

# North East Pensioners Association

Regional impact report on issues affecting pensioners wellbeing in OCTOBER 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)



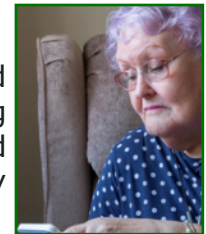
## 1. CARE HOMES/CARERS & HOUSING.

**A ban on "no-fault" evictions in England will be indefinitely delayed.** This until after the court system is reformed, the government has announced. Ministers have been promising to end the right of landlords to evict tenants without needing a reason since 2019 ([BBC](#)).

**Councils in England paying £1.7bn a year.** This to house people in temporary homes. Annual cost would be enough to build about 100,000 new homes over five years, as families forced into cramped hostels and B&Bs ([Guardian](#)).

## 2.ECONOMY

**The Autumn Statement.** This will be delivered on Wednesday 22nd November. Ask your MP to ask the Chancellor to extend Cost of Living Payments to every older person receiving an income-based benefit, and provide extra financial support to reduce the impact of high energy prices this winter ([Click Independent Age](#)).



**Newcastle Airport wins top award.** It has been named airport of the year at the roots world conference hosted in Istanbul, Turkey ([Chronicle](#)).

**Greggs.** The company is on course for a record year of new shop openings and expects to add between 135 and 145 new shops this year ([Retail Gazette](#)).

## 3.HEALTH AND WELFARE



**Pensioner Winter Fuel Payments.** These ranges between £250 and £600, depending on how old you are and who you live with. Those born before the 25/09/43 will get £600. Those born 24/09/57 will get £500 ([Bigissue](#)).

**UK pensions tax warning.** Don't get caught by a tax bill. State pensioners could be paying tax net next year. With the income tax threshold frozen at £12,570 since 2021-22, anyone with a state pension next year of more than £242 a week will have some tax to pay ([Guardian](#)).

**Veterans' Gateway.** This has an extensive range of [self-help resources](#), allowing veterans to search for help and advice independently on a range of issues such as housing, employment and finances - help line: 0808 802 1212 24/7 ([Royal British Legion](#)).



**Inequalities Northumberland Plan Webinar.** A series of videos short time limited to March 2024 ([NCC](#)). Well worth a look.

**Bobby Charltons hometown tribute to local hero who became an icon.** Ashington town Council expressed its deepest gratitude and admiration for Charlton and condolence to his family, following the announcement of his death ([allfootball](#)).



## 4.NHS

**Pioneering County Durham NHS mental health service.** This has reduced the distress levels of more than 3/4 of the people using the Derwent Distress, Brief Intervention Service ([NHS](#)).

**Never too old - Sexually transmitted infections home, testing kit.** If you are 18 or over and live in Northumberland or North Tyneside you can request a free STI home testing kit - [click here](#). Free confidential advice, support and treatment on all aspects of your sexual health. Tel 01912970441 or 01670 515151 ([NHS](#)).

**Call into Northumberland Healthwatch in-person events.** These at Bedlington, Ponteland, Alnwick, Blyth, Prudhoe and Morpeth. Speak to them in confidence, about your health and care services. ([Click here for Healthwatch details](#)). Tel. 03332 408468.

**Healthwatch North Tyneside feedback, centre.** Did you know you can review your recent experiences with health and social care services on their [website](#), email [info@hwnt.co.uk](mailto:info@hwnt.co.uk) or Tel. 0191 263 5321 ([Healthwatch](#)).



**Newcastle Hospitals new CEO.** Sir James Mackey has been appointed. He is a nationally recognised NHS leader with over 20 years' experience and a track record in leading high performing organisation ([NHS](#)).

## Our NHS and Social Care Needs TLC.

- Access to services remains a fundamental problem, for people with protected equality characteristics.

- Along the health and care journey, people are struggling to get the care they need when they need it.

- Over 7 million people on elective care waiting lists at June 2023.

- People who need treatment are struggling to get a referral from their GP.

- In the community, people are facing struggles with getting GP and dental appointments.

- Some are using urgent and emergency care services as the first point of contact, or not seeking help until their condition has worsened.

- At hospital, people are facing longer delays in getting the care they need.

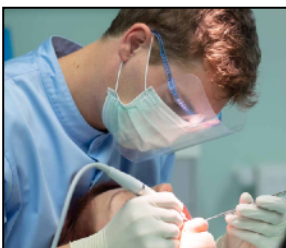
- Insufficient capacity in adult social care is continuing to contribute to delays in discharging people from hospital.

- Ongoing staffing and financial pressures in

residential and community services are having an impact on the quality of people's care, with some at greater risk of not receiving the care they need ([CQC](#)).

**Care Quality Commission report on the state of health care and adult social care in England 2022/23.**

**Another NHS Private Enterprise.** Health Secretary plans to give a £480m, multi-year contract to US spy tech corporation [Palantir](#). The National Pensioners Convention calls on him design a NHS data platform we can trust, which keeps the NHS public, respects patient choice, and protects privacy ([NPC](#)).



**Lack of dental access says Ashington MP.** Between April 2022 and March 2023, 410 patients were seen in Northumbria Specialist Emergency Care Hospital's A&E with a dental abscess, caused by tooth decay, and 80 with dental caries ([N/Gazette](#)).



## 5. POLITICS

**Covid Inquiry.** Former PM was described as “creating chaos and undermining everyone” by key aides in WhatsApp messages shown to the Inquiry. In a message sent by the former Cabinet Secretary, to the PM’s chief adviser, he said he was “at the end of my tether” with the PM ([Telegraph](#)).

### **Covid hearing headlines about how the elderly were viewed by those whom we trusted with our lives ([Skynews](#)).**

**Mr Johnson's attitude** to the elderly In particularly galling revelations for the families of those who died, **Mr Johnson's approach to older people** was raised during the hearings.

**Notes from the government's former chief scientist** Sir Patrick Vallance dated August 2020 described a “bonkers set of exchanges” with the prime minister, saying he was “obsessed with older people accepting their fate and letting the young get on with life and the economy going.

**The key scientific adviser wrote:** “[Mr Johnson] says his party 'thinks the whole thing is pathetic and COVID is just nature's way of dealing with old people - and I am not entirely sure I disagree with them. A lot of moderate people think it is a bit too much'.

**Another note from Sir Patrick** shown to the inquiry and dated December 2020, revealed the influence of the wider Tory party on decision making in Number 10, saying while the PM had acted early and “the public are with him”, a number of his MPs were not.



### **Older people**

*"A society that does not value its older people denies its roots & endangers its future. Let us strive to enhance their capacity to support themselves for as long as possible and, when they cannot do so anymore, to care for them"*

Nelson Mandela A message announcing 1999 as the United Nations International Year of Older Persons.

**Public Services Report by Institute for Government.** They say public services were performing worse than they did before the pandemic. This report, sets out the impact of the chancellor’s plans on four service areas: the NHS, schools, the criminal justice system and local government ([IFG](#)).

**Jarrow has been successful in securing this new ‘Long-Term Plan’ money.** The government's Long-Term Plan for Towns, backed by £1.1 billion overall, will drive ambitious plans to regenerate 55 towns around the United Kingdom over the long-term through Town Plans ([S/Gazette](#)).

**Councils in England face a funding gap of £4 billion.** This over the next two years the Local Government Association reveals today. This is a £1 billion increase since the LGA’s initial analysis in July as cost and demand pressures continue to rise ([LGA](#)).

**Tribute to Linda Arkley twice elected mayor of North Tyneside.** The current mayor said: “Hearing this sad news, my thoughts are with her husband, her wider family and friends, and the many people in North Tyneside who knew and loved her. ([NTC](#)).





## 6. POVERTY



**Destitution.** It's a word almost from another age, conjuring visions of desperate, grinding poverty. But it is a fact of life right now, for increasing numbers of people (approximately 3.8 m people), according to new research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation ([Channel 4 News video](#)).

**Homelessness in England is up 6.8% on the previous year - with thousands in temporary housing.** The data, published by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, also reveals that the number of people facing homelessness because they received a so-called 'no-fault' eviction notice increased by 27.4% to 24,260 ([Euronews](#)).

## SECURITY

**Where have all the judges gone?** Trials delayed over staffing crisis. Senior MPs, former judges and campaigners have hit out at the "troubling" delays, saying they reflect a "perfect storm" of underfunding in the judiciary caused by "years of neglect" ([Independent](#)).



**Police to crackdown on off-road bikes.** The Northumbria chief constable told councillors in Newcastle that her force is just weeks away from deploying drones to follow riders of scrambler bikes causing nuisance across the North East ([N/Echo](#)).

## 8. TRANSPORT

**North East bus passengers to gain from £15m Government funding boost.** This as £2 bus fare cap extended. Transport Minister said, "Buses are vital to unleashing the potential of our town centres, and connecting people that would otherwise be isolated" ([Chronicle](#)).

**European Travel Information and Authorisation System.** ETIAS authorisation is an entry requirement for visa-exempt nationals traveling to 30 European countries. Travellers headed to Spain, Italy, France and Portugal will soon require the important document to visit. This due in 2024 will be now delayed until 2025. ([Chronicle](#)).

**Go North East bus workers went on indefinite strike from 28 October.** This after rejecting the latest 10.3% pay offer by 81%. Their union said members were paid up to 20% less than those working for Go North West in Manchester ([ITV](#)).

**Plans to close railway station ticket offices in England scrapped.** The government U turn move came after a public backlash to the cost-cutting proposals. Over 750,000 responses in a public consultation, 99% of which were objections, according to the passenger watchdogs managing the survey ([Guardian](#)).



**NEPA's sincere thanks** to all those people and organisations that helped persuade the government to ensure that old and vulnerable people have safe access to rail stations by ensuring staff are in place for them to do so.

Sean Fahey  
NEPA Secretary

**If you want to know more or join contact the NEPA Secretary at  
Email: [nepacontact@gmail.com](mailto:nepacontact@gmail.com) or Tel. 01670 361981**

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