

# Vale 50+ Strategy Forum

## Fforwm Strategaeth Y Fro 50+

Vale 50+ Strategy Forum 2004-2014

Ten years of supporting people aged 50+ in the Vale

Giving you a stronger voice

*Rhoi llais cryfach i chi*



Autumn 2014  
Hydref 2014

# The Herald

Edition 22 2014  
Rhifyn 22 2014

Keep up to date with the Vale 50+ Strategy Forum

### The Future of the NHS

There is a constant stream of news items with the message that some parts of the NHS are being overwhelmed and the NHS is in crisis. Accident and Emergency departments are flooded by patients, many of whom should be dealt with by GPs. GPs complain about being overwhelmed by patient demand for appointments. Politicians constantly point to the increased population of old people and the rising tide of obesity, diabetes and dementia. Stories of neglect and poor care hit the headlines while the much greater provision of good quality care and treatment is scarcely mentioned. It is not surprising that individuals begin to feel guilty when they become ill or that sick people may feel they are being targeted as an unnecessary burden on the NHS.

Most of us who can recall the birth of the NHS see it as the crowning achievement of the post world war 2 government – a service free to all at the point of need, the costs shared fairly by the whole community and a service recognised world-wide as of high quality and excellent value for money. Despite this the current stresses and strains are there for all to see. What should be our response? One half of the equation lies within the health service the doctors, nurses, researchers and managers in embracing innovation and becoming more efficient.

Continued on page 13

### Forum Rewarded for Community Learning



Members of the Vale 50+ Strategy Forum being presented the 'Gail Hughes Award' on behalf of the Vale 50+ Strategy Forum, by Cllr. H. Hamilton Mayor of Vale of Glamorgan and NIACE representative back row first right.

The Vale 50+ Strategy Forum were invited to the Vale of Glamorgan Learning Journeys Festival Group Inspire Awards, which took place on the 19th June 2014 at the Glamorgan Suite, Memorial Hall Barry. The Forum were delighted to be nominated and awarded for 2014 the 'Gail Hughes Award' for helping to empower Community Learning here in the Vale of Glamorgan. The awards ceremony took place to recognise the achievements, and work of the organisations, and individual learners within adult learners categories.

**Inside this issue: The Future of the NHS. Wick across the Ages. OPAN Research. Hair Care in Winter. Transport & Travel in later life. Digital Technology. Falls Prevention. EXTEND Classes. Dementia Friends. Age Connects. Thoughts to make you smile. Info on using SKYPE. Your Local RSPCA in action. Caring for people and keeping them well. Research into the needs of older people. Older People's Commissioner for Wales. V.O.G.C. Older People's Champion. Vale 50+ Task Groups /Chairman's Reports.**



**Lynda Wallis chairman  
Vale 50+ Strategy Forum**

## **Welcome to the Vale 50+ Strategy Forum 22nd Edition 'Herald' Magazine 'Giving you a stronger voice'**

The year seems to disappear so quickly as here we are putting together the Autumn Edition of the Herald magazine already. We have been very busy since the last edition and we were also fortunate enough to be awarded a Certificate from NIACE in the Inspire Learning Awards 2014 and we were also the first recipient of the Gail Hughes Award for Community Learning.

This award is in memory of Gail Hughes who worked tirelessly for community learning; and we were very honoured that the Forum was selected to receive this award. We will have these awards on show at all of our events in the future to give members the opportunity of seeing them for themselves.

I was honoured once again to be selected to continue as Executive Chairman of the Forum and I am looking forward to the challenges ahead.

The Commissioner has launched "The Importance and Impact of Community Services within Wales" report which lays out the importance of the so called 'soft services' that Councils supply, such as public toilets, green spaces, public seating and libraries which are so important to older people and should not be abandoned easily. These are vital needs for older people, not just in the Vale of Glamorgan but throughout Wales. The Commissioner has also provided a "Best Practice Guidance for Engagement and Consultation with Older People on Changes to Community Services in Wales." Both of these documents are available from the Commissioner's office, tel: 08442 640 670 or on the website [ask@olderpeoplewales.com](mailto:ask@olderpeoplewales.com).

The Cardiff & Vale 3 Year Dementia Plan was launched on the 14<sup>th</sup> July which, it is hoped will address the needs of people with dementia and their carers over the next three years, as well as service future population growth. The Plan has been developed for people with dementia and their carers, in order that they can live well with dementia. It has been jointly developed between Cardiff and the Vale UHB, City of Cardiff Council, Vale of Glamorgan Council and Third sector partners including service users and carer representation. We as a forum will be part of this alliance and we will work to ensure its success for those with dementia now and those who will be affected in the future.

This is just some of the work that the forum is involved in and if you would like to take a more active part please contact John Porter on 01446 450201 or email [jporter@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:jporter@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk).

**Lynda Wallis  
Executive Chairman  
Vale 50+ Strategy Forum**

This publication has been made possible by funding from the Vale of Glamorgan Council

Bu'r cyhoeddiad hwn yn bosib oherwydd nawydd  
Gan Gyngor Bro Morgannwg



**If you want a range of information on topics for the over 50's, covering Housing, Health, Art Craft & Leisure, Age Equality, and Transport, plus information on Research Projects, Adult Education, and much more;**

**Vale 50+ Strategy Forum Website  
[valeopf.webplus.net](http://valeopf.webplus.net)  
*giving you a stronger voice***

## Wick Across the Ages



Much has been said and written about poor relationships between the young and the old in our communities and there are many excellent initiatives to improve them.

However young members from a small youth club at Wick in the Vale of Glamorgan decided to do something about it locally in their own way.

Many of the young people in the village do not have grandparents living locally and have little contact with older members of their community so a group of them decided that they should visit the pensioners to ask their views on how relationships could be improved.

**The above photo shows Councillor Elmore with members of Wick Youth Club and members of Wick Pensioners at the Youth Club's Open Evening launching "Wick across the Ages"**

They met the Wick Pensioners Group and discussed this with the members there and the pensioners agreed that it was an excellent idea for the Wick Pensioners Group and the Wick Youth Club to go on a trip and carry out some other activities together.

Next the young people made an application to Starbucks Youth Action for funding to support their project, which they called Wick Across the Ages and three of them attended a Dragon's Den style event in Cardiff where they had to 'make a pitch' for their funding to a panel of judges.

The judges must have liked the idea too as they were successful and were awarded over £1300 which will be spent over the next six months on a range of activities including a trip to Cardiff Bay, computer classes for the Pensioners, invite the pensioners to a Scary Halloween Tea Party, joint activities at the Pensioners Autumn Fair and culminating in a joint Christmas dinner in a local pub.

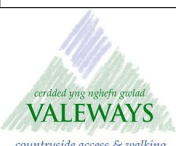
The Youth Club's Open Evening in July saw the official launch of Wick Across the Ages by Councillor Chris Elmore, Vale Cabinet member for Children's Services who paid tribute to the work of the young people in obtaining the funding and in their work with the pensioners to plan the different activities.

### **Conway Hawkins Wick Youth Club**

\*The Youth Club is open on Wednesday evenings 5pm to 6.30pm for those aged 7 to 10 and 6.45pm to 9.15pm for 11 to 24 year olds.

## Walk with Valeways

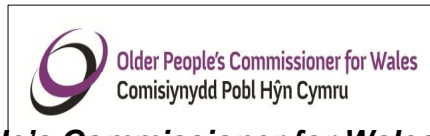
Valeways offers Coffee Shop Strollers, fully accessible walks, no more than one hour, with no steps, stiles or steep inclines. These walks are led by an experienced Walk Leader within a safe and sociable environment.



For full programme of walks contact Valeways 01446 749000 (limited office hours) or visit the website at [www.valeways.org.uk](http://www.valeways.org.uk)



Valeways Walkers May 2014



***'As The Older People's Commissioner for Wales, I am an independent voice and champion for all older people across Wales, standing up and speaking out on their behalf.' Sarah Rochira. Older People's Commissioner for Wales.***

**In this issue the Older People's Commissioner for Wales, Sarah Rochira, highlights some of her work to drive change for older people across Wales.**

### **Engagement Toolkit for Older People**

Many of the older people I have met and spoken with across Wales have told me that they do not know how to engage effectively with their Local Authority and often feel powerless when proposals are made to reduce or bring to an end essential community services that they rely upon, services often described as 'lifelines', such as local buses, public toilets and libraries. That is why I have published my Engagement Toolkit, a practical resource to help older people to make their voices heard and influence and challenge the decisions being made in their communities, decisions that could have a significant impact on their lives.



Sarah Rochira talking to older people during one of her many visits around Wales.

The Toolkit clearly outlines what older people should expect from their Local Authority in terms of engagement and consultation and highlights how older people can get involved in these processes. It also provides a range of other practical resources, including a set of key questions and checklist for older people to use throughout the engagement process, a sample letter to Local Authorities and a comprehensive directory of contacts who may be able to provide vital help and support.

Alongside the Toolkit, I have also used my statutory powers to issue formal Guidance to Local Authorities, making clear their duty to ensure full, meaningful and effective engagement and consultation with older people when changes to community services are proposed and key decisions are made.

It is essential that older people's voices are at the heart of decisions made about essential community services. That's why, as Commissioner, I want to ensure that older people across Wales have the knowledge, resources and support to have the strongest voice possible, a voice that is heard, listened to and acted upon, so they can work effectively with their Local Authorities and influence the decisions that affect their lives.

### **Residential Care Review**

As part of my work to drive up the quality of health and social care for older people in Wales, in October 2013 I launched my Residential Care Review into the quality of life and care of older people living in care homes in Wales.

The aim of my Review, which is the biggest of its kind ever undertaken in Wales, is to ensure that quality of life sits at the heart of residential care in Wales, considering factors such as physical and psychological health, social relationships and the care home environment.

The extensive evidence I have gathered for my Review includes over 2,000 survey responses from older people and their families about their experiences of residential care, as well as written and oral evidence from 143 public and statutory bodies, third sector organisations and other groups representing older people across Wales. An essential part of my Review has been visiting 100 care homes across Wales to hear directly from older people about their quality of life. My Review Report, which will be published in November this year, will highlight the best of care, but will also clearly illustrate the impact that poor quality of life and care has upon the lives of older people. My requirements for action will also ensure that the bodies subject to my Review take action to deliver the change required so that older people living in residential care can have the best quality of life.

**To download the Engagement Toolkit, or for further information about the Commissioner's work to drive change for older people across Wales, visit [www.olderpeoplewales.com](http://www.olderpeoplewales.com). 08442 640670 (standard rate) or 02920 445030 (local no.) - we can return your call if preferred .**



Cllr. Stuart Egan

## **A Few Words from the Vale of Glamorgan Council Older People's Champion**

I must begin by offering my congratulations on the forum's ten year anniversary and the achievements gained through the hard work and dedication of the executive and task group workers. I would like to take the opportunity to thank a founder member, former executive chairman Mike Edwards, who has decided to retire as the executive vice chairman. I am pleased that Mike will be continuing as an executive member and also as the chairman of the transport group. Also thanks to Mian Majeed who was an executive member for 9 years and contributed to the local and national equality agenda and who has now retired from being an active forum member. I would also like to congratulate the forum on their recent success at the local Niace adult community learning awards, where the forum became the first recipients of the Gail Hughes annual commemoration award. The award is for groups whose learning has benefited the community and was much deserved.

I was as always pleased to welcome members to the forum's AGM and enjoyed the range of presentations. Peter Welsh, General Manager of Llandough Hospital outlined the hospital new build projects which will provide a range of state of the art health care, in particular in regards to stroke and mental health. Maria Battle, Chair of Cardiff and Vale University Health Board provided an overview of future plans for older people's health care in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. Maria outlined the board's vision to further develop older people's health care provision and its commitment to improving current services. An example of just one of the service improvements highlighted was the dramatic reduction in the numbers of cancelled operations over the last year.

The Vale of Glamorgan Council is supporting a number of new exciting local initiatives in support of older people including, a pilot dementia supportive community project in the communities first area in Barry. Older people who experience chronic illness will be supported to live independently with the assistance of workers including domiciliary staff who will be trained to identify a range of needs including home adaptations and welfare rights. These workers will then phone Contact One Vale and dedicated staff will ensure that the residents then receive the appropriate services necessary to enable them to remain at home. We are also supporting the Communities 2.0 digital inclusion project that will offer residents individually tailored computer and I-pad training. This project recognises the importance of ensuring older people have the skills and confidence to use some of the technology that others may take for granted.

As you are aware all local authorities are facing difficult decisions at the moment due to the present budget cuts. The Vale of Glamorgan Council is very aware of how important local services are to older people, services including transport, public toilets, adult learning and libraries. Change under the pressure we are experiencing is unavoidable; however we are doing our utmost to engage with partners and residents to develop innovative ways to maintain community services.

I recently attended a conference hosted by the Older Peoples Commissioner for Wales, on providing high quality community services for older people. The conference provided an excellent opportunity for my Cabinet colleagues and I to discuss with a wide range of partners how we can maintain adequate service provision with dwindling resources. The Older Peoples Commissioner for Wales is working with local authority older people's strategy coordinators to develop specific actions to take forward the Ageing Well programme objectives. The actions proposed will offer us guidance on how we can further support the needs of the over fifties in line with our signing of the Dublin Declaration, which links us to an all Wales network of Age Friendly Communities and Cities. Our commitment is to ensure that the needs of older people are factored in to all aspects of our environmental and service planning in the future.

Finally I just wanted to acknowledge the excellent work achieved through partnership working with the Barry Town Council in introducing the Pop up Library provision for the citizens of Barry. It was officially launched on the 8<sup>th</sup> August at Baltimore House, Park Road, Barry.

**Councillor Stuart Egan.  
Vale Older People's Champion,  
Vale of Glamorgan Council**

## **Vale 50+ Strategy Forum Health Group News**

The Health group aims to keep members informed of developments in health services in Cardiff and the Vale and of key health issues which concern older people. At recent meetings we have had presentations on Llandough hospital, dementia care, and the “optimizing outcomes” policy of the Health Board (to support smoking cessation and weight loss). We are pleased that the “optimising outcomes” policy has been amended to take account of our concerns. And have been assured that no one will be disadvantaged on the waiting list if they take up the opportunity of attending a smoking cessation or weight loss course. We appreciate the excellent contributions from our expert speakers.

Members of the Health Group attend the Vale Council for Voluntary Service “Network Meetings” and the Health and Wellbeing meetings organised by Health Board public health staff. We are also represented on the health board “Patient feedback Steering Group”. From time to time we feed comments on services from Vale residents to the Health Board and advice on how to pursue a complaint or concern via the Community Health Council’s Advocacy service. Group members and other Forum members have performed a valuable role in commenting on draft patient leaflets for the Health Board. Communication with patients is vital in providing good quality health services and the Health Board has appreciated our help with this. Recently we sent a response to the Health Board’s consultation on services for older people.

We are not only concerned with local issues but comment on all Wales health policy. The group has responded to two Welsh Government consultations – on integrating health and social care services and on the need for a public health bill in Wales. An important issue has been the progress of the South Wales Plan for reducing the number of hospital sites providing full A&E services and neonatal and paediatric services. It now appears likely that the Princess of Wales Hospital will retain these specialised services which will be reassuring to residents in the Western Vale. The plans have generated much public discussion and the Health Minister, Mark Drakeford, has set up an independent review of hospital reorganisation plans. This means there will be further delay before final decisions are made.

A few years ago it was feared that Llandough Hospital would decline into a run -down old people’s home on the hill. Now it is regarded as a key plank in the Health Board’s aim of providing high quality services throughout Cardiff and the Vale. Llandough Hospital is becoming a centre for rehabilitation expertise and in 2015/2016 there will be a new Plaza which will open at the same time as the new Adult Mental Health Unit under construction at the moment. The Plaza will provide a variety of services (information, retail outlets, food and drink, cash machines) and the Forum was one of the groups providing comments on the services to be offered. Changes to the structure of the Health Board mean that Llandough Hospital (in addition to all its other services) will develop into a centre of excellence in the care and treatment of older people in Cardiff and the Vale.

Join us, either as a continuing member or to attend particular meetings you are interested in. In the autumn we will be turning our attention again to encouraging older people to have the flu vaccination and having a strong focus on preventing falls. If you have a concern or a health issue you would like the group to focus on, contact us via details in this magazine.

**Ron Walton: Chairman Health Group, Vale 50+ Strategy Forum**

The Vale 50+ Strategy Forum is always looking for enthusiastic people aged 50+ to join our five task groups. Age Equality, Housing, Health, Art Craft and Leisure, and Transport to help raise issues/lobby for positive changes for people aged 50+. The groups meet separately on a bi-monthly basis in the Vale of Glamorgan. Reasonable transport costs to these meetings will be reimbursed. If you would like further information on any of the above groups, and meeting dates, please contact John Porter Older People’s Coordinator on 01446 450201 email [jporter@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:jporter@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

## **OPAN (Older People & Ageing Research & Development Project): 'Attention in Ageing.'**

Two members of the Vale 50+ Strategy Forum Executive travelled to Swansea University in June, to assist the OPAN team with their current research programme. The team also included staff from the Departments of Psychology and Computer Sciences. The study was funded by BTG (Bridging the Gap) seed corn funding. Importantly, it had been ethically approved by the Psychology Research Ethics Committee at Swansea University. The aim of the study was to ascertain what older members of the public understood about attention, its relevance in everyday life and any changes experienced due to ageing.

Three focus groups were offered to the public. Candidates were chosen on the grounds of age, 65 or over, and also their good general health. Jim Loach and Gill Davies attended the first of these focus groups. Each group numbered approximately six people. After introductions the OPAN team explained that the initial part of the research would be tape recorded. The discussion that followed highlighted the concerns of the group in respect of their cognitive functions. The focus was on memory detail and how ageing can inhibit certain areas of information selection. Personal experiences highlighted the concerns that ageing often presents. The second part of the research involved testing on an individual basis. These computer based attention tests concentrated on numerical ordering. In all, thirty combinations were presented to each individual to measure their accurate attention spans. All research conducted by OPAN is treated in confidence and is ongoing. The results of all three focus groups will be used clinically to develop future programmes relating to daily attention functioning.

Contacts: Dr. A. Tales. Associate Professor: Department of Psychology, Swansea University. A.Tales@swansea.ac.uk  
Monika Hare. Research Development Officer: OPAN Swansea University. m.hare@swansea.ac.uk

**Gill Davies: Vale 50+ Strategy Forum Executive Member.**

## **Telecare in the Vale of Glamorgan for safe and independent living**



'Telecare' refers to a range of services and devices which use technology to enable vulnerable people to live with greater independence and safety within and outside their own home. Telecare may be the only service an individual receives, or may complement other services as part of a care package. Telecare devices are usually linked to the 24-hour a day, 365-days a year monitoring Centre at Contact One Vale (C1V) in Barry, where trained operators are quickly alerted to an accident or emergency and take appropriate action. Alternatively, bespoke Telecare services may be directly linked to an on-site personal carer via a pager, or may be 'stand alone' (e.g. an automatic reminder to take medication).

**There are currently 2 levels of service available:**

**TeleV** consists of a range of equipment which supports both personal and environmental safety. The individual is connected to the monitoring centre via user-friendly monitoring equipment attached to a conventional phone and electrical socket. Individuals are also provided with a wireless trigger pendant, which can be worn around the neck, wrist or on a belt. Additional sensors provided will automatically trigger an alarm call when smoke, extreme temperatures or carbon monoxide are detected. TeleV is available to all residents of the Vale of Glamorgan for £4.75 per week, plus a fixed installation fee of £59.50.

**TeleV+** provides a more bespoke, specialised service to help individuals manage greater risks to their safety and independence, perhaps as part of an overall care package. Specialised equipment may assist with conditions such as epilepsy; dementia and wandering; mobility or instability problems and falls; the need for medication reminders and enablement after leaving hospital. TeleV+ is also available to all residents of the Vale of Glamorgan. Depending on their assessment and circumstances, individuals may have to contribute towards the weekly cost of the service.

**For further information about Telecare services Contact CIV (Contact 1 Vale) on  
01446 700111**

## Vale 50+ Strategy Forum Art Craft and Leisure Group. (A.C.L.)

The March meeting of ACL introduced the members to George Davies. George, a retired miner from Bridgend, a friend and colleague of Mari Major, was at 92 still actively involved with hospital charity fundraising. He gave an amusing and often colourful account of a life spent working underground. He had started as a boy of fourteen working at the coal face and had survived 47 years in the industry. He had retired in 1984 as a mines safety inspector. His life story reflected the many changes that had taken place during the history of British Coal.

Ellie Lewis a founder member of ACL, gave the Group an interesting demonstrative talk in May on the art of Decoupage. Originating from China in the 12th Century, this art of layering card and paper did not reach Europe until the mid 18th Century. Historically an art communication of the lower classes, it evolved into a fashion statement used by wealthier social groups. Ellie Lewis learnt her craft at Palmerston Community Centre Barry. She now teaches there as a volunteer supporting beginners to progress their craft.

The July meeting of ACL welcomed back Jeanne Harvey. A member of the Vale 50+ Media group, Jeanne had delighted members with her interesting talk on Norfolk Island in 2012. On this occasion 'The Green Line' was her subject of presentation. She introduced the history and culture of Cyprus as a documentary drama.

An Island that had witnessed many invaders. These commenced with the early Romans, leading onto the Knights Templar during the Middle Ages.

In 1878 Cyprus was placed under British Administration, until in 1960 when it gained its independence. Britain maintained sovereignty over her two military bases. A year later the Island became a member of the Commonwealth.

The Green Line drawn up in 1974 geographically divided the two cultures. Each had a separate but shared existence within the Island. . Nicosia was a divided capital City within a divided Island.

In 1983 the Turkish Cypriots declared independence and north of the Green Line became the Turkish Republic of North Cyprus. This further emphasized the separation of these two nationalities.

A fascinating place to visit, with numerous secular buildings and ecclesiastical shrines. Enough to satisfy the most discerning of palates.

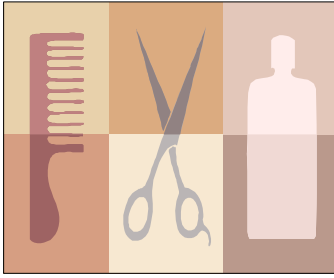


Peace Monument above the Landing Beach in North Cyprus



Turkish Breakfast

**More information about ACL meetings can be found on Vale 50+ Strategy Forum website [valeopf.webplus.net/arts.html](http://valeopf.webplus.net/arts.html)  
Gill Davies : Chairperson : ACL Group  
Vale 50+ Strategy Forum**



## **Hair Care everyday and winter** **By James R Satchell** **Artistic Director of Satchells Hair Salon**

**People are always concerned when their hair starts to become dry in the winter months. As a busy stylist I am asked these questions yearly and here is how I answer my clients.**

Cold winds, dropping temperatures and excessive styling can cause havoc and damage your hair in the winter months.

I recommend the use of a good conditioner to help restore natural moisture and glossiness. A good conditioner will also help with reducing tangles when brushing. For great results try combing the conditioner with a wide toothed comb, gently from ends to roots. If your hair still feels dry, then a deep conditioning treatment should be applied once a week. This can either be done at home or in a salon.

Also another way to maintain healthy looking hair is to have regular hair cuts. I recommend every six to eight weeks no matter what your length of hair. Coloured hair is more prone to splitting, the older the hair gets the more likely to break (this is for all age groups).

You could also really help your hair, by reducing the amount of heat damage caused at home. straighteners, tongs, Heated rollers and even your hair dryers can all cause serious damage. By reducing the heat temperature and not holding the equipment for long on each section, you are already helping your hair.

Looking after your hair doesn't come from just using the correct products or equipment, it also comes from within. A healthy diet can improve hair condition and also skin and nails. Green vegetables, pulses and fresh fruits, particularly pears and avocados. Fish that contain essential fatty acids, iron and vitamin B12, such as tuna, salmon, mackerel and sardines – will help add condition to your hair. Daily multivitamins will also help. Whilst some medication can dry out the hair, if your hair does feel different after starting new medication and you are concerned speak with your GP and also your stylist as they may have products that can help restore your hair's condition.

I hope these few tips will help maintain your hair's healthy condition through the winter months and all year round.

**Satchells, Dinas House, Wick Road, Ewenny, Vale of Glamorgan, CF35 5BL**



### ***Vale Centre for Voluntary Services*** ***Supporting Voluntary Action in the Vale of Glamorgan***

VCVS provides support, information and advice for voluntary and community groups that serve in the Vale of Glamorgan. For more information contact: VCVS Tel: 01446 741706 Fax: 01446 421442 Email: [vcvs@valecvvs.org.uk](mailto:vcvs@valecvvs.org.uk) Website: [www.vcvs.org.uk](http://www.vcvs.org.uk) Barry Community Enterprise Centre, Skomer Road, Barry CF62 9DA Registered Charity No 1062388 Company No 3332790

## Travel and Transport in Later Life

Despite being in better health and physically fitter than ever before, older people still report great difficulty in accessing shops, banks and hospitals and to stay connected to local communities; especially when no longer driving. The need to be mobile and to travel is also related to psychological wellbeing in old age and a reduction in mobility can result in an increase in isolation, loneliness and depression and overall a poorer quality of life. Sadly around 342,000 in the UK over 75 year olds in the U.K. 'feel trapped' in their own homes through lack of suitable transport. In this article I want to explore four elements of travel and mobility in later life. First, to expunge the myth that older drivers are a particular danger on the road and need to be given a test. Secondly, the importance of free bus travel. Third, how to create age friendly pedestrian areas. Finally the role that cycling could play, all hopefully citing mobility and accessibility could be improved in later life.

**Should we test older drivers?** On a chart (see figure 1) of casualties by age resulting from road traffic accidents per mile driven, you will see an increase in number of casualties from around 75 and certainly 80 years of age. However, much of this increase is because the older person is more likely to be susceptible to injury or death due to increased frailty and is especially an issue for those who drive a low number of miles. Interestingly, countries that have more stringent licencing for older people (such as in New South Wales, Denmark, Norway and Sweden) do not have any fewer road traffic casualties among that age group than in places with relaxed procedures (such as in the UK with self-report), suggesting introducing a test would not necessarily have a positive effect. Many countries are relaxing their licencing for older people as a consequence. Finally we are seeing increasing automation of vehicles, perhaps with full automation possible in the future, this changes dramatically who might be able to drive a vehicle and opens opportunities up for continuing driving in later life.

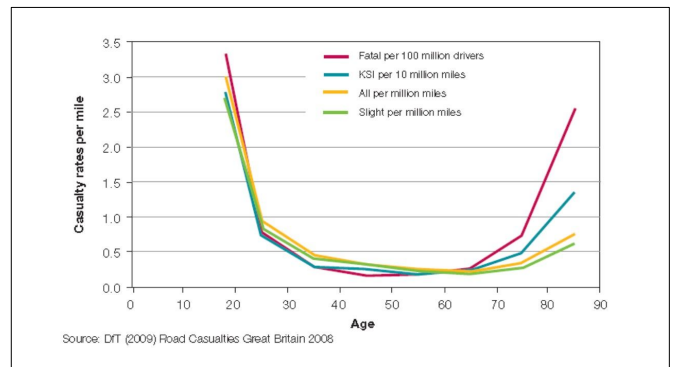


Figure 1

That said, not all older people are good drivers, however, and many of the things associated with old age can affect driving including changes in physical health, eyesight, hearing, cognition (e.g. memory, attention, distraction etc.) Also, since driving is a fairly automatic skill, we don't always notice subtle changes in our driving ability and it is always a good idea to seek advice on driving ability from others, from family and friends that you trust and can give valid feedback. Then it may be useful to visit one of the local driver assessment centres or book a driving instructor to give you some professional feedback and tips on staying on the road. Planning to give-up driving and working out new ways of getting out and about without the car using lifts, public transport, taxis or walking, is best done way in advance of needing to give-up driving, so best to start from a young age!

### **The value of the free bus pass**

The free bus pass for the over 65s has been excellent in meeting practical needs, for example helping to meet essential health care appointments and shopping needs, reducing missed appointments and providing access to variety of goods. It can improve health by creating space for exercise, for example taking people to places for walking, and in creating walking to and from the bus stops themselves. It is also good for mental health. The bus becomes a focus of social activity itself, with many going for journeys for their own sake, sometimes not even knowing where the route will take them, something that is traditionally missed when giving-up the car.

## Transport and Travel in Later Life continued

However, there must be provision of bus services in the first instance and in the current climate of cuts in local authority funding reducing services is a reality that can have detrimental effect on those that need them most. In addition, the buses must be accessible, have comfortable, sheltered places to sit and wait, with good information on services provided.

Many bus companies are also providing training for bus drivers to understand older people's needs, helping older people gain confidence in using the bus that the drivers will be patient and help with payment and ticket types and not drive off until being seated.



Figure 2

### **Age Friendly Pedestrian Areas**

We need to create environments for older people that they are able to walk in. Cracked pavements, steep steps, unlit areas are all too commonly barriers to getting out and about. Lack of toilets and lack of benches are often cited as reducing the accessibility for older people too. But it is also about desirability of an area, there must be something that pulls people to want to get out and about, decent shops with understanding and friendly staff, affordable coffee or tea shops, attractive architecture, a sense of place and history remembered and revealed. All too often these elements are forgotten, as needs of different users ignored.

Modern town or city centres have prioritised commercial interests over social, the worst of these a lack of places to sit, forcing people into expensive café and coffee shops and the advent of big television sets in city squares, as if we can't live without our televisions for the time we want to visit the shops (see figure 2).

A big issue is also crossing the road. The Department for Transport in the UK set the suggested crossing speed for a pedestrian at 1.2m/s. Countless studies suggest this is way too quick for older people and in my recent study 85% of all older people and 94% of women, over 65, did not walk at this speed, making crossing the road inapproachable and dangerous. Smart crossings that follow people as they cross, only turning back to green for vehicles once completion of crossing has occurred should be rolled out.

### **A note on improving cycling**

Cycling is great for fitness and health for older people and has less impact on hips and joints as other cardio-vascular activity such as running, yet in the UK only 1% of all journeys by the over 65s are made by bicycle; compare this to 15% in Denmark and 23% in Netherlands. We need better supportive infrastructure and a change in attitude; roads are not just for cars and cycling isn't just for the young.

### **Conclusion**

Driving is often felt to be a panacea in later life, as it enables almost door-to-door travel with little physical or cognitive effort. Research shows that giving-up driving is usually associated with a huge increase in depression and poorer health. However, planning to give-up driving, gathering information on alternatives, trying them out before having to give-up driving altogether can help, as can emotional and practical support from family and friends. We need to improve the accessibility and desirability of our urban and pedestrian areas, shout about the benefits of free bus travel and possibly look to active travel such as cycling to help improve life beyond the car in later life.

**Dr Charles Musselwhite, Associate Professor in Gerontology, Centre for Innovative Ageing, Swansea University**

**c.b.a.musselwhite@swansea.ac.uk**

'See Musselwhite, C. (2011) Successfully giving up driving for older people . Discussion Paper. International Longevity Centre—UK '

## **'Hello, Brazil?'**

### **Overcoming Isolation with Digital Technologies**

Research has shown that isolation is a negative health factor equal to smoking 15 cigarettes a day. Isolation can also be a problem in rural communities in particular, where cutbacks to public transportation and other services have made the situation more difficult still. Making use of the many benefits of the internet can be one way to mitigate isolation.

Former Environment Secretary Owen Patterson is one of many who champion digital technologies in order to help reducing isolation. He pinpointed the rollout of broadband to rural areas as something that would be a 'huge social gain for elderly people' and added that 'the biggest thing we can do for people is to get broadband into our most remote communities'. With the Welsh Government's Digital Wales initiative, the vast majority of households in Wales are soon to have access to fast and reliable broadband internet. But what is it about the internet that can help to overcome isolation? Statistics speak of increases in wellbeing and a significant drop in depression for those who regularly connect to the internet, in addition to other benefits such as saving hundreds of pounds per year from being able to compare prices online. Most of all however, digital technologies can bring people closer together.

A powerful example for how the internet helps to connect people can be found in an educational experiment set up by a language school in Brazil. Faced with the challenge of how to bring its language students into contact with native English speakers, CNA schools set up the 'Speaking Exchange' programme. This allowed language students in Brazil to connect to elderly Americans living in a retirement home in Chicago, moving from initial set topics to break the ice to free conversations. It's such a great, simple idea: Young Brazilians want to learn English. Elderly Americans living in retirement homes just want someone to talk to. Why not connect them? With the help of the internet, they could do just that.



The Speaking Exchange experiment has been documented in a touching video. It shows that as the young Brazilians and older Americans connect via Web chats, they not only begin to share a language, but develop relationships that enrich both sides culturally and emotionally. The video can be accessed through the following link:

**<http://cna.com.br/speakingexchange>**

### **We are here to help you to use computers**

Would you like to watch the video, but don't know how? Or perhaps you are interested in learning how to use free video chats to keep in touch with your friends and relatives? Get the Vale Online and Getting on with IT are two projects run by the Vale Centre for Voluntary Services, dedicated to supporting those who have either never used a computer before or would like to gain more confidence if they already do. Whether it is a vetted volunteer coming to you or you visiting one of our digital drop-in sessions, the support we offer is friendly, open and free of charge.

If you would like to try using a computer, please get in touch with someone from the Get the Vale Online project by calling 01446 741706 or contact Vale of Glamorgan Council Older People's Coordinator John Porter on 01446 450201 email [jporter@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:jporter@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

**More information is also available online under [www.getthevaleonline.org.uk](http://www.getthevaleonline.org.uk)**

Care needs to be provided as close to people in the community as possible and patients only admitted to hospital when it is the only safe place to give expert care and treatment. Patients should be in hospital for as short a time as possible and discharged back into the community as soon as they are well enough. More patients should be treated as day patients, minimising the risk of hospital infections and maximising the use of hospital resources. Community care and treatment services need to be expanded and more of the medical and nursing workforce based in the community or splitting their time between hospital and community settings.

The other half of the equation is encouraging all citizens to take responsibility for their own health. People may have a general reluctance and resistance to being told what to do based on fears of a “nanny” state coupled with childhood memories of being told to “eat your greens” and hating it. But would any of us actually choose to have a stroke, heart attack or develop cancer? The evidence is crystal clear about how easy it is to reduce the risks of experiencing these diseases and extend our years of relatively healthy life. None of this takes enormous effort or expense and represents value for effort at the personal level. Taking regular physical exercise, eating and drinking moderately, meeting people and stimulating our brains do not equate to attempting to climb Mount Everest or completing the Tour de France. A healthier lifestyle will never guarantee that we will not become ill but it substantially reduces the risks and also increases the potential to benefit from treatment.

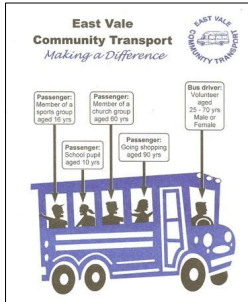
The NHS can survive but we need a new covenant between the providers within the NHS and citizens. We can rightly expect the NHS to treat and care for us in ill-health. But the NHS community can also expect each of us to take some responsibility for looking after our own health. Would any of us deliberately step in front of a lorry? No. But this is exactly what we are doing if we do not care enough about our own health. Make a start by taking the free NHS Health Check: [addtoyourlife.co.uk](http://addtoyourlife.co.uk).

**Ron Walton Chairman Health Group Vale 50+ Strategy Forum**

**AUDREY EVELYN JONES**  
**1929 – 2014**

It was with great sadness we heard of the passing of Audrey Jones who was a founder member of this forum and served on the Executive Group for many years and until her recent illness continued to serve on the Age Equality Group. Audrey was a great campaigner and in particular campaigned for legislation prohibiting violence against women and girls. She believed in the rights of older people and worked with the Age Equality group to prevent ageism and elder abuse and other forms of discrimination. Audrey will be greatly missed by her family and friends and by colleagues who worked closely with her in her work. Audrey gained her BA at Southampton University and did her teacher training in London and Manchester. She married and came to Wales in 1959 and had a successful career in secondary education and became Senior Mistress of Penarth Secondary Modern now St Cyres. In July 1990 she retired from teaching and began a second career as a campaigner. She was a co-founder in 1984 and chair for many years of the UN accredited Wales Assembly for Women, she attended UN conferences and worked for a gender perspective to be fundamental to teacher education; she was also passionate about the arts and women’s role in them. She is a great loss and will be greatly missed.

**Lynda Wallis**  
**Chairman Vale 50+ Strategy Forum**



John Huish Right and Clive Carreyett left

## Transport for the people By the people, In Danger.

Two comfortable minibuses, specially adapted for use by disabled people, are available for hire at very reasonable cost from East Vale Community Transport, based in Penarth. The service is chiefly used by groups, such as the Llandough residents who for the last 12 years have travelled in an EVCT bus every Thursday to go to local supermarkets. What makes the service special is that two volunteer drivers collect people from their homes making it possible for those with mobility problems to get out and do their own shopping.

However, the service is in danger. After twelve years with EVCT, volunteer drivers John Huish and Clive Carreyett will celebrate their 70th birthdays this year, meaning they lose their eligibility for insurance to drive the minibus. Clive and John have found sharing the work very rewarding and recommend the volunteering opportunity.

**Could you take their place? All you have to do is contact Alun Harper, office co-ordinator based at West House, Penarth by telephoning 029 20705138 or email [eastvale.ct06@virgin.net](mailto:eastvale.ct06@virgin.net)**

Wherever you are in the eastern part of the Vale, you could be involved as a trustee, a driver or user member. Please consider it and contact Alun as above. He can also give you more information about the work of East Vale Community Transport, which receives funding from the Vale of Glamorgan Council.



## Vinyl still lives on!

I got my first single record 'Love me do' when I was about twelve years old. From then on I would save pocket money and go down to the

Record Store and listen to the singles and L.P.s of the time in the 'music booths'.

As I got older and had more cash I went on to buy L.P.s. I can still remember falling in love with 'Bridge over Troubled Water' L.P. by Simon and Garfunkel. I was quite offended when I went into the record store and bought it to be told by the counter staff that it would never catch on. I believe it stayed in the top twenty L.P. charts for over 40 weeks, so I had the last laugh!

During my twenties my record collection grew, with classics such as 'Dark Side of the Moon' and many others. I stopped collecting L.P.s in my thirties, but in my fifties I started to collect L.P.s again. I missed the ritual of getting my long player carefully out of its cover, wiping it gently with a cloth to get the dust off, and gently placing it onto the turntable. To me personally the music sounds better, I love the tactile feeling of records, and some of the art work of the covers is amazing. My record collection has now blossomed again; with over 500 L.P.s and a few singles. My collection ranges from Ella Fitzgerald & Louis Armstrong, to Z Z Top, Four Tops, George Michael, Rod Stewart, Edith Piaf, Bob Dylan, Pavarotti, Boomtown Rats, Elvis to name but a few!

A few years ago you could get good quality L.P.s in charity shops. Good quality records are not so easy to find these days, as there are more people now interested in collecting them. There also seems to be more specialist record shops selling L.P.s which is a mini mecca for the L.P. enthusiast! Some L.P.s can be worth considerable sums of money but they must be in very good condition, with good quality covers and posters, song sheets etc. still enclosed.

**Jane Weldon Vale 50+ Strategy Forum**

## **Housing Group**

Early in the year within the Housing Group there was a change in Chairmanship when Lynda Wallis stood down as chairman and that post devolved to me, Julian Loach, who was the then Vice Chairman of the group. Thanks were extended to Lynda for the work she had put into the management of the group during her time in the Chair. We also took the opportunity to wish her the very best on her marriage to Jack Hawkins.

The future of the group will not alter a great deal. I want to build on our good relationship with the Vale Housing Agencies. Work will continue with companies and associations that will help us understand housing problems they encounter and where and if we, the Forum, can help in assisting them reconcile those problems. Our consultative work with the Older Peoples Commissioner for Wales is on going. What is important to me is engaging with those people who need help at "grass root" level. Very often the necessary help is there but does not get to them. There are executive members of other groups within the Forum who are already addressing this problem and doing it very well. I intend to join them.

We have very interesting bi monthly meetings with speakers dealing with topical and meaningful issues and I take this opportunity to invite members to attend. Our speakers make a great contribution to helping the group understand how local authorities approach and solve the problems facing today's housing market. Several developments are coming to fruition, the Old Barry Magistrates Court development should be near completion by the end of the year and Golau Caredig, the old cinema, is scheduled to open subject to open within the Autumn subject to there being no further delays. Anyone interested in becoming member of the Housing Group should contact the Forum Coordinator John Porter, whose details are enclosed in the magazine.

## **Julian Loach Chairman Housing Group Vale 50+ Strategy Forum**

## **Falls Prevention**

Falling is one of the most common causes of hospital admissions for older people today, and with it comes the inevitable problems associated with getting back to full health after a fall again and in some cases the misery of social isolation. Falling may be considered a hazard that older people will face, but it is one that we can do something about. This comes in the form of general care about our home, personal care and benefitting from becoming more active.

In the home, we should look out for, slippery carpets / floors, no loose cables to form trips, ensure that suitable indoor foot wear is worn, ensure medication is taken as prescribed, should you wear spectacles ensure that your sight is checked regularly, seek advice regarding foot problems either through the doctor or the practice nurse, the list is endless.

By becoming more active, there are many benefits, increasing flexibility, improving balance and co-ordination, attaining a sense of achievement and increasing confidence, coping with the everyday chores in life and an overall improved sense of wellbeing. Participating in a regular exercise session once a week, following a short regime every day at home will be of great benefit to older adults.

It is planned that at the beginning of October the Forum will have an exercise leader trained by Age Cymru who will be able to deliver exercise sessions aimed at helping to prevent falls and improving general fitness levels. The sessions are not falls specific; they are a general course to improve the overall fitness level of an individual but will impact on improved stability. The sessions will be fun and enjoyable and be able to be done standing or seated or a mixture of both if you like. What is, of course, important is that you are confident you are able to embark on an exercise session, if in doubt seek the advice of a medical professional but most people are able to participate. Further Details will become available on the Forum's website in due course.

## **Julian Loach Executive Vice Chairman Vale 50+ Strategy Forum**

**Hi! My name is Shirley Dodd-Clark and I run EXTEND classes in the Vale of Glamorgan. So, what are EXTEND classes? Please read on....**

**EXTEND (EXercise for The Elderly aNd Disabled);** Extend is gentle movement to music for older people or less able people of any age with at least 20 minutes seated exercises. EXTEND is primarily for people to get together, improve their sense of well being, increase mobility, stamina and flexibility: thus maintain their independence but also very importantly to meet others, share life and have FUN. The EXTEND organisation is a registered charity see [www.extend.org.uk](http://www.extend.org.uk). It provides EXTEND teachers with the initial training course and my public liability insurance is purchased through them. However, once qualified, EXTEND teachers have to operate self employed. In January 2014 I decided to start an open class in St Athan: this has proved very popular and I now find I am running 2 more open classes in the Vale. I have a vast range of ages attending these classes: 55-100! So far, we are enjoying ourselves and people keep coming back! Therefore, I would like to invite readers of this magazine to come along and give it a go. Carers are very welcome; wheelchair users are catered for as all venues have the appropriate facilities. Also, I will adapt the exercise routines appropriately. I list below the dates and times of classes: I look forward to meeting you.

**Monday: 10.30-11.30 Murchfield Community Hall, Sunnycroft Lane, Dinas Powys**

**Tuesday: 2.00-3.30 the Gathering Place, St Athan**

**Thursday: 11.00-12.00 Rhoose Community Centre, Stewart Road, Rhoose**

These are open, drop in classes and cost £4.00 per session which includes use of equipment and refreshments afterwards. **Please contact me on 01446 751077 or email [shirleyadc@aol.co.uk](mailto:shirleyadc@aol.co.uk) for more information.**

**Helo! Fy enw i yw Shirley Dodd-Clark ac rwy'n cynnal dosbarthiadau EXTEND ym Mro Morgannwg. Beth felly yw dosbarthiadau EXTEND? Darllenwch mwy....**

**EXTEND (EXercise for The Elderly aNd Disabled);** mae Extend yn symud esmwyth i gerddoriaeth ar gyfer pobl hŷn neu bobl lai abl o unrhyw oedran gydag o leiaf 20 munud o ymarfer corff wrth eistedd i lawr. Prif nod EXTEND yw dod â phobl at ei gilydd, gwella'u hymdeimlad o les, cynyddu symudedd, stamina ac ystwythder: gan gynnal eu hannibyniaeth ond yr elfen bwysig yw cwrdd ag eraill, rhannu bywyd a chael HWYL. Mae sefydliad EXTEND yn elusen gofrestredig, ewch i [www.extend.org.uk](http://www.extend.org.uk). Mae'n rhoi cwrs hyfforddiant cychwynnol i athrawon EXTEND a gellir prynu fy yswiriant atebolrwydd cyhoeddus trwy'r wefan hon. Fodd bynnag, pan fydd athrawon wedi cymhwyso, bydd yn rhaid i athrawon EXTEND weithio'n hunangyflogedig. Fis Ionawr 2014 penderfynais agor dosbarth agored yn Sain Tathan: roedd hwn yn hynod boblogaidd ac rydw i bellach yn cynnal 2 ddosbarth agored arall yn y Fro. Mae gen i ystod eang o oedrannau yn dod i'r dosbarthiadau hyn: 55-100! Hyd yn hyn, rydym yn mwynhau ein hunain ac mae pobl yn dychwelyd tro ar ôl tro! Felly hoffwn wahodd darllenywyr y cylchgrawn hwn i ddod a chael tro. Mae croeso i ofalwyr; darperir ar gyfer defnyddwyr cadeiriau olwyn, gyda chyfleusterau priodol ar gael ymhob lleoliad. Byddaf i hefyd yn addasu'r ymarferion yn briodol. Mae rhestr isod o ddyddiau ac amseroedd y dosbarthiadau: edrychaf ymlaen at gwrdd â chi.

**Dydd Llun: 10.30-11.30 Neuadd Gymunedol Murchfield, Sunnycroft Lane, Dinas Powys**

**Dydd Mawrth: 2.00-3.30 the Gathering Place, Sain Tathan**

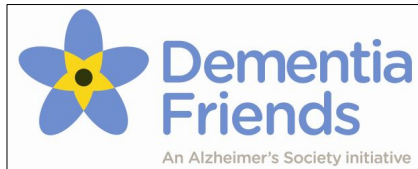
**Dydd Iau: 11.00-12.00 Canolfan Gymunedol Rhws, Stewart Road, Rhws**

Mae'r rhain yn ddosbarthiadau galw heibio agored gyda chost o £4.00 y sesiwn sy'n cynnwys defnydd yr offer a lluniaeth ar y diwedd.

**Cysylltwch â fi ar 01446 751077 neu e-bostiwch [shirleyadc@aol.co.uk](mailto:shirleyadc@aol.co.uk) am ragor o wybodaeth.**

#### **Ymuno â'r Fforwm!**

Os oes diddordeb gennych chi ymuno â Fforwm Strategaeth Y Fro 50+, cysylltwch â'r Fforwm Strategaeth Y Fro 50+, Llawr 1af yr Orsaf Dân, Port Road West, Y Barri, CF62 3AZ. E-bost [jporter@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:jporter@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk) neu ewch at ein gwefan: [valeopf.webplus.net](http://valeopf.webplus.net)



Alzheimer's Society is the leading support and research charity for people with dementia, their families and carers. There are an estimated 45,500 people with dementia in Wales.

In 2012, Alzheimer's Society conducted the 2012 Dementia Report which provided some worrying statistics:

- **44% of people with dementia feel they lost their friends after being diagnosed.**
- **48% of people with dementia feel like a burden to their family.**
- **61% of people with dementia feel lonely always or some of the time.**
- **67% of people with dementia do not always feel a part of the community.**
- **75% of people in the UK don't think society is geared up to deal with people with dementia.**
- **77% of people with dementia feel anxious or depressed.**

This report highlighted the need for action, which led to Dementia Friends!

### **What is Dementia Friends?**

People with dementia sometimes need a helping hand to go about their daily lives and feel included in their local community. Dementia Friends is a social action movement that aims to give people an understanding of dementia and the small things that they can do that could make a difference to people living with dementia.

Dementia Friends is a national initiative led by the Alzheimer's Society. In Wales it is supported by Welsh Government and aims to improve people's understanding of dementia and its effects.

A Dementia Friends information session is not training in any way, nor is it a kite-mark for a person or organisation. More information about the programme can be found on the Dementia Friends website at [www.dementiafriends.org.uk](http://www.dementiafriends.org.uk).

### **How does it work?**

A Dementia Friend is someone who has learned a little about dementia and has then turned their understanding into action by committing to at least one dementia-friendly action afterwards. There's no action too big or too small – it could be anything from being a bit more patient in a supermarket, to sharing information about dementia via social media.

To become a Dementia Friend, you need to attend an information session, which are run all over the country by volunteer Dementia Friends Champions. The sessions last between 45-60 minutes and use activities and discussions – and anyone of any age can get involved.

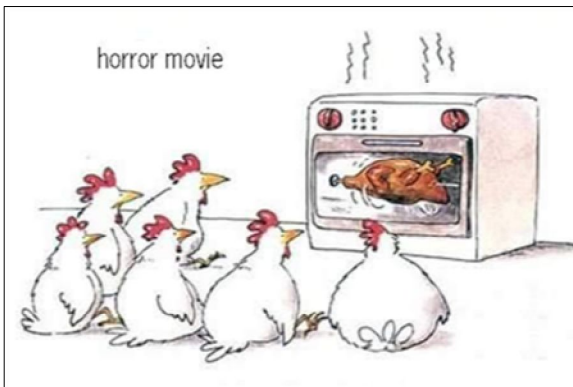
### **How can we get involved?**

You can become Dementia Friends individually by attending a nearby Information Session. You can find the one closest to you by visiting the Dementia Friends website and searching for a session by entering your postcode.

Your group can all become Dementia Friends at once by having a session organised for you. This will depend on the availability of Dementia Friends Champions in your area. To enquire about this, please contact Chella Borde on [richella.borde@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:richella.borde@alzheimers.org.uk).

Alternatively, if you would like the freedom and ability to run as many Information Sessions as you want when you want, you may choose to train as a Dementia Friends Champion. You will need to meet the eligibility criteria for this role and attend a full days training. More about this can be found on the Dementia Friends website: [www.dementiafriends.org.uk](http://www.dementiafriends.org.uk)

# Thoughts to Make you Smile



Mian Majeed second left, receiving a Certificate of Appreciation at the Vale 50+ Strategy Forum A.G.M. after stepping down from the Forum Executive in June 2014. The Vale 50+ Strategy Forum would like to express its thanks to Mian for his input into the executive and representing the Vale 50 + Strategy Forum at the V.O.G.C. Equalities Consultative Forum.

## The Saints

Imagine a luxurious executive suite arranged with cushioned rocky armchairs letting some senior citizens elite to sip black coffee with a grateful glare, in a confined room, curtains drawn, windows shut, doors closed, secured confidence to deny and wilky leaks of the privacy and confidentiality of the olds and the aged who just settled in comfort, with dignity and style.

Imagine the opportunity provided to the old folk to adjust their glittery costumes and settle freely to stretch their cramped legs, release the toughened muscles of bowed spines and the full liberty to exchange their locked impressions with conservative whispers and twinkling eyes mocking their dwindling ages.

Imagine the suite bursting in perfumed air, the fragrance compelling the musical heads to doze while half asleep and just to disturb their sound slumber to behave by a cruel bang on the table for a change of atmosphere by an elderly boss.

Imagine the assembled group resuming their itemised agenda, a strict schedule to reduce poverty, eliminate inequality, eradicate prejudice, hatred and discrimination, remove the effects of loneliness, cure illnesses and provision of reasonable answers and facilitation towards the hard faced existence of the aged while scratching their grey haired heads to find solutions of their agonies and woes.

Imagine the lot taking a deep sigh of relief after the questions and answers of the propositions, suggestions & solutions still floating within the four walls, of the fragrantly luxurious executive suite, doors closed, windows shut, curtains drawn surprisingly decorated, beautifully arranged with cushioned armchairs to allow a bunch of elite senior citizens to swing back and fro, sip black coffee in a dignified manner, graceful style thus concluding the meeting embraced with abundant ideas, imagined experiences and numerous untried skills astonish without any wilki leaks.

**Mian Majeed. BA: LLB.**  
**Vale 50+ Strategy Forum**

## Penarth Computer Club: Information about using 'Skype'

Skype was designed by a couple of IT guys in 2005, one Danish and one Swedish. It is a software programme that allows us to make telephone calls over the internet using the same computer to-computer connections that you have for going on-line. You are not using additional resources over and above what you have already paid for so there is no extra charge for the call to any other user anywhere in the world. And the software is free.

It can be used to call telephones, but even then the calls are significantly cheaper.

Skype has been a big hit. By April 2006 it had 100million users. It was snapped up by eBay and then by Microsoft for big money, making the original writers very wealthy. Its progress has been relentless as it became available on more operating systems and devices and also expanded its range of services; just about any modern PC or laptop will be OK.

Whether you need it or not depends on whether you have people you would like to chat to at length and if you are interested in saving money. If the answer is 'yes' then Google 'Skype' and go to the Skype site to get the free download. Installing it is simple as it does most of the work for you. It will search your contact list to identify Skype users already noted there and add them to your new Skype contact list. Other contacts you will have to identify yourself for inclusion.

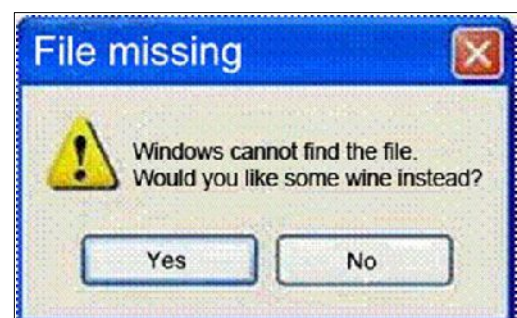
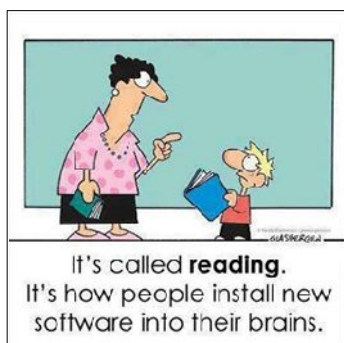
You have to set up an account with Skype using any name you wish as your Skype name (as long as it is unique) and a password. When you have done that it will run a test programme to see that everything is working properly (link, camera and microphone). If there is a problem, it will try to help you to fix it. Then you are ready to go.

Exactly what you can do with it depends in part on the speed of your internet connection, but it will be the basics of showing you the 'other end' person on screen with a small corner picture of what they are seeing of you on their screen so that you can adjust things if your head is being cut off.

Recently introduced is the facility for conference calls for three- or four- way conversations if the participants' broadband will take the strain. The strain can be reduced if you switch off the video; after all, once you are sure who you are speaking to you don't always need to have them in picture. There is also the facility to send large files and chat while they are transferring.



Want to learn more about the computer?  
**Come see what we do and see if it's for you. All welcome.**  
**Meetings are at 7.30 p.m. for 8 00 p.m.**  
**On 2nd and 4th Tuesdays (September to June) at**  
**All Saints Church Lesser Hall Victoria Square, Penarth**



### **Affected by cancer?**

Cancer brings bewildering changes to the lives of those diagnosed and can also have a major impact on family, carers and friends.

Age Connects Cardiff & the Vale have launched a new **Cancer Advocacy Service** in partnership with Macmillan Cancer Support and OPAAL UK which will provide one to one support and advocacy to anyone over the age of 50 who is affected by cancer.

Our advocacy service is free, non-judgemental and confidential and we aim to provide a listening ear and help resolve issues to improve quality of life and wellbeing.

By providing information on matters ranging from treatment and care to social, employment and financial difficulties, our advocates can support you to make informed decisions and help ensure that healthcare professionals, social services, benefits and other agencies understand and respect your wishes.

If you, or someone you know need support or advice then please call 029 2068 3681 or email [copa@ageconnectscardiff.org.uk](mailto:copa@ageconnectscardiff.org.uk)

### **Why not become a Volunteer Advocate?**

We are now recruiting enthusiastic volunteers who are over the age of 50 to join this service and become **Peer Cancer Support Advocates**.

We are looking for good listeners with some knowledge of cancer related issues who want to help people to take control of their lives during their cancer journey.

With guidance from professional project staff, volunteers will provide information, support and understanding around a variety of issues, helping people to make informed choices and access practical support.

You will need to provide a flexible time commitment of between 2 and 4 hours per week, have an understanding of cancer and an awareness of how it affects older people. Full and comprehensive training will be provided, as will regular support and travel expenses.

**If you would like to find out more about becoming a Cancer Support Advocate then please contact the Volunteer Coordinator on 029 2068 3694 or email [copa@ageconnectscardiff.org.uk](mailto:copa@ageconnectscardiff.org.uk)**

## **YOUR LOCAL RSPCA BRANCH IN ACTION!**



Buster a Border Collie



Barney—a rescued tom cat

## **YOUR LOCAL RSPCA BRANCH IN ACTION!**

Pictured on page 20 are just two examples of the many animals we've successfully rehomed. Barney was a lovely ginger tom who came to us following emergency surgery to remove a toe. An Inspector brought him in, with a serious injury to his paw. How content does he look in his new home though? And handsome Border Collie, Buster, who was found abandoned with his four siblings – all young pups, perilously close to a railway line. Thankfully, those bundles of mischief found loving new homes without too much difficulty, as you can imagine!

Without an animal centre, we rehome using private boarding establishments and a team of amazing volunteer fosterers, who offer all the TLC our newcomers need. All the animals we rehome are neutered, micro chipped and vaccinated. And anyone applying to adopt needs to pass a home visit inspection to ensure that our animals are finally going to the loving, forever home they deserve. Amongst our team of volunteers, are a number of individuals that assist with Home Visiting.

In fact, it's fair to say that the Branch couldn't function without our volunteers! Some choose to work in our charity shops – which are crucial to our fundraising – others assist with administration and income generation at the Branch office. And we have a pool of volunteers that join us for occasional store collections, events or to give talks to local schools, for example. We value each and every one of them ..... And are always happy to hear from anyone that would like to join the team, needless to say!

A major part of our work is helping with emergency vet bills, for pet owners living in the Branch area and in receipt of benefits or on low incomes. Our Welfare Assistance Project helps with one-off vouchers towards the cost of an unexpected vet bill. There is no doubt that many animals in need of veterinary attention would not receive the treatment they need without this assistance. So it's important that we are able to continue funding this project. We also help towards the cost of neutering, which helps limit the number of unwanted pets in the area – and with micro chipping, invaluable in re-uniting lost pets with their owners. A never-ending problem in Cardiff & the Vale, as in most other areas, is that of feral cats. These cannot be rehomed, of course, but we help capture and neuter them when we can, to avoid the problem getting worse.

We're always busy. Our telephones ring constantly throughout the day, with people needing advice on a wide range of topics. We do our best to help – and when we can't, we can at least point callers in the right direction.

So, as you can see, we are an extremely active Branch of the Society! However, many people don't realise that our work with local animals in need depends entirely on the funds we raise locally. We are not supported financially by the National Society of the RSPCA and receive no Government and Lottery funding, which is why you will often see us collecting money at local stores – or begging for unwanted clothes and goods for resale in our charity shops – or advertising for new volunteers!

RSPCA Cardiff & District Branch has been established for some 140 years. Like many charities in this current climate, we are struggling at present. However, for guys like Barney & Buster it's crucial that our work continues. I'm happy I've been able to tell our story – and would be happier still to hear from any readers that would like to help us fundraise and/or join our friendly team as a volunteer!

**Lynne Williams, Office Manager**  
**RSPCA Cardiff & District Branch**  
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## Caring for People and Keeping them Well

It was a great privilege to attend your forum meeting in June and have a healthy (!) and invigorating conversation. As well as making a difference with your campaigns, such as public toilets and reporting on nursing homes, I am sure your forum has huge health benefits through sharing, debating, friendship and stimulation. We tend to think of the health service as hospitals and GP surgeries but it all starts with us, how we care for ourselves and care for each other. There is no pill for loneliness or for friendship or belonging. Forums such as Vale 50+ are key to maintaining our health by valuing each other and supporting those who need our help.

It is two years since I was appointed as Chair of Cardiff and the Vale UHB. It is very humbling. Day in and day out I see such kindness and care provided by dedicated and very hard working staff. Like the nurse who for years on her day off goes into Llandough hospital to do patients hair because it makes them feel better.

When I came into post we were cancelling far too many operations, 2000 in my first winter, causing distress and anxiety. I apologise for this. This was because "the patient flow" through the hospitals from the front door to the back wasn't working like it should. Through lots of detailed work getting people in the right bed, first time we reduced cancellations by 64% this winter. We are working hard to do better next winter. In my first year we had far too many patients waiting over 12 hours in A&E, 259 patients in January 2013. Again through complex and hard work there were 17 patients in January 2014. Still not good enough, but definitely going in the right direction. And even though we treat the most complex and sickest patients in Wales we have the lowest "crude" mortality rate in Wales.

We tend to be shy in Cardiff and the Vale in speaking up about the challenges we face like having the fastest growing population in Wales (double the rest of Wales), the biggest increase in birth rate (3 times the average) and more deprived people than any other area in Wales (103K). Much of our medical machinery, estate and IT is aging and needs replacing and maintaining. We have difficult choices to make. We will make them with you.

Stories in the media about healthcare tend to be negative. This can cause real worry to the public and impacts on staff morale. That is why it is even more important that we meet the public regularly and we listen to patients, their carers and front line staff. I walk the wards regularly in the evenings to do just that and attend as many public meetings as possible to listen, to improve and to share the facts. As my mother always said "your health is your wealth". That's true. The health service belongs to us all and I want to work with you to care for people and keep them well.

**Maria Battle**  
Chair Cardiff and the Vale University Health Board

### Please Send Us Your Articles

Contact  
Holwch

VALE of GLAMORGAN  
BRO MORGANNWG

OneVale  
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**01446 700111**  
[www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

The media/publicity group of the Vale 50+ Strategy Forum welcome contributions to the 'Herald' magazine. If you would like to send us your views, news, for consideration for our Spring 2015 issue, please contact John Porter at the address on page 24 of this magazine, and details will be forwarded to the group for consideration.

Please note that articles sent could be edited for editorial purposes.

Vale 50+ Strategy Forum Media/Publicity Group.

## **Vale 50+ Strategy Forum Age Equality Group Report**

### **Language and Communication Skills of care workers in residential care home/care settings.**

The group have worked very hard over the past year to make their views and concerns known about how older peoples' needs are met in the above settings; in that good communication and language skills of front line care staff are essential in helping give vulnerable older people the quality care they deserve. The group also raised questions around National Minimum Standards for Care Workers, and induction for staff. I have attended two conferences, one on issues surrounding Residential Care in Wales, and another on Safe & Compassionate Health & Social Care in Wales; where I was able to lobby the group's issues to the delegates in a question session, and discuss these concerns with other delegates. In my capacity as chairperson I have had written dialogues with CSSIW (Care & Social Services Inspectorate Wales), Head of Workforce Policy & Regulation Welsh Government, and the Older People's Commissioners Office. The group have received good feedback from all three of the above correspondents, and the group feel they have highlighted their concerns in a robust way.

\*The Older People's Commissioner's Review into Residential Care in Wales is due for release in November 2014.

### **Elder Abuse Awareness Day held at Gwenog Court Sheltered Housing Complex.**

Leaflets and small booklets covering all aspects of Elder Abuse, Scams, and Internet Safety were provided by Age Cymru: information stalls on Benefit checks, Prostate Cancer UK, TeleV, our Local Fire Brigade complete with fire engine, Befriending Services, OWLS4U, Advocacy from Age Connect, and Community Safety. Our thanks to our MP for the Vale Alun Cairns, AM for the Vale Jane Hutt, Cllr. Stuart Egan Vale Older Peoples Champion, Cllr. Chris Ellmore Cabinet member for Childrens Services; representation from the Older People's Commissioners Office; the V.O.G.C. the residents, and the warden of Gwenog Court for supporting the event.

**Older People and Digital inclusion.** The Age Equality group together with interested forum members, has set up a digital inclusion group. This group compiled, emailed and provided paper copies of a questionnaire asking people aged 50+ whether they had access to or used any hardware which had access to the internet. Also what did they feel were the reasons why this age group did not access the internet? We had sixty responses; from sheltered housing residents, meeting groups, and via forum members. Out of the sixty responses 51 responded that they would like more 'training' on how to use different aspects of the internet. The group are following this up by exploring with Communities.2.0 formatting pilot forum workshops; one divided into small workshops for learners to explore devices, and the other workshop to train Digital Champions to go into the community and teach others basic internet skills. We will keep everyone informed of our progress. You will also find more information about where you can access digital training etc. in the article on page twelve of this issue. I have also been invited onto the Vale of Glamorgan Digital Inclusion Steering group as a representative from the Vale 50+ Strategy Forum.

**V.O.G.C. Equalities Consultative Forum.** The 50+ Strategy Forum member of this committee, Mian Majeed has stepped down from this post, and I am looking forward to representing people aged 50+ on this equalities forum.

If you are interested in Age Equality issues please phone/email John Porter at the address shown on page 24 for information and times of our bi-monthly meetings held in Barry Civic Offices.

**Jane Weldon. Chairperson Age Equality Group. Vale 50+ Strategy Forum**



## **Research into the needs of Older People: Getting Involved in the research and development process.**

The key aim of the Older People & Ageing Research & Development Network (OPAN Cymru) is to improve the lives of older people. We achieve this through the integration of research, policy and practice in Wales. OPAN ensures a broad vision of ageing and actively encourages the participation of older people in the research process.

OPAN Cymru is a research network led by Professor Judith Phillips of Swansea University. It is an all Wales network and includes academics from all Welsh Universities, older people with an interest in ageing and/or stroke research, health, housing and social care professionals and practitioners with a breadth of experience in ageing. OPAN Cymru supports collaborative research projects both nationally and internationally and has contributed expertise to other projects that require an older people or ageing dimension. Besides professional researchers, older members of the public are involved in our research activities to ensure that all aspects of ageing and concerns about growing older are considered.

OPAN Cymru believes that involving people in the research process is critical to its continued success. It leads to research that is more relevant to people's needs and concerns, is more reliable and is more likely to be used to improve health and social care services.

We want to make sure that the research we do:

- is relevant (asking the questions that people want to know the answers to);
- is well designed (will the planned way of working really work in the real world? And
- that the results will make a difference? (e.g. change the way services are delivered, improve ways of working or designs of products)

To do this we need to work closely with the people whose objectives we are trying to meet.

**There are many ways that people can get involved in our activities.**

- Reviewing research proposals
- Being part of a research development group (helping to design the research project and being involved in its development)
- Helping to make sense of research results (making sure that research results are heard; are publicised and can influence people, practice and policy)
- Attending meetings and events to hear about research and express your views on it
- Being on a research team (steering group member or active researcher)

There are many more potential areas for involvement – depending on people's time, interests and experience/skills and we would like to explore these ways further.

Current projects we're involved in include studies in age-related illnesses such as stroke, neurodegenerative disease and dementia. Included in the other varied areas of study are justice and older people, health and well-being, lifestyle choices, evaluating chronic conditions management services, the needs of care home residents and the effect of climate change on older people. If you are interested in helping to shape and design the right research questions for ageing research then please contact us:

**Carol Maddock [c.a.maddock@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:c.a.maddock@swansea.ac.uk) 01792 602048**

## **Join the Forum!**

If you're interested in joining the Vale 50+ Strategy Forum, please contact The Vale 50+ Strategy Forum, 1st Floor Fire Station, Port Road West, Barry CF62 3AZ tel: 01446 450201  
E-mail [jporter@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:jporter@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk) or visit our website [valeopf.webplus.net](http://valeopf.webplus.net)