

North East Pensioners Association

Regional impact report on issues affecting pensioners wellbeing in May 2023 including: 1. Care Homes & Housing, 2. Economy, 3. Health & Welfare, 4. The NHS, 5. Politics, 6. Poverty, 7. Security and 8. Transport.

(Note for more reading click [underlined](#) words)



1. CARE HOMES/CARERS & HOUSING.

The Renters Reform Bill. This entered parliament in May 23 but is unlikely to become law for at least another 12 months. Importantly it includes the scrapping of [section 21](#) 'no fault' evictions ([Shelter](#)).



The average price of property coming to the market jumps by 1.8% (+£6,647) in May. This reached a new record of £372,894 in a delayed response to the higher-than-expected level of market activity since the start of the year. ([Rightmove](#)).

Shotley Park Residential Home, to close. Rising costs, the increasing price of energy and food, have made the business untenable. 38 residents some with dementia will need to find new homes in 30 days. 63 employees will be out of work. The care home becomes the latest casualty of the cost-of-living crisis (N/Echo).

Benwell pensioners boiling mad over £200 monthly bills increase for all-year-round heating. Residents say they "can't breathe" in the communal corridors of Manisty House as the radiators are never turned off ([Chronicle](#)).

2. ECONOMY.

Barclays bank slashes opening hours at most of its remaining branches. This Announcement comes as the bank plans to shut 122 branches, including Prudhoe, Washington, Alnwick, Seahouses and Haltwhistle ([Chronicle](#)).

UK GDP Forecast. UK GDP growth are among the lowest in the G7 for next 2 years. Yet PM claims that the International Monetary Fund "is now forecasting that we will have stronger growth than Germany, France and Italy" but this is by 2028 ([Full fact](#)).

Chancellor backs interest rate rise despite fears of recession. Owning a home is getting more expensive as lenders begin putting up mortgage rates, spooked by stubbornly high inflation figures ([Channel 4](#)).

Water companies are to invest £10bn to stop sewage spills. The public will ultimately foot the bill. Charging consumers for sewerage improvement works is "the only sustainable way" of providing funding, Water UK has said (ITV). So polluters don't pay?

Northumbrian Water £6m of funding. This to help reduce leaks across the UK (S/Echo).



Ofgem energy price cap falls to £2,074 in July but households will see little relief. Consumers will still be paying almost twice as much for gas and electricity as in October 2021 ([Guardian](#)).

3. HEALTH AND WELFARE

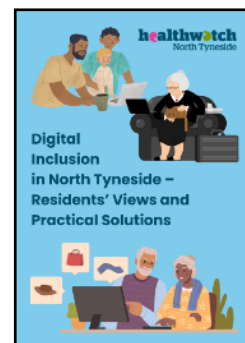
A 90-year-old man with dementia, threatened with bailiffs after his wife tried to cancel a mobile phone contract that he could no longer use. Dementia UK said [its helpline](#) receives many calls from families unable to cancel or amend contracts of a relative with memory loss. The contract was cancelled by the firm after the Observer intervened ([Observer](#)).

South Tyneside charity Key's Community Bus initiative. The bus will be a hub for the community. In addition to affordable, good-quality food on the lower deck, specialist advice services and community activities will be offered on the upper deck thanks to a National Lottery grant ([Key](#)).

Blood tests may spare cancer patients chemo. A major bowel cancer trial is examining whether the test can show if surgery has removed all of the tumour and thus avoid Chemotherapy ([BBC](#)).

Diabetes UK said that there were more than 7,000 excess deaths in England linked to the condition in 2022, (13% higher than pre-pandemic levels). They said urgent action is needed to tackle the missed checks and health inequalities ([BMJ](#)).

Digital Inclusion Report - Residents' views and practical solutions. This is a small study offering real insight into getting more inclusion: includes identifying how technology can help, support to get kit, easy access to information with one stop shops and basic frontline assistance within the community with one to one support ([Healthwatch North Tyneside](#)).



4. NHS

NHS North East and Cumbria ICB £49m deficit by the end of the year. They are working on plans to recover this over the next 3-5 years. ([Integrated Care Board](#)). See also page p100 of the ICB finance report ([ICB performance report](#)).

Making complaints about primary care services. The 2 ways are: a) to the healthcare provider e.g. a GP surgery or dental surgery providing the service or b) from July to the commissioner of the service i.e. [North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board](#) instead of NHS England ([Healthwatch Northumberland](#)).

Concerns raised over Newcastle Hospital Trust's missed cancer targets. The data showed that just 53.1 per cent of the 172 patients in the category were seen within the target of 62 days, against a national target of 85 per cent ([HexhamCourant](#)).



Heartbox. 29-year-old from Newcastle was the first patient in the UK to receive a donor heart transported via a new method, called the XVIVO Heartbox. It is hoped that the new method could improve heart function after surgery, and increase the number of successful transplants ([NHS](#)).

Racism towards Newcastle Hospitals staff increasing from patients - and their own colleagues. A leading member of staff said "racism is increasing". The Newcastle Hospitals chief has warned her organisation "has a long way still to go" when it comes to staff equality across race, disability and sexuality ([Chronicle](#)).

5. POLITICS

Voluntary supermarket food price caps. Government proposes charging the lowest possible amount for some basic products like bread and milk. The British Retail Consortium said the measures would not make a "jot of difference" to pricing and warned they could thwart efforts to cut inflation ([N/Echo](#))



There's another invisible injustice for working women – the gender pension gap. It's partly the inevitable result of the gender pay gap, but the sums are much bigger. Outside the state pension, pensions come in roughly two forms, private and workplace, and women are being let down in both areas. The trade union Prospect estimates that the percentage difference in retirement income for females and males between 2020-21 is 40.5%. This urgently needs to be fixed ([Guardian](#)).



Tyneside Irish Centre
Thursday 15 June

Listening Roadshow



Come share your story!

We want the Government to create a Commissioner for Older People and Ageing.

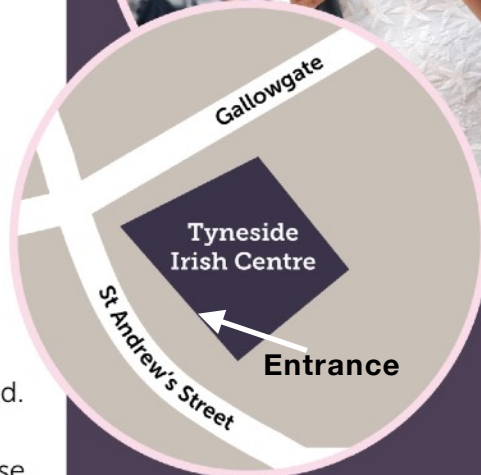
We'd like to hear from you:

- about the issues that older people are facing
- how you want these to be represented and promoted.

We hear from lots of older people, who aren't having the retirement they'd hoped for, whether that's because of getting the right care and support or money worries. Dealing with these difficulties in later life can leave you feeling invisible and powerless.

So we're taking our campaign to cities across the UK, to hear directly from older people about the issues they're facing and how a Commissioner for Older People and Ageing can be the vital first step towards making the UK the best place in the world to grow older.

We'll take those experiences straight to those at the top, to demonstrate that the needs of older people aren't being given the attention they deserve.



Tyneside Irish Centre

43 Gallowgate
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 4SG

12-4pm (drop-in)

Find out more about our campaign for a Commissioner for Older People and Ageing here: independentage.org/commissioner.



Commissioner
for Older People
& Ageing

NEPA along with many other organisations are supporting this campaign and will be there Thursday 15 June from 12.00 to 4pm at the Tyneside Irish Centre.

6. POVERTY.

700,000 households missed rent or mortgage payments in April according to a Which Survey. With the Bank of England predicted to raise interest rates again next Thursday, consumers will continue to face financial pressures throughout 2023 ([Which](#)).

'It's a tax on disability'. Rising UK social care costs force many into debt. Charities and disabled people's organisations have told the Observer that disabled care users are being pushed into severe financial hardship with some forced to go without essential home care because they can't afford the fees ([Observer](#)).

7. SECURITY

The 4 most convincing scams according to Which this year. For those on line.

- **Fake appeals for help** - can involve getting “likes” to authenticate dodgy projects which will have nothing to do with say, anybody missing.
- **Beware pig butchering** - can involve grooming before you invest.
- **PayPal Scam.** Can involve compromising your account and paying out to some fake enterprise e.g. HMRC.
- **Fake app alert.** Don't assume anything about Apps. Check them all out no matter the source.

New laws have been published to help tackle fake reviews and unfair practices online. This brings attention to creating a more transparent and trustworthy online environment for consumers with the Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Bill ([Which](#)).



New technology put in place to stop scammers preying on elderly people in Northumberland. Age UK Northumberland has partnered with Lloyds Bank and with technology firm, [trueCall](#) to fit call-screening equipment in the homes of vulnerable elderly people ([Chronicle](#)).

8. TRANSPORT.

TransPennine Express loses rail franchise. Services will be taken under public control after a long period of “continuous cancellations” said the Transport Secretary ([BusinessLive](#)).

Road deaths in Britain rose 9% last year, leading to calls for the Government to give the issue “the attention and resources it deserves”. Department for Transport (DfT) figures show 1,695 people were killed in crashes in 2022, up from 1,558 a year earlier ([Independent](#)).

Metro Security. Nexus security will be deployed on the majority of trains to tackle antisocial behaviour, taking the security presence on the network to its highest ever level. Security personnel will be on board almost every service from 7pm every day ([S/Echo](#)).

Metro's new train fleet. More efficient, more reliable, more environmentally friendly. The whole Metro fleet is being replaced with 46 new trains. The first train enters passenger service in late 2023. The new trains will arrive in stages. As each new train arrives an old one will be removed ([NEXUS](#)).



Sean Fahey
NEPA Secretary

**If you want to know more contact the NEPA Secretary at :
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Feel free to share.**