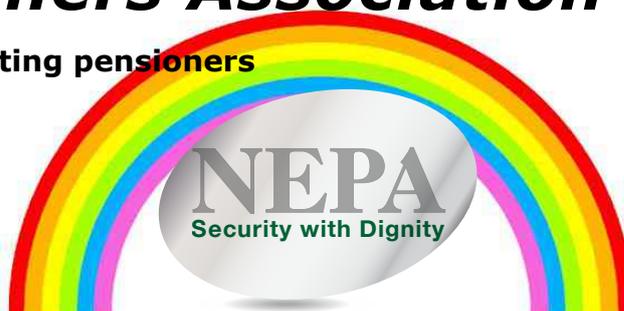


North East Pensioners Association

Regional impact report on issues affecting pensioners wellbeing in October 2021 including :

1. Care Homes & Housing,
2. Economy, 3. Health & Welfare,
4. The NHS, 5. Politics, 6. Poverty
7. Security and 8. Transport.



1. CARE HOMES & HOUSING

Shortages of care staff who support older or disabled people in the community. NHS CEO's say rising numbers of patients are stuck in hospitals in England due to a lack of care staff ([BBC](#)).



Newcastle care home 'fell short' caring for Alzheimer's sufferer in the last weeks of her life. An ombudsman ruled Newcastle City Council and HC-One Care needed to apologise to the family of a terminally-ill woman whose care in the last weeks of her life "fell short" of expected standards ([Chronicle](#)).

Homecare costs outstrip funding from councils. The [Homecare Association](#) (2,340 care provider members) calculates minimum cost of providing an hour of home care in the UK is £21.43. Data collected by them shows the average paid by councils in the UK is £18.45. The report found that areas with some of the highest levels of deprivation also had the lowest average fee rates for homecare. We found this to be the case in our region by using the BBC data tool "[Look up the cost of homecare](#)".

2. ECONOMY

Jonathan Walker. The policy director at the North East England Chamber of Commerce said:

- The Budget had some welcome announcements for North East businesses but our wait for a long-term levelling up strategy goes on.
- In the near term we were pleased to see Government had listened to our campaigning on the need for support for the hospitality, arts and culture sectors as well as our regional airports which were so badly hit by the pandemic.
- We welcome the confirmation of funding for a number of regeneration and transport projects across the region. Similarly, many of our members will benefit from the measures announced today on business rates although they fall short on the substantial reform that is needed.
- However, substantial longer-term strategies like the Levelling Up White Paper, the integrated rail plan and details on how the Shared Prosperity Fund will work, have yet to see the light of day.
- We would like to have seen further support for exporters as international trade is so crucial to our economy (N.Echo).

3. HEALTH & WELFARE.

How dementia might affect an LGBTQ+ person. As your condition progresses, you will find it harder to manage day-to-day things and you will need more help and support. [Planning ahead](#) can help you prepare for this, and there may be specific things to think about if you are LGBTQ+. For example, this might include getting a Gender Recognition Certificate or ensuring that your partner has the ability to make decisions on your behalf. [Alzheimer's Society](#) can help on 0333 150 3456.

High levels of Sewage discharged into our regions rivers.

Ministers have bowed to pressure to clean up rivers and the sea. They have announced a plan to impose a duty on water companies to reduce the impact of sewage discharge from storm overflows ([Sunday Times](#)). Check the [The Rivers Trust's](#) interactive map to see the history of discharge where you live.



How to avoid Covid this winter. NHS bosses have continued to insist that, despite a successful vaccine roll out, the best way to stay safe and coronavirus-free this winter is to stick to existing hygiene and social distancing guidelines.

Life expectancy falling in parts of the North. This is suggested in a new study published in the [Lancet](#). Average life expectancy in the UK is 79 years for men and just below 83 years for women, according to estimates from the Office for National Statistics. Key findings from the study:

Women. By 2019, the researchers say there was a 20-year gap in life expectancy between a woman living in Camden (95.4 years) versus a woman living in one area of Leeds (74.7 years).

Men. There was a 27-year gap in life expectancy between areas in Kensington and Chelsea (95.3 years) and parts of Blackpool (68.3 years).

The researchers say the differences are down to poverty, insecure employment as well as reductions in welfare support and healthcare ([BBC](#)).

4. NHS

Trust launched Winter Wellness campaign on World Mental Health Day (10/10/21). Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation [Trust](#) has free self-help guides available on a range of topics, from anxiety to sleeping problems and stress. They are available in a range of formats, including audio and British Sign Language: [Click here](#).

A&E waits have sunk to their worst levels in England. This since the four-hour target started, with doctors warning the situation is bleak ahead of winter. It comes as ministers and GPs clashed over demands that practices see more patients face-to-face. The government has handed GP practices £250m to take on temporary staff. But the British Medical Association said they were "hugely dismayed" with the plan, saying it would not solve the problems ([BBC](#)).

NHS waiting lists. The Chancellor has announced £6 billion package to reduce the waiting lists ([Northern Echo](#)).

NHS makes plea for blood donors. To register to become a blood donor and book an appointment visit www.blood.co.uk to download the GiveBlood-NHS app or call 0300 123 23 23.

5. POLITICS

State pension to increase by up to £289 in 2022. More than 10m state pensioners will receive a pay rise of 3.1% from April, in line with the inflation rate – which could represent a boost of up to £288.60 for the year. The 3.1% rise was confirmed after the Office for National Statistics revealed that CPI inflation measured that amount in September 2021 ([Which](#)).



Pensioners that reached state pension age before April 2016 and receive the basic state pension will see their weekly pension payments rise from £137.60 to £141.85 next year.

Response brief by National Pensioners Convention - Health & Social Care

Working Party on the proposed plans for Care Services.

Some key NPC conclusions:



- a) After all the hype, instead of a reforming vision which includes prevention, independence and community services targeted to need (although we are assured that will come through the 42 Integrated Care Services/Boards), it was all about the money. And not enough of it.
- b) Care homes were struggling before and during the pandemic and are still struggling now. Two years down the line, many of them may have closed. Some equity-funded providers have also closed homes, but we suspect that is more about profit loss than the day to day struggles that small and medium sized care homes contend with.
- c) There is nothing about choice in the paper – something that the NPC has put at the heart of our policy for a National Care Service. A National Care Service which stands alone and is separately funded from the NHS funded from general taxation; i.e. redistribution of wealth will ensure that everyone needing care will choose how, when, where and who that care is provided. Preventative services, advocacy and support for unpaid carers is a key feature of 'Goodbye Cinderella – A New Settlement for Care', as is training for care workers/managers with a grade allied to NHS and a career structure that enables workers to progress and commit themselves to what is a most vital role in caring for those in need (NPC).



Care cost. Depending on your care package and where your care home is, here are some average costs to be met in the UK (NPC).

Costs for care across the UK 2019/2020

	Average weekly UK care home fees			
	Residential care		Nursing care	
	Frail older	Dementia	Frail older	Dementia
North East	£577	£590	£774	£801
North West	£557	£570	£903	£934
Yorkshire and the Humber	£617	£630	£840	£869
East Midlands	£650	£664	£886	£916
West Midlands	£621	£635	£990	£1,024
East of England	£653	£667	£1,030	£1,065
London	£760	£776	£878	£908
South East	£832	£851	£1,012	£1,047
South West	£733	£749	£1,094	£1,132
Wales	£634	£690	£840	£869
Scotland	£850	£869	£863	£893
Northern Ireland	£546	£558	£720	£745

Source: LaingBuisson Care of Older People UK Market Report 31st edition 2020

6. POVERTY

Economists have warned that millions of people will be worse off. This due to rising costs and tax increases as the Chancellor's Budget came under intense scrutiny. The Institute for Fiscal Studies said the poorest face "real pain" and middle earners will lose out ([Independent](#)).

7. SECURITY

Why pension scams are on the rise? The 2015 pension rule changes have created more opportunities for fraudsters, as people now have easier access to their savings. The 2019 ban on pension cold calling seems to have had little impact, with scammers simply approaching victims through other channels instead. More than £2m has been lost to pension scams this year alone, according to Action Fraud.



'Which' have presented a very helpful video. This highlights 3 warning signs to note. 1) You are offered a three pension review that comes out of the blue, 2) advisors tell you can release your pension fund before age 55 without penalties (you cannot) and 3) always check the adviser is on the Financial Conduct Authority register. If they're not your chance of getting anything back if scammed is low ([Which video](#)).

Anti-social behaviour has risen. The Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner has made it clear that it will be dealt with. The PCC said that the key to ending communities' frustrations over issues ranging from noise or littering to drug dealing would be having "clear routes" to report problems and "making it simple for people" ([Chronicle](#)).

8. TRANSPORT

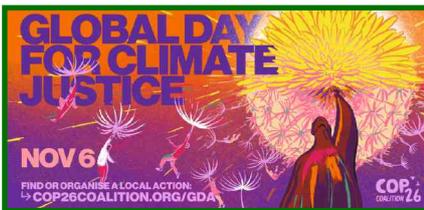
Metro. Passengers have been urged to wear a face mask as Covid-19 cases escalate – with less than 40% currently doing so ([Chronicle](#)).



Plans to revolutionise the regions bus network. Plans have been unveiled for radical improvements that would include cheaper fares, more low emission buses, and seamless London – style travel across bus, Metro, Rail, and ferry with a single ticket. It will now be down to government to decide how much of the £804m bus service improvement plan they will fund. It is unlikely that it will be paid for in full given that only £3bn has been allocated for the whole of England ([Highways News](#)).

North East councils 'incredibly disappointed'. This as region excluded from £7bn transport boost. While areas like the Tees Valley and Greater Manchester are getting major investment. A long-running devolution row means nothing has yet been allocated to the North East ([Chronicle](#)). The North East Combined Authority has expressed disappointment after being snubbed by the Treasury for regional transport funding, losing out on hundreds of millions of pounds ([Transport Network](#)).

Sean Fahey
NEPA Secretary



COP 26 - NEWCASTLE PROTEST SATURDAY 6/11/2021

As well as a protest in Glasgow there are protests across the UK bringing together movements to build for a system change – from indigenous struggles to trade unions, faith groups, from racial justice groups, youth strikers and pensioners who may have lived their futures but want to ensure a future for all generations coming after them.

In Newcastle, we will be assembling at the Civic Centre at 11:00am with our NEPA banner to march to the rally at Grey's monument from 12 noon. You are most welcome to walk with us.

The NEPA Website can be accessed by [clicking here](#) or google "**NEPA Pensioners**" (Please note that underlined script in this document serve as links to web pages).