Older Voices broadcasts are available on <https://www.mixcloud.com/LLARC/> so that you can listen again. Elders Council was also instrumental in supporting LLARC to deliver the #HousingMatters series during lockdown, which includes a rich mix of interviews with experts in the field of housing.



EC arranged a joint **Age Friendly City Centre Project** with students from Newcastle University. The students did some of the leg work for us and engaged with us in a series of on-line meetings where we discussed what we liked about the city centre and where we thought there could be improvements. The students provided a comprehensive report and presented their findings to us alongside officers and politicians from Newcastle City Council. We now have a very useful summary document with which to progress a continuing conversation.

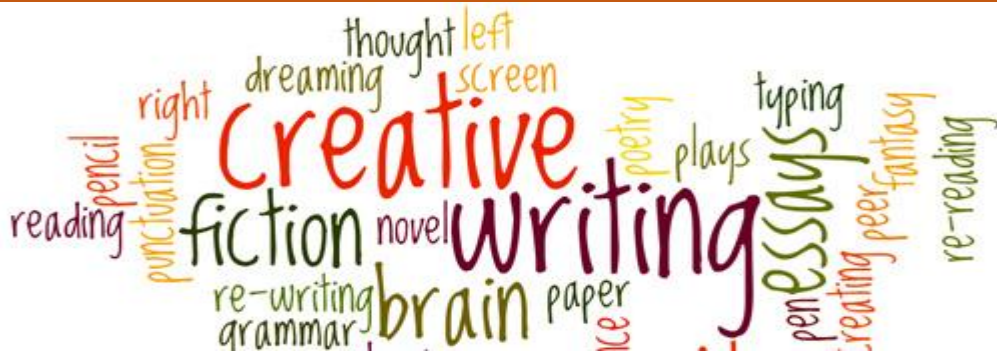
Jesmond Wellbeing Group

The Wellbeing group were unable to continue meeting in Jesmond Library during lockdown, so they set up sessions from home to meet with the local community for those who could join online. These meetings have continued twice a month, not only bringing people together but sharing invaluable information such as, keeping safe in the home and online, local news and events, where to go on local walks, where to get help safely. They continually review the situation and look forward to be able to meet in person as they are able.



Doorbells is a partnership project between Elders Council, Care and Repair England, Skimstone Arts and Northumbria University, with funding from the Rayne Foundation. Our aim is to encourage older people to explore options for where and how they want to live in later life. The starting point is a performance by Skimstone Arts in which Kathleen starts to muse on her options. Performances are followed by small discussion groups to

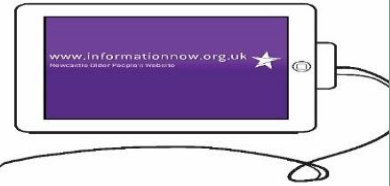
give people the opportunity to explore ideas. In March 2020 Skimstone Arts produced a short film of Kathleen's experiences of life under lockdown. We used this short film in three successful webinars and a presentation at Sunderland's Older People's Day event. The insights from our discussions have been compiled into a report by Northumbria University and form the basis of the key messages we will give to policy makers, service providers and older people.



Elders Council was privileged to be partner in a Newcastle City Council artist residency from November 2020 to March 2021.

As a group of older people, we enjoyed a 15-week creative writing course on Zoom, hosted by local artists, during which members wrote about the ups and downs of life during lockdown in various forms of writing (essay, poetry, both serious and amusing). We laughed and cried as we listened to each other's work, and have been amazed at what was achieved.

Staying Connected



We have also made great efforts to help some of our members get online and stay safe at the same time. Northumbria University Students ran their IT workshops for those people who needed additional help with computers, laptops or smart phones. We received some funding from the Postcode lottery Community Fund to buy equipment, sim cards and tech support. Together with Mental Health Concern and Digital Inclusion Newcastle we have a programme to help older people to get started on-line.

Supported by players of



Awarded funds from



Throughout the pandemic we have kept you all in touch through our various communications. We managed to send out the e -Bulletins as normal and the Magazines too except issue 89 as we couldn't get that one printed. There were postings on social media giving you the most up-to-date information and opportunities for activities and helping in research projects.



Thanks to our Sponsors

The Elders Council wish to thank Newcastle City Council; The Post Code Community Trust; The Rayne Foundation and Care and Repair England for their support throughout this most different and difficult year. It has been truly appreciated.

Treasurer's Report for the financial year ended 31 March 2021

Our income for the year amounted to £74,124 in total, compared to £67,183 in the previous year.

We received a grant from Newcastle City Council of £44,000 and it has been confirmed that this level of funding will continue in our new financial year. Income from services amounted to £12,251. The main amounts came from Newcastle University for our involvement in its Oral Nutrition Project, from WEA and from Care and Repair England towards the Doorbells Project.

We were fortunate to receive a grant of £15,600 from the Postcode Community Trust for the Staying Connected Project, started in the final quarter of the year and scheduled to be completed by the end of 2021. We are grateful to members and supporters for donations and legacies.

The entire financial year was shaped by the pandemic and this meant that our expenditure in many areas was substantially lower than in previous years. However, many of our activities have moved from the real world to the virtual world. The Elders Council has been as busy as ever successfully supporting older people in Newcastle and participating actively in many affairs related to the ageing population. There has been a focus on helping older people staying connected, and also in maintaining engagement through traditional printed media.

As a result of the lower spend on member support and on working groups, there is a surplus of income over expenditure of £13,882 for the year on general (unrestricted) activities. In addition to this, restricted funding received in the year of £13,510 has been carried forward to meet costs which will arise in the new financial year.

We are in very good financial health, with net assets of £124,100 at the end of the year. This puts us in a strong position to meet the challenges after lockdown and are able to start organising face to face activities.

The Board has reviewed its policy on reserves in the light of the present economic climate and agreed a prudent level should be equivalent to 12 months of working capital. At the end of our financial year the balance of unrestricted reserves was in excess of that target. We are conscious this situation could change significantly. The Board will do as much as it can to mitigate against this, it will not allow those financial considerations to inhibit the pursuit of the goals that have been set for the organisation.

After three years as Treasurer, I am stepping down and I am very happy to pass my responsibilities to Keith Williamson who I know will be a very worthy successor.

Nick Lambert

THE ELDERS COUNCIL OF NEWCASTLE LIMITED
A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE
FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2020/21	2019/20
INCOME				
Newcastle City Council	44,000		44,000	44,000
Income from Services	11,251	1,000	12,251	5,184
Donations	1,551		1,551	1,283
Legacy	--		--	14,715
Grant	500	15,600	16,100	2,000
Interest	152	--	152	--
Sundry Income	70	--	70	--
	£ 57,524	£ 16,600	£ 74,124	£ 67,182
EXPENDITURE				
MEMBER SUPPORT				
Training & Conferences	50		50	120
AGM & Other member support	--		--	1,272
Booked Transport	30	--	30	614
	£ 80	--	80	£ 2,006
PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE				
Newsletter Publication	3,327		3,327	3,792
Newsletter Postage	2,303		2,303	2,948
Publishing, Printing	552	360	912	1,181
W. Groups & Other Events	--	2,730	2,730	1,593
	£ 6,182	£ 3,090	£ 9,272	£ 9,514
GOVERNANCE EXPENDITURE				
Insurance	540		540	528
Professional Fees	1,428	--	1,428	--
	£ 1,968	--	£ 1,968	£ 528
GENERAL EXPENDITURE				
Rent, Service Charge & Phone	3,327		3,327	4,396
Staff Costs	29,721		29,721	34,240
IT & Website Costs	2,197		2,197	2,129
Sundries	167	--	167	101
	£ 35,412	--	£ 35,412	£40,866
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ 43,642	£ 3,090	£ 46,732	£52,914
NET INCOME	13,882	13,510	27,392	14,268
TRANSFER	1,062	(1,062)	--	--
	14,944	12,448	27,392	14,268
FUNDS AT 31 MARCH 2020	95,646	1,062	96,708	82,440
FUNDS AT 31 MARCH 2021	£110,590	£13,510	£124,100	£96,708

COMPANY No, 6188907

CHARITY NUMBER 1122424

THE ELDERS COUNCIL OF NEWCASTLE LIMITED

BALANCE SHEET

31 MARCH 2021

	2021		2020	
FIXED ASSET				
Computer at Cost		701		--
CURRENT ASSETS				
Debtors & Prepayments	6,612		858	
Cash at Bank				
Deposit Account	67,836		50,000	
Current Account	50,122		46,852	
	124,570		97,710	
CREDITORS				
Amounts falling due within one year	1,171	123,399	1,002	96,708
		£124,100		£ 96,708
ACCUMULATED FUNDS				
Unrestricted		110,590		95,646
Restricted		13,510		1,062
		£ 124,100		£ 96,708

Independent Examiner's Report to the Members
of The Elders Council of Newcastle Limited

I report on the accounts of the company for the year ended 31 March 2021.

The trustees (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under Section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 and that an independent examination is needed.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:-

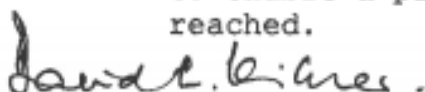
- a) examine the accounts under Section 43 of the 1993 Act;
- b) follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act;
- c) state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and the seeking of explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and, consequently, no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present 'a true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent Examiner's Report

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- a) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements
 - i) to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 386 of the Companies Act 2006 and
 - ii) to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (revised 2005) have not been met or
- b) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



David L Kilner FCA
Chartered Accountant
7 Eldon Square
Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7JG
12 May 2021