

# Welcome to the November Edition of the North East Region Newsletter.



## Executive Officer's Log

Welcome to the November Newsletter. This summer has seen some dramatic sporting moments both high and low – England qualifying for the world cup but also being relegated to Division 3 in the Davis Cup. England winning the Ashes but losing 6 – 1 in the 1 day series.

A British driver and a British racing team winning F1

Philadelphia Phillies winning the world series. I know I know. Only the Americans could hold a **World Series** that was restricted to teams from the USA. And what's that got to do with UK sport? Well, all will be revealed inside, so do read this month's newsletter to find out.

Closer to home we have had two teams relegated from the premier league but hosted the worlds largest participatory sporting event. 54,000 runners (and walkers) took part in the 2009 Great North Run.

A fantastic achievement by any standards. Even better because it's local.

We feature a report from Max Coleby, co founder and Course Director, detailing some of the issues in putting on a major event.

And of course a story from one hapless individual who took part – “Just for the fun of it.”.

A volunteer has stepped up to the mark in the form of Mandy Reed who has written an article on Housing Licensing. Thanks Mandy. Come on the rest of you we need your input, so drop me a line.

We feature a personal review of the joint CIEH/HPA update day by Jane Kett . A great day was had by all – and it was free.

We also report on the Members Forum from Northumbria. Another great FREE afternoon.

Add in a piece from HSE and our regular feature from Gary C and we have a bumper bundle of fun.

Finally, the 2009 Sanitary Shield Quiz is scheduled for early December (details in the training and events section). Please support it by attending and challenging the usual suspects for the coveted title of Sanitary Shield Champions.

**Enjoy**

**Tom**

## Members Forum

Northumbria University opened it's doors and it's heart to host the November Members Forum in the Great Hall. Impressive surroundings for an impressive event.

The afternoon opened up with a panel from the university outlining their hopes and ambitions for the future of Environmental Health at Northumbria including a desire to work with authorities on research projects.



We were entertained and educated by two of our brightest young professionals. Kay Young led the way by presenting the findings of her study into local air quality in Chester le Street. Resulting in one finding that by speeding up the traffic there was less pollution. But

try selling that to local families!

Ed Oughton was next up with a comparison between Visual and Microbiological Assessment in High Risk premises. His study showed that cleaning cloths were generally unsatisfactory, anti bacterial cleaning products were not available and there was a lack of documented procedures. Did he really suggest lowering the microbiological standard for cleaning cloths?

Both presentations showed that our investment in training students is a great , worthwhile investment in the future of Environmental Health.

A new feature was included in the meeting. Existing students prepared posters illustrating their proposed dissertation subjects. Members present were able to chat to the students offering advice and encouragement in order to assist in maximising the outcome of their research. Feedback shows that this was of value to both students and members.

To further encourage the students the three dissertations that most impressed were given prizes. The winners in a close contest were Carol Devine (Domestic Hygiene), Laura Price (Night Time Noise) and Catherine Ealand (Emty Homes). Well done Northumbria Well done students.



November 2009

### Regional Details

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Trustees

• Tim Deveaux

• Les Milne

Regional Board

• Alison Black

• Mike Bowery

• Kevin Hardisty

• Tim Hibbert

• Neil Laws

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Max Coleby is one of the five founders of the Great North Run and is currently Course Director.

He was an international marathon runner but has also had a distinguished career in Local Government. It was he who measured the famous route by running it at 5.30am one Sunday morning followed by his coach on a bicycle and two police motor bikes—so you could say he was the first man ever to run the Great North Run.

**“you cannot simply tell over 40,000 runners and many thousands of spectators assembled on the Central Motorway in Newcastle to go home if a problem arises”**

**The GNR raises huge amounts for charity- £28 million this year alone.**

**The Tyne bridge has only been officially closed once - in 1928 when it was opened by George Vth. Even now the bridge is not “officially” closed for the race—it just happens!!!**

## Health and Safety at the Great North Run

The Great North run has now been staged on 29 successive occasions since its inauguration in June 1981. It was the brainchild of Brendan Foster and four friends who launched themselves into making the first Great North Run a huge success - with what can only be described now as a touching degree of naivety. It was, however, hailed as an organisational tour de force!

The team that the five pulled together did have cause to be proud of their achievement. However, with the benefit of twenty nine years hindsight, what is very striking is the extent to which the organisational task is now equally devoted to ensuring a safe event as well as undertaking the massive administrative and event delivery elements. There are of course many documents, plans, contracts and briefing notes which make up the totality of the paperwork on the basis of which the event actually happens. A lot of this resides with Nova International, the event organisers. But a huge amount is

generated by and resides in the files of the police, the three local authorities through which the route travels, traffic management contractors, stewarding companies, medical services, local hospitals and the many suppliers of goods and services. If there is one document that could claim to be the blue print for the event, it is the Bupa Great North Run Event Safety Management Plan (ESMP). This huge document sets out in great detail how the event works, the management structures, risk assessments, timings etc. It is a 'template for action' which, if delivered, ensures a text book event. However, the ESMP also reflects the understanding that there must be clear and widely understood arrangements that are triggered when things do not happen as anticipated.

For example, one year there was a protester on the Tyne Bridge which delayed the start for a short while. This experience led to the development of three alternative routes to cross the Tyne and for the runners to re-join the route in Gateshead should the Tyne Bridge be lost for any reason.

This particular contingency plan was based on the fact that you cannot simply tell over 40,000 runners and many thousands of spectators assembled on the Central Motorway in Newcastle to go home if a problem arises. It is this sort of consideration which separates events such as the Great North Run from smaller events.

The ESMP also summarises the medical cover arrangements for the Great North Run. There is in fact a separate Multi Agency Medical Response Plan which is produced by a Medical Planning Group chaired by the Red Cross. The staff required to deliver the Medical Plan travel from as far as South Yorkshire, Manchester, Glasgow and the North West. There is no doubt where the bulk of the work required to pull together the GNR Event Safety Management Plan takes place. It is undertaken by one of the senior event organisers at Nova International. However, the final “signing off” and endorsement of the plan is a function of the Safety Advisory Group which includes representatives of all of the public bodies, local authorities and key contractors to the event as well as Nova International.

South Tyneside MBC have the responsibility for chairing the group and thereby ensuring the independence of the process whereby various drafts of the ESMP lead to the final, approved version. In this manner the “buy in” of all key organisations is assured.

In terms of the competency of staff from outside Nova International who work on the delivery of the GNR, it is remarkable how, over the years, some of the most eminent people in their field offer their services year after year. The medical services are a particular example. Runners in difficulty have some of the most experienced consultants in A&E, Intensive Care and treatment of trauma looking after them within minutes. As in most aspects of life, another driver for constant updating and improvements of all event delivery plans is the never ending flow of Health & Safety legislation.

### *‘Just for the fun of it’ - Tim Deveaux on the Great North Run 2009*

*Finished the run in 1 hour 57 minutes and 19 seconds!  
“It was a run of two halves. The first 3 miles were quick in 24 minutes, then I slowed down (because I couldn't keep that up!) Managed a cheery wave at Carol and Alexa on the Tyne Bridge.  
Missed the Red Arrows flying over the Tyne Bridge because I was on the Felling bypass!  
Took water on after three miles thinking it would help – no such luck there!  
Half way and feeling ..not too bad .... 10 miles and reached the Boost Zone - No help!  
Feeling knackered and getting worse as I moved into 11th and 12th miles .... 12 miles clock check : 15 minutes to beat my target time YES!!!*



*A crocodile passed me! Then three red arrows - called Goose, Maverick and Biggles – and a bottle of Heineken. Dave Owen shouted ‘Tim’ and I waved with my last ounce of energy! Peter Bell saw me, I didn't see him, totally not compus mentus! Staggered to the end and nearly fell over the line after being pushed from behind ...twice.”*

*Never again!  
I say that every year!!*

....cont from p2

## Health and Safety at the Great North Run

The event has a duty of care to people running long distances, their supporting spectators and the army of volunteers. It involves erection of structures weighing several tons, a number of large outdoor screens, miles of wiring for communications, timing and TV purposes. It feeds literally thousands of people on the Great

North weekend, has hundreds of marquees at the start, on the route and at the finish. Very large numbers of vehicles essential to the event are moving around all areas of the event most of the day. Therefore, the preparation of Nova's own Working Practices and Method Statements and Nova's

requirement for all suppliers to provide the same, is hard wired into organisational arrangements. The Great North Run is a huge event which requires a massive mobilisation of people to deliver. Achieving this in a safe and legal manner is an on-going preoccupation of the organisers.

### CIEH/HPA Information day..... A review!

The packed programme of the recent HPA / CIEH Information Day held at Newcastle spanned an eclectic mix of health related issues which are increasingly impacting upon our day to day work. Gary McFarlane, Director of CIEH N. Ireland, kicked the day off with a polished performance on climate change which pricked our conscience and culminated in an audio-visual slide show accompanied by the anthem 'One Life', which would inspire U2!

Next up we had the Killers, presented by Peter Wright & Catherine McConnell. What with tackling smoking, obesity and salt intake etc. it's clear we have our work cut out, and much to do. Salt with those chips Peter? ..... 'One grain or two'?

Afterwards the Children's Environment and Health Strategy presented by Dr Stacey Wyke, Chemical Hazards and Poisons Division HPA, brought a little known and understood strategy out from the dark and into the energy saving light.

Dr Kirsty Foster HPA NE was up next literally straight from the fight to update us on the regional response to tackling Swine Flu. Following on Dr Ian Rufus RHEPA HPA NE delivered a very informative presentation on resilience planning & business continuity strategies.

John Cragg of the FSA spoke of 'lamentable failures and poor performance' ( no, he wasn't talking about Jedward from the Xfactor!!!). John was discussing the issues raised

by the Pennington Report and the Agency's strategy for embedding HACCP, addressing food safety culture and enforcement. Last but not least, Dr Peter Acheson HPA, delivered an excellent presentation on outbreak management. The case study showed just what problems an outbreak investigation can throw up, pardon the pun!

Our unanimous verdict of the day was that it was an un-qualified success enjoyed by students, experienced officers & managers alike!

Jane Kett et al  
Hartlepool Borough Council

### Henry Chadwick Father of Baseball

While Edwin Chadwick was trying to improve health and extend life by introducing the first Public health Act, his half brother Henry moved to the wide open, clean lands of USA.

His love of cricket led him to develop baseball into the national sport of America assisted by Albert Spalding. Spalding's commercial attitude led to a parting of the ways. Spalding needed an American hero so claimed it was Abner Doubleday, a civil war hero that invented the game. However Chadwick was inducted into the Baseball hall of fame in 1938 for his contribution to the game.

He died at 83, Edwin at 90 so who achieved the greater good and the greater life?

### Climate Change—Gary McFarlane

Gary said that the evidence for climate change was unequivocal and needed to be put across that it was about Environment, Economy and Society.

He also challenged us to be champions :-

Internally—with our organisation  
Externally—with business and public  
Personally—in our actions and choices.

*"Is it getting better  
Or do you feel the same  
Will it make it easier on you now  
You got someone to blame  
You say.....  
One love  
One life  
When it's one need....."*



Sanitary Shield	
Details	Renowned general knowledge quiz with teams from across the NE Region competing for the prestigious Sanitary Shield and Thomas Crapper Chain - plus other fantastic prizes
Date	Wednesday 2 December 2009. Prompt 7:30 start
Venue	The Bridge Hotel, adjacent High Level Bridge, Newcastle
Delegate fees	£6/person (pay on the night but due if you turn up or not). Includes buffet. Max 6 per team
Booking	Contact Alison Black
Contact	alisonblack@gateshead.gov.uk Tel: 0191 433 3971

## HSE News

**The Partnership and External Relations Team** is responsible for embedding and strengthening HSE's partnership with the local authorities and other stakeholders within the Yorkshire and North East Region.

The work of the team covers three main elements - Partnership, External Relations and Divisional Intelligence Work – underpinned by, and contributing to, the national partnership and strategy work.

Paul Spurrier leads the team supported by staff in the Leeds, Sheffield and Newcastle offices.

The day to day work of the team involves a variety of roles from attendance at LA county liaison group meetings, developing local strategy, organising seminars, health and safety training for LA colleagues (on topics such as Noise in the Entertainment Sector, Occupational Health, Slips and Trips), promoting flexible warranting e.g. construction work in the Hull area, LPG safety in South Tyneside and working with various support groups to promote health and safety of vulnerable/migrant workers.

Also attached to the team is the Divisional Intelligence Officer who's role is to improve how HSE gathers and shares its information for targeting and intelligence purposes as good quality data ensures that HSE and the local authorities are able to target resources in a more effective and efficient way. Various options are used to gather and source information such as working in partnership with One North East, Government Office for Information and Central Statistics Team.

**If anyone would like any further information or assistance from the team please contact Paul Spurrier**

[paul.spurrier@hse.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:paul.spurrier@hse.gsi.gov.uk)

## Selective Licensing of Private Landlords

Gateshead Council campaigned in 1999 to introduce the licensing of private landlords as a tool to combat the problems associated with private rented housing. In 2007 they successfully introduced one of the first schemes in the country alongside, Manchester, Salford and Middlesbrough.

The scheme was introduced in the Sunderland Road area of the Borough. It gives the Council the ability to make landlords accountable for the management of their property and tenants in the Sunderland Road area, which is known to suffer from the problems of low demand housing and anti-social behaviour. The licensing scheme complements other works carried out in the area and strengthens Gateshead Councils commitment towards improving local

neighbourhoods and communities.

To date 226 licences have been issued to landlords who have properties in the area. Three landlords have also been prosecuted for failing to obtain a licence. Fines have ranged from £615 to £5,000. The prosecutions send out a clear message to landlords who blatantly disregard the law and bring other private landlords into disrepute. Another landlord has been refused a licence following failure to meet the "fit and proper" test.

The scheme introduced specific discounts to the licensing fees to encourage landlords to both join the local landlord association - the Gateshead Private Landlord Association [www.renting-in-gateshead.co.uk](http://www.renting-in-gateshead.co.uk) - as well as improve their properties to the accreditation standard. This has resulted in many

landlords joining the Association as well as increasing the number of properties meeting the Accreditation Standard. Landlords have spent in excess of £100,000 on property improvements in the area as well as ensuring all properties have valid gas certificates and a 5year periodic inspection certificate in relation to the electrical installation.

Feedback from landlords has been generally positive with comments including "The area has improved since the introduction of selective licensing particularly with regard to anti-social behaviour and tenant selection".

The Council have proposed a second area within the Borough for licensing and are currently awaiting a decision from CLG.

If you would like further information regarding Licensing in Gateshead please contact

**Mandy Reed on 0191 4332956.**

## Regional Co-ordinator's Update

October and November are unfolding into a very busy time for me and undoubtedly for you. Much of the early development/priming work is now beginning to bear fruit with the joint regional seminar with the Health Protection Agency, now fully booked. I hope those attending enjoyed it and took something positive away to inform their own future practice.

The regional Training and Development Needs Assessment survey will be live at the end of November, having undergone a short pilot at the end of October. You will be contacted directly and asked to take the survey. I would urge you all to take part and help inform what future training and development may be required in the North East.

An inaugural regional Heads of Service meeting was held on 4 November to explore the appetite and need for a more strategic body to oversee regulatory services, initially focusing on Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Licensing. There was a presentation from Derek Allen, LACORS Chief Executive on his view on the future of regulatory services.

I attended the CIEH Best of the Best Conference held at the end of September and I've provided my own summary of the sessions I attended (posted on the Forum detailed below). Notes from my attendance at LACORS EH Policy Forum and CIEH Regional Policy Forum are also available from the Forum.

CIEH Centre seems to have stepped up its communication with the regions (not before time and after much work from regional contacts!). There is a raft of consultation that you will be/have been asked to contribute to, including the new draft CIEH Food Policy, the new draft vision for CIEH and CIEH governance arrangements. Other consultations have been received from the FSA concerning:

A review of communications with local authorities during incidents

A questionnaire to inform a response to the E. coli Public Inquiry

Whilst I feel the need to apologize for the increased e-mail traffic you will have been receiving recently I hope you agree that it is better to be informed, engaged and given the chance to inform the future direction of your profession?

**For more information on all of these developments please visit the North East Environmental Health Forum – your dedicated regional web facility. Please use the link below and follow the instructions or refer to the guidance previously circulated to you.**

<http://www.communities.idea.gov.uk/c/1686358/home.do>

Please get in touch if I can be of help or you'd like any more information

Gary Carr

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