

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



SEE PAGES 3 & 4  
FOR 'AGE MATTERS'  
AGE CONCERN NEWS



For further information about this newsletter or the Older Persons' Forum please contact Jen Eastman on 01249 466168 (jen.eastman@westlea.co.uk). Westlea Housing, Methuen Park, Chippenham SN14 0GU.

### FIT TOGETHER

'Fit Together' is an exciting new opportunity for rural communities in Wiltshire and Swindon to be able to take part in sports and activities at a local level.

Through the project people will be able to discuss and take part in all kinds of activities. For older people there will support for extend classes; movement and gentle exercise classes; walking and other opportunities. With the support of Help the Aged and Wiltshire County Council, we are able to offer some financial help to enable older people's groups to start up and continue an exercise programme.

This project has brought together Community First with Youth Action Wiltshire, Age Concern Wiltshire, the Wiltshire and Swindon Activity and Sports Partnership (WASP) and Westlea Housing to support these new opportunities. Communities will be able to get help to begin activities in their area - with use of the village hall or community centre will be encouraged. Support workers will be on hand too.

For further details contact Helie Franklin at Community First on 01380 722475.

## Peggy's knitting marathon



When the Older Persons' Forum (OPF) was set up in July 2005, one of the first projects involved knitting for charity.

Since then, a small group of dedicated knitters – including Peggy Sage, from Chippenham – have produced over 200 items to go into shoe boxes that are sent to Eastern Europe as part of the Operation Christmas Child

appeal. These items have included teddy bears and hand puppets, along with hats, scarves and gloves.

Peggy has recently been unwell and not able to go out as much as usual – but she has kept herself very busy by knitting more things from the Westlea OPF knitting book. In January this year, the Doorway homelessness project in Chippenham received 24 hats, 23 scarves and 10 pairs of gloves – all made by Peggy! Lisa Lewis from Doorway commented upon the beautiful variety of colours Peggy had used and said that they would be extremely useful at this cold time of year.

Thankfully Peggy is now recovering from her illness and hopes to be out and about soon, but she is still busy knitting away in her spare time. Her latest work is baby clothes and blankets for the Feed The Children charity. To date completed four blankets and more than 20 jumpers and hats.

- All the patterns that Peggy uses are in the free Westlea knitting book which also gives details of the charities that finished work is donated to. If you would like a copy of the pattern book you can get one at any Older Persons' Forum or request one by contacting Jen Eastman (see above). The book also gives details of how to get your finished articles to us – you can bring them along to the OPF or drop them off at any sheltered housing scheme. If this is difficult for you we may be able to arrange to collection.

## Newspapers that talk

**Do you take time out every week to read the pages of your local weekly newspapers – to keep up to date with the news of what has been happening in your locality and what is on during the week ahead?**

Many of us do just that, but what about those in our community who are blind, visually impaired, housebound or have reading difficulties? They too like to know what is going on in their town or village. That is where local talking newspapers come to the rescue.

Chippenham & District Talking Newspapers, a local charity, produces two free weekly talking newspapers each Thursday for Chippenham and area (including Calne, Corsham, Colerne and Box) and also Malmesbury. A fortnightly

Melksham newspaper is also recorded on alternate Wednesdays. Listeners usually receive their hour of local news on tape the following morning – almost as quick as you obtain your copy from the newsagent. There are also talking newspapers for other parts of Wiltshire and England and Wales.

If you know anyone who might benefit from receiving a local, friendly talking newspaper do tell them about us so that their lives might be enriched by keeping up to date with the news from their local weekly papers. All that is needed is a telephone call to Alan Scotford on 01249 653712 or Frances Alexander on 01249 657129 to provide the details of the person who would like to receive a Chippenham,

Malmesbury or Melksham talking newspaper - or for any other area of England and Wales - and we will respond immediately.

We are also always pleased to hear from anyone who would be prepared to join our friendly team of volunteers who record and read our newspapers - please telephone Alan or Frances for more information, or speak to one of them at the next Forum meeting.



## News from the last meeting

The December meeting was a joint meeting – and along with the speakers we had a bazaar which gave members an opportunity to purchase some wonderful Christmas presents from a variety of stalls, many of which were raising money for charity. The stallholders included people from Waste Not Want Not (a local furniture recycling charity), Oxfam, Corsham Country Markets and the St Johns Ambulance Trust. The stallholders reported that they made a lot of money on the day; feedback from those attending has shown that this was a very popular addition to the meeting, and it is something that we are planning to repeat next Christmas.

We had an update from Age Concern Wiltshire who gave details of their latest news and projects and we also had a very informative talk from Sue Wilkins of Wiltshire Trading Standards, who set a quiz (printed on this page) to find out how much people knew about their consumer rights. She informed the audience that Consumer Direct, a Government-funded call centre can provide answers to queries and help with problems relating to consumer goods and services. They can be contacted on 08454 040506. Sue was pleased to see some high scores from the quiz which proved that our older population are quite clued up about what rights they have when shopping. Members of the Forum also enjoyed a lovely buffet lunch which was rounded off with mince pies and Christmas cake. The star raffle prize was a beautifully-decorated home made Christmas cake kindly donated by Mrs Smith of Corsham.

• If you have not yet attended one of the Older Persons' Forums, why not come along? Details of how to book your place are on the enclosed booking form.

## FREE CAVITY WALL AND LOFT INSULATION

People aged over 70 (and tenants on certain benefits) are now entitled to free cavity wall and loft insulation. The new offer is part of the Government's Carbon Emissions Reduction Target 2008-11 scheme, where energy suppliers are required to spend £1.5bn over the next three years to install energy efficient measures in the homes of older people and those on low incomes. When you contact British Gas, for example, the firm will send a surveyor to establish whether your home has cavity walls and measure the thickness and quality of any insulation already in place. If your insulation is not up to modern standards British Gas will pay for further insulation



material to be installed. If it is very old, it may replace the loft insulation entirely. There are no fees to pay. The company says anyone installing both cavity wall and loft insulation will save up to £200 a year in energy bills, reducing CO2 emissions and helping the company hit its target.

• Westlea tenants need Westlea's permission to apply. To get this, please phone Steve Francis, Project Surveyor, on 01249 466071. Then simply ring 0845 6052535 (quoting code JOU). Tenants do not have to be British Gas customers to benefit.

**From 1 April 2008, if you're aged 60 or over or registered disabled, then your bus pass is changing.**

The new pass means that you can enjoy off-peak free travel on local buses anywhere in England and at any time of the day in Wiltshire. New passes will be sent automatically to existing pass holders from mid March 2008. Application forms for new passes will be available at your local Post Office from mid March or telephone 0845 601 0487.

## 'Money friend' at CAB

The aim of this new post is:

- to help Westlea residents have greater access to financial services;
- to help open basic bank accounts (eg for benefit payments as PO's close);
- to help access credit union services (eg secure savings for Christmas);
- to help access low-cost loans (instead of high-cost door step lenders);
- to help access Child Trust Fund information;
- to offer support with

general budgeting advice and skills;

- to help get a better deal on fuel with or without prepayment meters; and
- to help with applications for charitable funding for necessary one-off costs not otherwise affordable.

Referrals can be made to trained advisors and other organisations if required. The Money Friend is not a trained CAB advisor, or a debt advisor, but has more of a practical role. For example, she can actually take customers into a bank or to the Credit Union to open an account if they are unable to manage this by themselves.

So, if you have a problem with money, contact Elizabeth Payne, the Westlea Money Friend, to see if she can help you: phone 01249 461089.

## How FAB can help you

Joint teams have been set up by the Department for Work and Pensions and Wiltshire County Council to help people get the benefits they are entitled to. The Financial Assessment and Benefit (FAB) Team offers a wide service which includes:

- Assistance with applications for state entitlements such as Pension Credit and Attendance Allowance;
- Benefit checks for Adult Carers, and applications for Carers Allowance; and
- Financial assessments for those who need home care, or for those in a Residential Care of Nursing Home. These can be carried out by a home visit or an appointment at an Information Point available at various venues across the county. For further information, or to request a visit, please telephone the FAB Team Chippenham on 01225 496349 or 01225 496348 (Monday to Friday between 8.30am-4.30pm).

• **Representatives from the FAB team will be at each of Westlea's Older Persons Forums, where you can find out more, or book a home visit.**

## Do you know your rights?

A quiz from Wiltshire Trading Standards

1. What rights do you have when you buy something and later change your mind?
2. Does a retailer legally have to give a receipt when you buy something?
3. Do you have a legal right to buy goods displayed at the price shown?
4. Who would you inform if you thought a retailer had broken the law?
5. Who would represent you legally if you wanted to sell your house?
6. What are the names of the two main credit card companies?
7. What is the difference between a credit card and a debit card?
8. Does a contract have to be in writing to be legally enforceable?
9. What is the minimum legal age for buying fireworks?
10. If you agree to buy a watch with a scratched face can you take it back for a refund?

**ANSWERS:**  
 (1) None (2) No (3) No (4) Trading Standards (5) A solicitor (6) Mastercard and Visa (7) Credit card (8) debit (9) borrowing: card payment is from your bank account (8) No, but it helps (9) 18 years (10) Not unless there is something else wrong with it.



If you would like to have any part of this document explained or translated, or in a different format such as in larger print, braille or on audio tape, contact Westlea on 01249 465465 to discuss your needs.

## Garden Maintenance – from a helping hand to complete maintenance!

A garden maintenance service designed  
around the needs of older people.

For more information or a quote contact Alan  
at Age Concern Wiltshire on 01380 727767.

## Carer's Emergency Card

Wiltshire County Council's Department of Community Services is launching a Carer's Emergency Card scheme to provide support to carers in the event of an emergency or an accident. It is being introduced in response to concerns expressed by carers who worry about what will happen to the person they care for if they, the carer, are taken seriously ill or had any accident and could not tell anyone that they care for someone.

The new card will benefit carers in that:

- they will have the back up of 24 hours a day 7 days a week emergency cover;
- they will feel less anxious about going out or being away from the home; and
- in the event of the carer being involved in an emergency they know that the person they are caring for will be looked after and supported.

Carers can register for the scheme by completing an application form that provides information about themselves, the person they care for and the names of people who can be contacted in the event of an emergency. This information is held by CareConnect, the emergency response service, and is only accessed in the event of an accident or emergency. When CareConnect receive a call they will phone the nominated contacts to put into action the procedures that have been agreed with them. If the contacts are unavailable or if the carer does not have anybody they can nominate as a contact, CareConnect will inform social care services to ensure the cared-for person is not left unattended. The emergency helpline service operates 24 hours a day 7 days a week and is a free service to carers.

The Carer's Emergency Card is the size of a credit card that will fit in a wallet or purse and identify the carer as someone who is providing care and support for someone else. The card includes the telephone number of CareConnect and the carer's unique reference number to enable anyone who finds the card to raise the alarm. No personal information is recorded on the card.

**To apply for a card or for further information about the scheme contact the Carer's Emergency Card Coordinator on 0800 066 5068.**

## FASHION SHOW

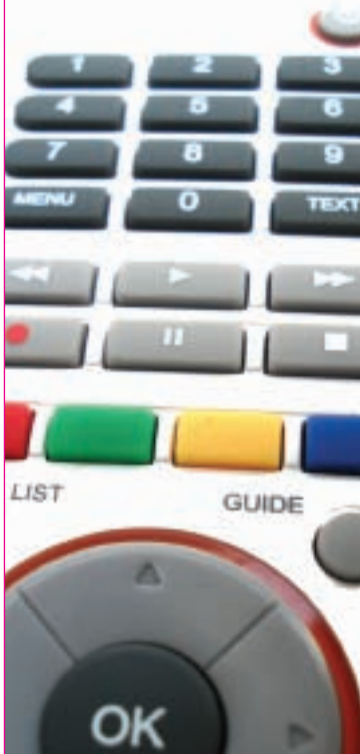
Age Concern Shop, Chippenham, presents  
a Fashion Show in the Neeld Hall  
**Wednesday 14 May 12.30pm – 2.30pm**

Tickets £2 (includes a free drink and raffle ticket) available from the Age Concern Shop, The Bridge, Chippenham or Age Concern Wiltshire, Devizes - phone 01380 727767.

## Make sense of technology!

We live in a world where technology is a part of all our lives but some older people are excluded from the advantages this can bring. Westlea Housing and Age Concern Wiltshire have been working with Wiltshire County Council and other organisations to offer regular technology sessions. These will be held once a week in Wootton Bassett, Chippenham, and Devizes. The sessions will cover everything from digital TV and cameras to mobile phones and computers. Members of the group will have a session with a tutor once a month and will then spend the next three sessions practising their new skills on the equipment.

**If you feel you need to gain confidence using new technology then call us on 01380 727767 to find out more about joining one of these groups.**



## RNID hearing check

The RNID tell us that 4 million people in the UK are losing their hearing but doing nothing about it. Research suggests that this is often because of embarrassment. Unfortunately a hearing loss can have a serious impact on the personal and social life of older people, affecting their wellbeing and independence.

The RNID are urging anyone who is concerned about their hearing to take a simple telephone hearing check. This is a quick and easy way for people to take immediate action to address a potential hearing problem. The test takes about five minutes and afterwards you will be given more information about your hearing and how to look after it.



The number to ring is  
**0845 600 5555.**

## Timers to help prevent fires



Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service attended 225 kitchen fires last year. Over half of these involved older people and resulted from food left on hobs, in grill pans or microwave

fires. A simple way to avoid these incidents is to set a timer when cooking. They have made available some portable kitchen timers for distribution to older people. The timers have a loud ring and can be carried with you while food is cooking. If you think one of these timers would help you please contact Jayne Funnell on 01380 735512.



## Quizcorner

**ANSWERS FOR THE WILTSHIRE QUIZ IN LAST ISSUE:**

1. Athelstan. 2. On the top of the Wiltshire Coat of Arms. 3. His hunting lodge in Chippenham. 4. Oxygen. 5. Leucipotomy is the cutting of hill figures in chalk, specifically horses. 6. The oldest working mechanical clock. 7. It was the longest in the world. 8. 29. 9. The Battle of Roundway Down. 10. Trowbridge.



Design and print for 'Age Matters' is provided by the Communications team at Westlea Housing [www.westlea.co.uk] working in partnership with Age Concern Wiltshire

## Flippin' fun raises cash to help older people



Age Concern Wiltshire organised the second Devizes Pancake Races on 8 February and raised over £500 to help older people in Wiltshire. The event was great fun in spite of the challenges presented by the weather so early in the year. Some competitors had their pancakes picked up by the wind and blown across Devizes Market Place when they stopped at the obligatory tossing points. Some others quickly adapted to the weather and learnt to toss their pancakes only a few inches into the air! The team from Melksham Happy Circle Day Centre entered into the spirit of the day. They

wore the costumes from their Christmas production of Swan Lake and although they finished some way behind the other teams they received the biggest round of applause.

- Pictured with Julian Beinhorn, Mayor of Devizes are Janine Woolford, Sid Filkins, Pam Dudman and Jo Sibley. Jo was sponsored for her run on the day and raised £200 to be distributed between the Happy Circle Day Centre and Age Concern Wiltshire. "Who says you can't have fun and new adventures when you're old!" said Pam after the race.

## New team member can advise on paying for care



Judy Pell is a new member of the team at Age Concern Wiltshire.

She is available to meet with anyone who has questions about finding and paying for care at home or in a residential setting. Judy is an experienced social worker who has worked for many years in and around Wiltshire. You can contact Judy on 01380 727767.

## CONTACT AGE CONCERN WILTSHIRE

Find us at 13 Market Place, Devizes SN10 1HT  
Telephone 01380 727767 • Fax 01380 728797  
Information Line 01380 735500  
Email [admin@ageconcernwiltshire.org.uk](mailto:admin@ageconcernwiltshire.org.uk)  
Website [www.ageconcernwiltshire.org.uk](http://www.ageconcernwiltshire.org.uk)

## Help in an emergency

If you are met with a sudden emergency expense, perhaps because of illness or a disability, then you could approach one of the many charitable trusts that provide funds for people in such situations.

There are charitable trusts that exist to support many sorts of need. There are trusts that provide help for people that have had some contact with the Armed Services and trusts that will support people who live in particular areas. There is even a trust that can help people who have previously worked as a gardener and one for those who have been involved in manufacturing sweets.

All of the trusts have their own preferences as to how they receive applications. It can be quite difficult to know which trust you should approach. Age Concern Wiltshire can put you in touch with an organisation that can help you decide which charity might be able to help you. We can also help you make the application if necessary. Don't forget: charitable trusts exist to help those in need – they have funds waiting to be allocated. So if you are facing a sudden financial emergency it is worth taking some time to look around and see what help is available.

**Contact Christine Tucker on 01380 735500 for more information.**

## LEASE OF LIFE FUND

Are you a member of a group?  
Does your group help people to stay active and independent?

The first grants have just been awarded from the 'Lease of Life' scheme. This has been set up to provide small grants to help groups that promote an active lifestyle. It is aimed at enhancing the physical social or mental well being of older people in Wiltshire.

The money can be used by groups to cover such expenses as paying for physical activity sessions or to buy items such as equipment, for example to enable your members to play short mat bowls. The first awards have included an award to a group to enable them to start yoga sessions and another to promote singing! The fund is a partnership between Wiltshire County Council, the Wiltshire and Swindon Activity and Sports Partnership (WASP) and Help the Aged. It can make grants to groups of up to £300 per year. There is a total fund of £9,000 for Wiltshire.



**If your group would like to know more then please contact Jayne Funnell on 01380 735512 for further details.**