

NEWSLETTER

Woodley AGE Concern

New Year 2010

Welcome to our first newsletter of the new decade, which I am sure will bring many challenges and success to Woodley Age Concern. I have just completed my first year as Chair of the Trustees and feel that I must acknowledge the support and advice of our previous Chairman, Colin Preston. His dedication and enthusiasm have been instrumental in implementing many of the changes made in our organisation over the past years. Colin is now Chairman of Berkshire Age Concern so is still deeply involved in the welfare of the elderly.

Our other high achiever is Ann Parr who, as you may know, was recently awarded an MBE in the New Year Honours. This award was for services to the elderly in Berkshire and was undoubtedly well deserved. We offer Ann our hearty congratulations and unashamedly bask in her reflected glory.

I must also express my gratitude to all the staff, volunteers and trustees involved in the running and the support of the Day Centre and its associated outreach services. You all contribute to delivering a quality of care that is without equal.

One of the most significant achievements of recent months has been the refurbishment of Brightside. New flooring and furniture have given the centre a more modern look. The final touch was the redecoration done by staff in their spare time. Now that we have facilities of which we can be proud, we can both make use of them ourselves and also market them to the wider public. In the current economic climate, we need to think of more ways to raise funds. Marketing our services and our facilities more actively is a skill we need to learn.



Following advice from Age Concern England, we plan to do as many other Age Concern branches have done and form ourselves into a charitable limited company, with a Board of Directors. With this in mind, we have been recruiting a group of people interested in our work whom we are calling 'Friends of W.A.C.'. This group will have the power to vote Directors onto the new board. We feel that the formation of the limited company will give us more credibility when negotiating contracts and will also reduce the theoretical financial risk to Trustees. In no way does this change alter our charitable status. It simply makes us more able to compete in the modern world and to deliver what we are really good at.

Best wishes for the New Year

Dr. Jenny Miller



Special Birthdays

In recent months Day Centre members have celebrated two special birthdays. Phyliss Payne and Fred Coxhead both became centenarians on 15th September and 13th November respectively.

Phyliss has been attending the Day Centre for some years now and attributes her longevity to a glass of sherry daily. She has a loving and devoted family who share their home with her. She goes on holiday with them and lives life to the full. She enjoys a joke and has a great sense of humour.

Fred has been coming for about ten years now and is known for his cheerful whistling. He lives with his son in Woodley and during his working life was a farmer who enjoyed both getting up and going to bed early (maybe this is the secret to a long life?) Despite being partially sighted and hard of hearing we never hear him complain and he is unfailingly good natured.

Both Phyliss and Fred celebrated their birthdays with cake and sherry and of course the good wishes of staff and members.

Please join us in congratulating them on reaching this marvellous age and hope they may have many more birthdays ahead.

Snow Staff

Staff at Woodley Age Concern need to be praised for going above and beyond for the service users at the Day Centre. Carers and staff wrapped up, put on their walking boots and battled in the snow, some of the heaviest in 30 years. Jackie Timms walked for over an hour to get to work and Pius walked from Whitley to do a night shift. These were just two of our snow heroes.

All the staff who did make it into work have made exceptional efforts throughout the last two weeks. Some sleeping at the centre because they could not get home and also working extra shifts to cover the staff that could not get into work. This then guaranteed that there would be staff on duty for the next day.

All our services continued so there was snow stopping us, once again a big big thank you to all.



VOLUNTEERS

We are extremely grateful to our band of willing Volunteers who, week in week out offer their services to the Day Centre. Our volunteers primarily help in our Tea Bar, Charity Shop and with Computer Lessons but other duties are always possible. We always welcome new Volunteers—perhaps you would like to give this very rewarding job a go.

We also require a Volunteers Co-ordinator at the Day Centre to strengthen the team. Working with our Centre Manager you would be responsible for the welfare of the Volunteers, arranging rotas and participating in recruitment. Although this is working voluntarily, helping to fulfil the aims and aspirations of the Charity can be very rewarding.

To discuss any Day Centre volunteering opportunities, please contact Les Green (Centre Manager) on 0118-9691471.

Able Active Friends

AAF offer a variety of social activities and days out for older people who otherwise may be lonely or isolated across the Wokingham Borough.

For more information please contact either Heather Woods or Angela Lawrence on 07776-409-287

Try something new for 2010

Tea Dance : first Thursday of the month at Emmanuel Hall, Southlake Crescent, Woodley—2pm till 4pm.

Line Dancing : second and fourth Thursday of the month at Emmanuel Hall, Southlake Crescent, Woodley—2pm till 4pm.

For further information please phone The Day Centre on 0118-9691471.



IT'S PARTY TIME

Did you know that we have a full 'Off Sales Licence' and can supply you drinks for your party or that special occasion. We also offer:

- Free Glass Loan Service
- Free Local Delivery

If we can help in any way please have a word with Les on 0118-9691471.

Are you looking for that special venue then just maybe we can help. During 2010 we are looking to offer our centre to companies or individuals wishing to take advantage of our superb modern facilities. Anything from a small meeting to a larger gathering can be accommodated.

We can offer:

1. On Site Catering
2. Licensed Bar
3. Friendly and helpful service.

Once again contact Les on 0118-9691471 for further assistance.

Alzheimer's Café

The café is going from strength to strength just as we had hoped. We have many guest speakers and every other month we hold a social evening. Transport can be provided, for further information contact Jan Hiles on 0118-9691471. The café is held on the second Thursday of the month:
11th February; 11th March; 8th April; 13th May; 10th June and 8th July.

Carer's Café

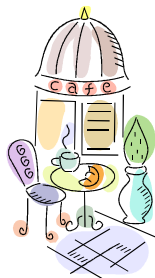
This is held at the Day Centre on the last Wednesday of the month from 3pm till 5pm. This is a place where Carers can meet other carers in a relaxed environment to share information and make new friends.

Bistro

The Bistro is the 3rd Sunday of every month. Bookings can be taken over the phone—0118-9691471 at a cost of £5 per person.

The Bistro is proving to be a very popular event with entertainment from Musicians, Barbershop singers and lots more. Good food, good company on a day when a great many of us feel isolated so why not give it a try. Dates for future Bistros are:-

21st February; 21st March; 18th April;
16th May; 20th June and 18th July.



Carer's Support Evening Service / Bathing Service

We are now able to offer extended Day Care / Evening Service. It is available on the following dates:

1st—6th; 19th—21st February
5th—7th; 14th—21st; 27th—28th March
23rd—24th April

So many older people have a problem with mobility so The Day Centre now offer a bathing service. With a Wet Room for those who prefer a shower and a bath with a hydraulic lift we feel we can cater for all requirements and preferences.

Respite Service

Carers can take a well deserved break by booking the person they care for into one of our 3 newly decorated bedrooms. Carers can be confident that their loved ones will receive a personal service and will be well looked after during their time with us. Two members of staff are on duty and in the evenings visitors will enjoy activities tailored to their preferences. This might include a manicure, pedicure or a trip to the pub! During the night one member of staff remains awake and the second sleeps in the building and is on call for emergencies. Short breaks at the centre can be arranged through Social Services, direct payments or privately.

Please contact Debbie Heffernan on 0118-9691474 if you would like to make use any of these services.

We are so proud of Ann's Award

Congratulations to Ann Parr on receiving the M.B.E. in the Queen's New Year Honours List.

Ann writes:- I received the letter from the Prime Ministers Office in November and remember reading it several times before it finally sunk in that I had been nominated for an award. Once I realised that, assuming the Queen gave her seal of approval, I would in fact be named in the New Year Honours List, I was very excited. At that point I wanted to tell everyone, but the letter stated that it had to be kept secret until the press were informed and that would not be until the end of December.

Sure enough the press rang on 27th December and congratulated me on the award, then I knew it was definitely going to happen, I could then tell family and staff.

I would like to thank the carers who nominated me —we have been looking after their wives for a number of years and also those at Woodley Age Concern for their support and commitment over several years. Also a big thank you to Dr. Jenny Miller (Chair of Woodley Age Concern) and the Management Committee who have encouraged me with all the new projects and services that we have developed. *Ann Parr M.B.E.*



STOP PRESS

***** Service

We are delighted that our Catering Operation at the Day Centre has now been awarded the highest 5* rating by Wokingham Borough Council following our recent food hygiene inspection. The system, known as 'Scores on the Doors' is a rating given to all food establishments and range from zero to five stars.

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Charity Merger

Age Concern and Help the Aged have joined forces. From April 2010 they will be known as 'Age UK'. We will be known as 'Age UK Woodley'

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Donations

If you would like to make a donation to the work of Woodley Age Concern you can do so by simply sending it to Les Green (Day Centre Manager) here at Woodley Age Concern.

Those who still pay tax can add to their donations by filling in a Gift Aid Form.