

TALKING ABOUT

MY GENERATION

CHANGING THE RECORD ON GROWING OLDER IN GREATER MANCHESTER



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THE RECORD

NEWS AND VIEWS ON AGEING IN GREATER MANCHESTER



Talking about my generation

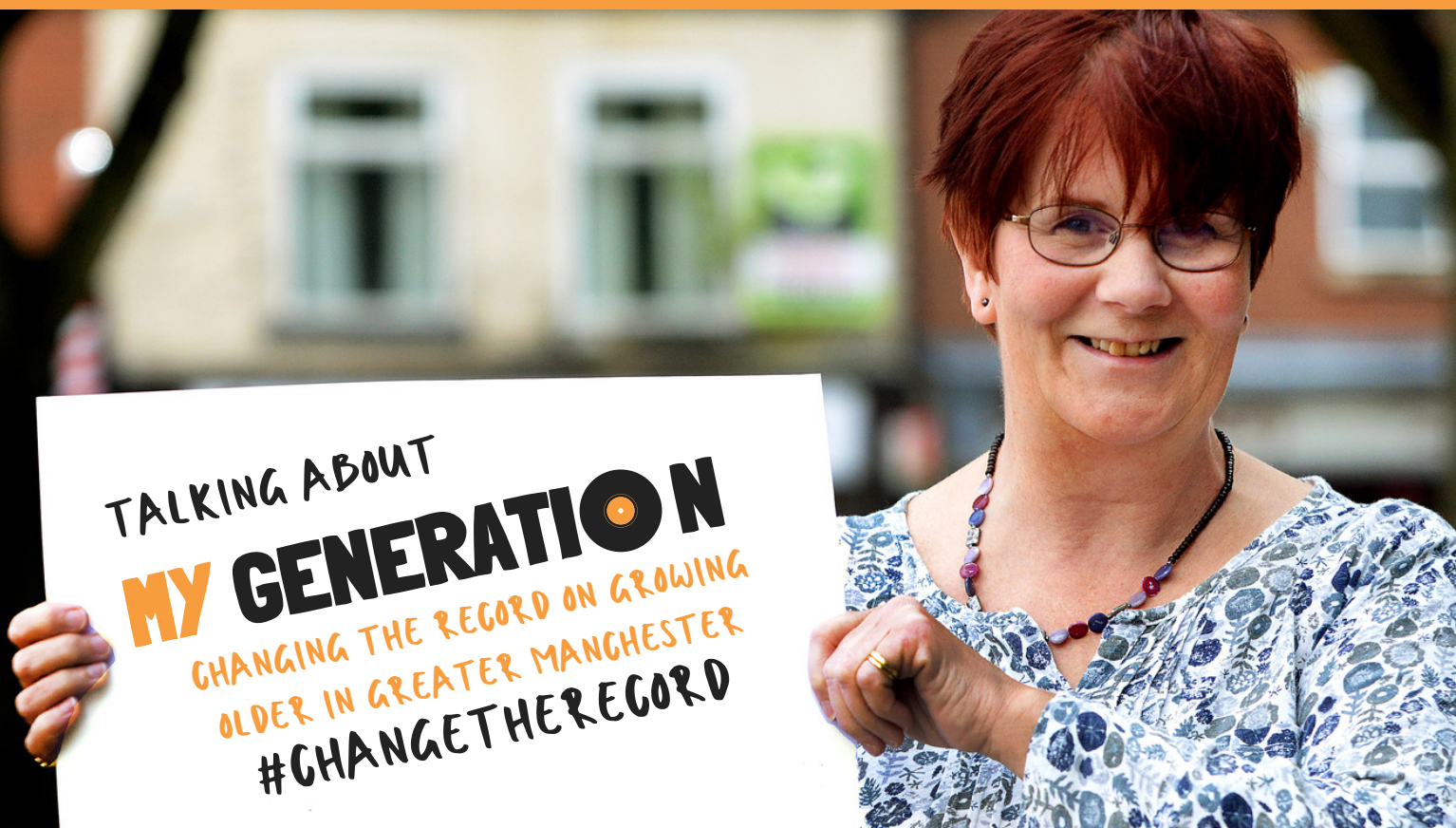
BREAKING NEWS

People aged 50 and over from across Greater Manchester are changing the record on what it means to grow older in the region.

They have teamed up for a new campaign – Talking About My Generation - to become community reporters and show what it's really like to grow older in Greater Manchester.

The reporters will be setting the record straight on ageing by reporting on other people from their generation, charting their stories of life over 50, to celebrate their lives and highlighting challenges associated with ageing and how they are being overcome - to inspire people to live the life they choose, regardless of age.

From hosting their own reggae radio show to delivering their own photography clubs, the community reporters will also



show off their own range of talents and experiences – as well as learning new skills, from podcasting to media production.

The team will deliver the campaign until March 2020; meeting at monthly newsrooms and attending local events and groups to cover key issues that they feel are important in later life: from retirement to staying active.

"It is not all purple rinses, nylon dresses, and rocking chairs."

The Talking About My Generation Campaign is part of an Ambition for Ageing project, with funding from the National Lottery Community Fund, and is being co-delivered with the support of PR social enterprise Yellow Jigsaw and Age UK partners from Wigan, Salford, Tameside, Bury, Oldham, Rochdale, Bolton and Manchester.

Grace Dyke, from Yellow Jigsaw, said: "We are at risk of sounding like a broken record when we talk about the older generation – with our common misconceptions and stereotypes of ageing in Greater Manchester.

"It is not all purple rinses, nylon dresses, rocking chairs and mumbles of 'back in my day'.

"The Talking About My Generation Campaign is challenging these views and changing the record on growing older – showing what this is really like for people in Greater Manchester by celebrating people's lives over the age of 50, sharing stories and the challenges overcome by older generations.

"Please join us to share how people are rocking retirement."

All content produced by the community reporters can be found through the partner websites and at www.yellowjigsaw.co.uk/TalkingAboutMyGeneration

Get involved to inspire people to live the life they choose by sharing our reporters' stories, newsletters and special reports.

And if you have an event or story that celebrates positive ageing in Greater Manchester get in touch to invite your local reporter along via grace@yellowjigsaw.co.uk



ON THE RECORD: MEET YOUR COMMUNITY REPORTERS



Our community roving reporters, along with our satellite teams at Tyldesley writers' and Bolton Asian Elders Centre, are our campaign rockstars – who are challenging the ageing conversation and stereotypes and setting the record straight by capturing inspirational stories from across Greater Manchester through different media forms.

They will also tell their own inspirational stories of embracing and overcoming the challenges of later life.

COMING UP IN THE NEXT EDITION OF THE THE RECORD



In August our reporters will be launching their first Special Report - on the topic of keeping active.

The team will share a range of stories through press, blogs, photography, audio and video on how people across Greater Manchester are keeping active in their own way.

Got a story to share? Contact the newsroom via grace@yellowjigsaw.co.uk

LESLEY DOWNING

REPORTER PATCH:

Bury

AGE: 61



Our reporter, Lesley Downing, split her career between nursing and as an archive assistant. She is semi-retired now and is doing casual work as a support artist.

She recently moved back to the North West after having lived abroad and in the south of England since 1987.

Lesley has a wide variety of interests from Richard III and the arts to walking, politics, green issues, music, detective novels, travel, film and live performances. She has also recently started to learn ballroom dancing with her husband.

She will be using her many interests as part of the Talking About My Generation campaign and is looking forward to interviewing people.

Lesley say: "Generally older people are viewed as physically and mentally struggling in one way or another, not particularly productive in society, often requiring a lot of help. Old fashioned, out of touch, unreceptive to change, white-haired, frail, woolly, be-slipped and vested.

"To change attitudes we need to promote positive images and examples of 'older people' as proactive, reactive, vital, engaged in society, forward looking and invested in the future."

Lesley sees this changing through the campaign by reaching out to older people to help, support and encourage them to be active, mentally, physically and psychologically, to maintain a presence in the here and now, and the tomorrow. And by reaching out to all other ages to showcase this positive, proactive view of ageing.

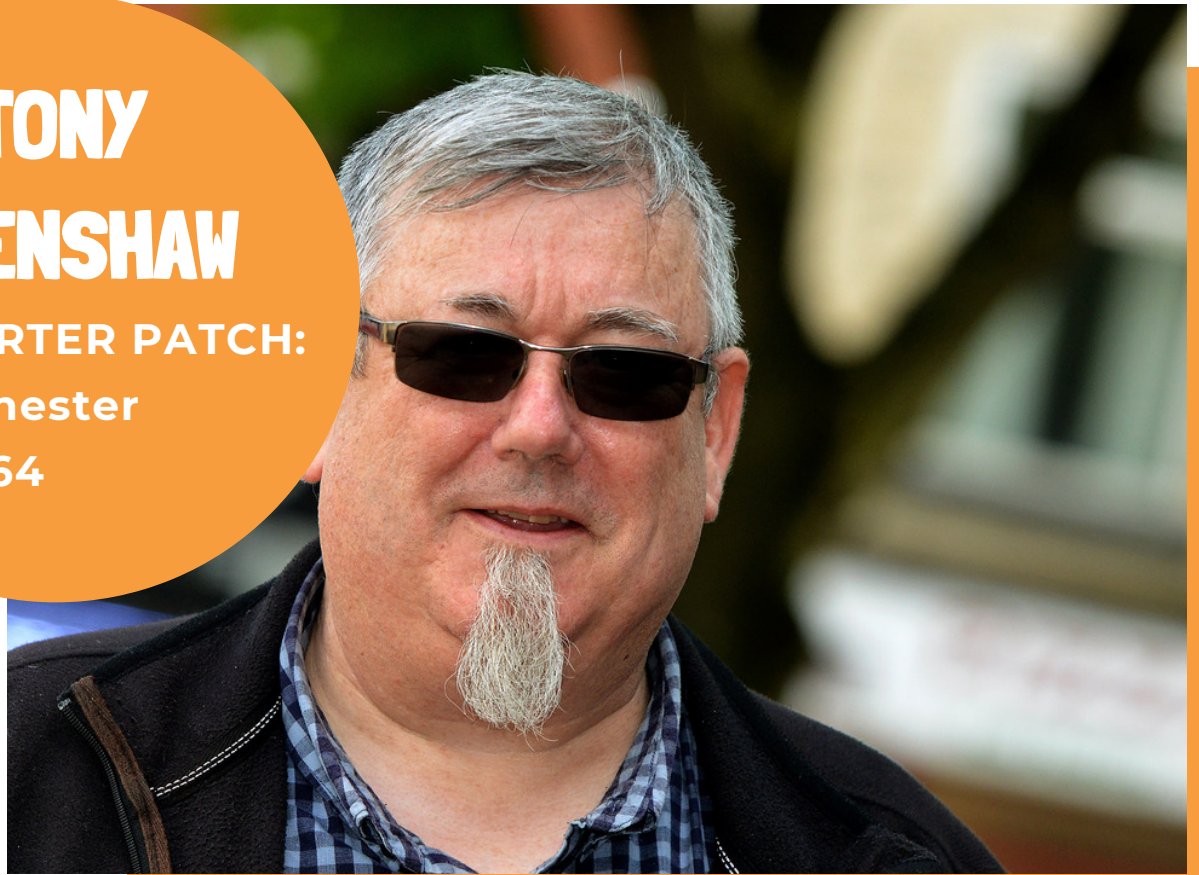
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TONY OPENSHAW

REPORTER PATCH:
Manchester
AGE: 64



Our reporter, Tony Openshaw, set up Asylum Support Housing Advice (ASHA) in 2004 – helping 7,000 people seeking asylum in Greater Manchester.

He retired in 2015 and joined Out In The City, a social and support group for members of the LGBT+ communities aged over 50, which he now runs.

He also volunteers at George House Trust (a HIV agency); and is a trustee for Manchester City of Sanctuary, an organisation that supports refugees

and people seeking asylum and even hosts his own reggae podcast!

Tony enjoys music - both recorded and live concerts – pub quizzes; and visiting places of interest.

He joined the Talking About My Generation campaign to help breakdown stereotypes and support others and will be using his podcasting and radio skills to do so – as well as plans for a Living Library.

Tony says: "When I was a teenager, I thought 40 was old, and I don't think attitudes to ageing have changed much. This programme will help to breakdown stereotypes and show different aspects of ageing."

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CHRISTINE DUFFIN

REPORTER PATCH:
Manchester
AGE: 59



Our reporter, Christine Duffin, used 'meet up' when she retired to find out about social opportunities and networks and is now part of walking group that goes as far and wide as Granada, and also volunteers at The Royal Exchange Theatre, Stretford Public Hall, Age UK Manchester and HOME. She also volunteers at various festival events such as Manchester International Festival 2019 and Manchester Literature Festival.

Christine enjoys travelling, walking, the theatre, the cinema and any performance arts.

She is a great communicator and enjoy spending time with people, hearing their stories and

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experiences – skills she will use as part of the Talking About My Generation campaign, where she wants to see a positive change in views towards the over 50's, and an acknowledgement of their ability to continue to contribute to society and positive steps taken to harness and make use of what each individual still has to offer.

Christine says:

"Unfortunately my experience has been that some people will overlook the positives of the over 50's age group, like wisdom, experience and knowledge.

"I am keen to share my own experience since retirement in discovering a whole new world of opportunities via volunteering, challenge views that retirement and getting older means we have nothing further to contribute and to show that there is plenty of opportunity to meet lots of different people, gain new skills, and use and share existing skills - and have fun!"

JEAN FRIEND

REPORTER PATCH:

Oldham

AGE: 67



Our reporter, Jean Friend, is a photographer, and enjoys the theatre, cycling, art, politics and campaigns on LGBT issues.

She wants to use her photography skills in the Talking About My Generation campaign as well as learn new skills and build confidence.

Jean, who is a retired science teacher, along with being a volunteer for Age UK Oldham for 15 years and founder of the Owt and Nowt photography enterprise. She wants to highlight issues faced by minority communities and thinks older people are viewed in many ways as a “strain on the system, past it, stuck in the past” but should be seen as a valuable resource.

Jean says: “I would like to see more older people used in advertising campaigns, fashion shoots, sports events and in general getting a higher exposure in the media – to help to change perceptions along with intergenerational events.”

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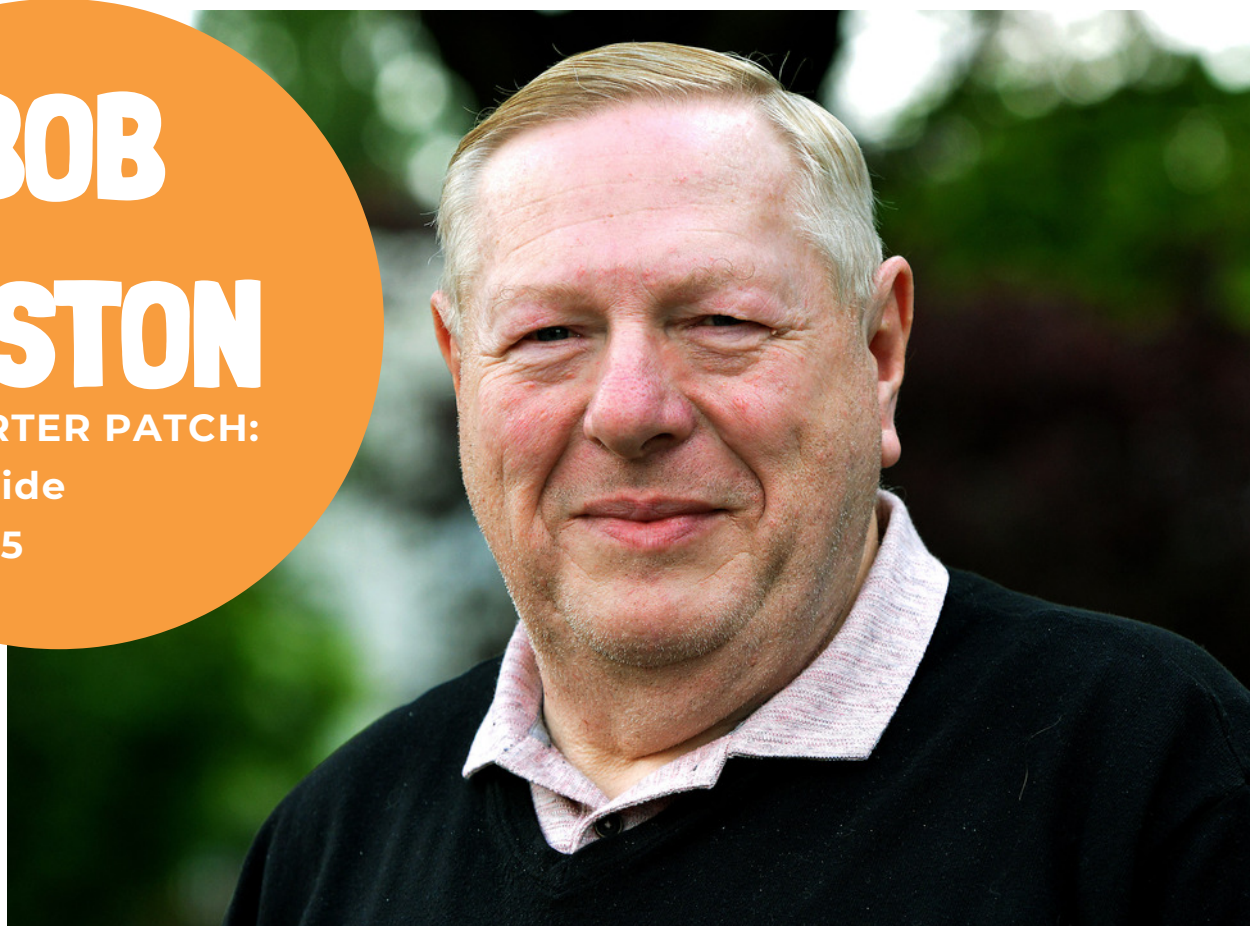
BOB

ALSTON

REPORTER PATCH:

Tameside

AGE: 65



Our reporter, Bob Alston, is a proud Mancunian, reds fan, and retired engineer and teacher.

Bob volunteers at Age UK Tameside and the Grafton Centre, Hyde and has an interest in anything with an engine, photography and his family.

He wants to use his photography skills in the Talking About My Generation campaign, as well as design and newsletter editing, and learn new skills from podcasting to interviewing.

Bob wants to make sure that older people get to know what is available in their community – for them to stay healthy and active – as well as changing perceptions of ageing.

Bob says: "People over 50 today class themselves as young, unlike my father's generation who considered over 50 as old. I still believe that I have a great deal to offer."

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CHRIS VICKERS

REPORTER PATCH:

Salford

AGE: 67



Our reporter, Chris Vickers, found retirement difficult at first – but was encouraged by a friend to try Walking Football and now plays four times a week!

He is also part of a writers group at Critchley Café with his wife.

Chris joined the Talking About My Generation team as a new learning opportunity and to meet new people.

He is passionate about investigating what opportunities are available now for older people in the community and wants to show that retirement should be seen as an opportunity to do more and try new things.

Chris thinks retirement should be seen as being a positive thing and that people should not be excluded on age.

Chris says: "Hopefully retirement can these days be viewed as a new beginning rather than an ending and 'silver surfers' can be much more active and productive; enjoying arts and crafts and/or sporting activities and much more – whatever their passion is."

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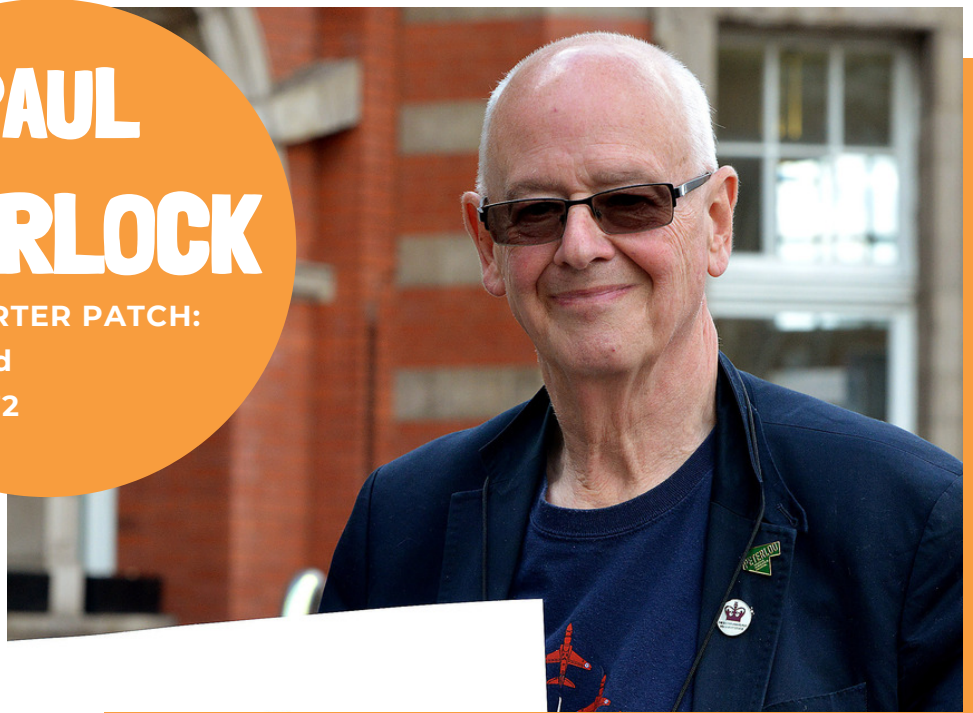
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PAUL SHERLOCK

REPORTER PATCH:
Salford
AGE: 72



Our reporter, Paul Sherlock, is a volunteer for Age UK Salford – mainly at the Critchley Cafe Community Hub in Swinton.

He enjoys local history, genealogy and photography.

He joined the Talking About My Generation campaign to use his skills in photography to capture people and events that will break stereotypes on ageing.

Paul also wants to learn new interview skills and write articles, and is particularly keen on recording our heritage for future generations as well as inspiring the present one.

He wants to improve perceptions of growing older by shifting the media portrayal of his generation, and inspire his peers to stay active in the community by showing them what opportunities and facilities exist.

Paul says: "I don't feel young people regard me as old to the extent that I regarded people my age when I was young but I accept that there are stereotypes that need dispelling."

"I like to communicate with my neighbours as equals rather than me being someone from a former (older, wiser and morally superior) era and I find that they seem to respect that."

"I hope that young people don't see our recollections from the past as just boring ramblings but as part of a living history from which they can learn."

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CAROLE OGDEN

REPORTER PATCH:
Bolton
AGE: 58



Our reporter, Carole Ogden, is originally from East Sussex, but has lived in Bolton nearly 30 years.

Carole took voluntary redundancy at 55 for health reasons and to care for her mum, who had dementia.

She is a poet and chair of a Big Local project in her community - Tonge with the Haulgh - and did a degree, PGCE, masters and Level 5 Diploma, all in her 50s!

Carole, who also volunteers at Haulgh Hub and the Sea Cadets, has won a Bolton University inaugural award for writing, teaches English, organises the community's Great Get Together every year, enjoys crochet and attends a sewing class.

Carole's passion for writing has led to recognition from her peers and the public. She has a poem displayed in Bolton Central Library and is a BBC Radio Poem for Manchester finalist and short story winner.

Her skills in poetry and prose will be well used for the Talking About My Generation campaign, and she wants to promote what is going on for over 50s and break down barriers, as well as learn new things and share her talents.

Carole says: "My personal and professional lives both began again in my 40/50s. I would like people to see that you can reinvent yourself later in life, learning never stops. I really value the new friends I have made through community engagement, who enrich my life."

"I would like people to see over 50s as being interesting and relevant and in an ideal world, I would like there not to be any mention of age, race, gender at all. If something is interesting or amusing, the age of the person involved is irrelevant. It would be good to treat us all as the same, with no stereotypical focus."

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Our reporter, Pauline Smith, moved back to the UK in late 2007 at age 59, after 30 years living and working in Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands with no active personal network and as a trans woman.

Now she has a network of friends and is active in the LGBT Foundation's Butterflies support group for trans people, a member of Out in the City, on the advisory board for the Pride in Ageing campaign and has been filmed by a student about her life, was recently on Radio Manchester to help launch the Pride in Ageing programme and has been part of a portrait photography session being supported by Getty that will show those over 60 can have a positive outlook.

Pauline was also involved as a volunteer in the start-up of



PAULINE SMITH

REPORTER PATCH:
Manchester
AGE: 71

the Trans MCR programme at the LGBT Foundation from its first monthly meeting in April 2016 through to October 2017 and has been a befriender since May 2016 at the LGBT Foundation.

Pauline has many interests from football, women's fashion, current affairs, reading fiction and history and cooking, as well as travelling. She also speaks three other languages - Dutch, French and German.

She is passionate about supporting the transgender community and enjoys being a member of the social group, Out in the City.

Her many skills - including preparing presentations, report writing, and interviewing - will support the Talking About My Generation Campaign, in which she wants

to enable older people to enjoy being older and to help those who are vulnerable overcome loneliness and depression and to show that life can be fun.

Pauline says: "People see older people wrinkly and "past it"...or 'invisible' is the word that springs to mind. "I want to show there are many new things to get involved in, in Manchester, and that once you try new things – other doors open."

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MIKE DODD

REPORTER PATCH:
Oldham
AGE: 78



Our reporter, Mike Dodd, is passionate about people staying connected in their local communities.

He is a governor at a primary school, committee member of a social group, member of the Patient Participation Group with the CCG to review their processes and materials, has been a parish councillor and volunteers with Age UK Oldham - and is part of a group that has a remit to organise expansion into Oldham.

He has worked with the media before, writing articles and identifying news opportunities for a local newspaper, and is a trained community reporter for Oldham Chronicle – skills he will be

bringing to the Talking About My Generation campaign.

Mike, who has nine grandchildren and brought up four children, wants to change perceptions of growing older, by showing people how they can help themselves and others to live a more interesting and energetic lifestyle to reduce isolation and build interactions.

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Mike says: "Older people are seen by the young as a nuisance, a necessary imposition, in some cases as in newspaper articles, a drag on the costs of health care and old age pension – with too many freebies like bus passes, TV license, blue badges and the like."

"I want to show younger generations that this is not the case – and older generations have a benefit to society as a whole."

RIK WHITAKER

REPORTER PATCH:
Wigan and Leigh
AGE: 68



Reporter Rik Whittaker, from Lowton, has a keen interest in music, photography, dance, travel, and education.

After retiring from Civic Service, Rik attended The University of Salford to complete a Computer Science degree and Masters in Technology and Education.

He now promotes STEM careers going into schools with the Greater Manchester STEM Centre, runs a photography group and is an avid motorcycle rider – and has added playing the flute to his musical skills.

He joined the Talking About My Generation campaign to show that "We're not growing old, we just have more experience of things."

He would like to recognition that older people can add great value to the lives of others, and hopes to do this through the campaign with improved communications on the reality of the lives of older people, particularly with strong visuals and compassionate images.

As one of the community reporters, he will be building on and using his photography skills, capturing people at events, who are a part of the campaign.

Rik says: "It's a great time to start something new!"

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DO YOU HAVE A STORY FOR OUR CAMPAIGN OF A PERSON
OVER THE AGE OF 50?

OR KNOW SOMEONE WHO WOULD LIKE TO JOIN OUR CAMPAIGN
ROCKSTARS TO BECOME A COMMUNITY REPORTER?

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