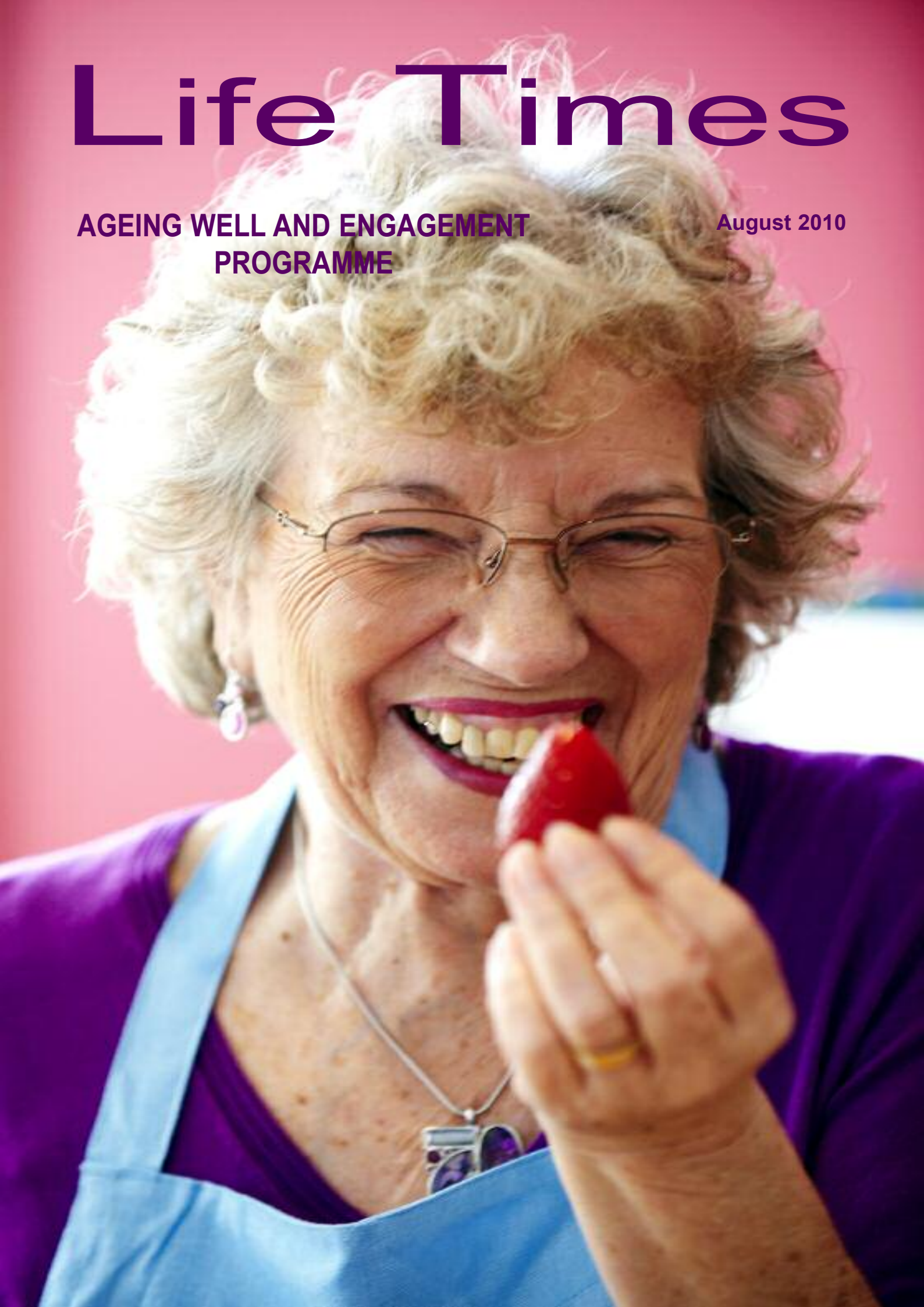


Life Times

**AGEING WELL AND ENGAGEMENT
PROGRAMME**

August 2010





Cardiff and the
Vale of
Glamorgan

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Dear readers

Doesn't time fly?

The first time I wrote for this magazine I struggled for content, this time around I have had to cut out 6 pages, hopefully next time either I will get it right or Karen will be back to take on her mantle as editor.

Hopefully you will enjoy this issue as much as the last and find it packed full of useful information. On the health front we have a four page article and an insert on falls prevention and since over a third of us will fall this year at some time its well worth reading.

In the finance pages you will find articles on Age Concern's new Money wise project, a day in the life of one of our welfare rights staff and some tools to help find missing money. Please give them a try, I found a missing building society account through it and was surprised how much interest had accrued over the years on what was initially a small sum.

And then the rest of the magazine is chock full of general information, from the support the Hospital Discharge Service can give you when returning home from hospital, to some ideas of things to when visiting a relative. I know I certainly will be trying some of them out.

Remember if you have friends or relatives that you would like to receive a copy of Age Concerns "Life Times" magazine just ring 02920 578385 and we will add them to our mailing list.

Best wishes

Mathew Coffin

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Editor's note

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SEASONAL FLU What are your views?

Every year there is publicity encouraging people over 65 and those in 'at risk' groups with chronic conditions to have a free vaccination against seasonal flu – but only about two-thirds of people over 65, and half of those with chronic conditions take up the offer.

Why is this?

There are some very good reasons for having the vaccination:

- Flu can lead to serious respiratory conditions, including pneumonia.
- Every year in the UK around ten thousand people are admitted to hospital because of complications of flu, and between three and four thousand people die – most of these are people aged over 65. In a bad year as many as thirty thousand people have died from complications of flu.
- Whilst most people don't get these serious complications, even an ordinary bout of flu can make you feel awful and wreck all your plans for a week or two.
- Having the flu vaccination can't give you complete protection against flu, but most people (70-80%) will be protected, and those who do get the flu are likely to have milder symptoms.
- The flu vaccine doesn't contain any live virus, so can't possibly give you the flu. Any side effects after vaccination are caused by your immune response. They would be mild and would only last a day or two.
- Even if you are fit and healthy, and think you are immune to flu, it's worth having the vaccination because the virus changes and you may not be immune to the latest virus.

Can you help us find out why more people don't have the vaccination?

Inside this magazine there is a short questionnaire and prepaid envelope. Please use them to let us know your views!

If you receive this magazine by email and would like to participate, please contact us for an electronic version of the questionnaire at mathew.coffin@age-concern-cardiff.org.uk

Falls Prevention and Bone Health Protection

Although the risk of falls increases with age, falls are not an inevitable part of ageing. There is a great deal that you can do to reduce the risks of falling and/or falling and injuring or breaking a bone. If you have had a fall, you are not alone as one third of people over the age of 65 will fall each year. It is important to keep our bodies healthy and active throughout our lives and this article gives some handy pointers to support you to remain independent.

Facts

- Most accidents to older people involving hospital treatment are due to falls
- Fractures are the most common injury when older people fall
- Someone who has suffered a stroke is twice as likely to have a serious fall
- Women are twice as likely to fall as men
- Most falls occur at home
- Over 2000 people over 65 die as a result of an accident at home every year



In Cardiff and the Vale we may have as many as 20,000 falls a year but most people do not seek medical attention unless they sustain a serious injury or fracture. The effects of any fall though can be detrimental to the person's health and well-being and the following information aims to empower you in making decisions about reducing falls and fracture risks.

Why you might fall

You are more likely to fall as you get older, because as you age: your sense of balance may decline, your muscles may weaken, your vision may deteriorate and your reaction time slows- that makes it harder for you to avoid something in your path or adjust to a sudden change in the surface on which you are walking.

Medication: Medication can also affect your balance or perception. Your risk of falling may increase if you are on four medications or more, if you take diuretics, sedatives or other sleeping medications, high blood pressure medications or medication for some psychological conditions. In addition, older people may often be affected by many health conditions that can increase the risk of falls.

Alcohol use: The negative effects of too much alcohol on our sight, hearing, balance and judgement about personal safety are very clear. Whether used alone, or combined with medication, alcohol use can result in dangerous falls.

Poor vision: Poor vision, cataracts, macular degeneration and glaucoma can affect your perception or make it difficult for you to see obstacles..

Gait and Balance disorders: Stroke, Parkinson's disease and hypothyroidism, among others, can affect your balance and ability to walk. Weakness or a general lack of fitness can also have an effect.

Lung disease: Disease of the lung, such as emphysema, may make it difficult for you to get around. When you become inactive, you may lose some of your muscle conditioning and balance. That may increase your chance of falling when you walk.

Cardiovascular disease: Congestive heart failure, arrhythmia and other conditions affecting your heart and blood vessels can cause fainting or lead to inactive lifestyles which, as with lung disease, can increase your risk of falls.

Disorders affecting your legs and feet: Arthritis, foot problems, muscle weakness and peripheral neuropathy - nerve damage that can cause unsteadiness and numbness, tingling, weakness and pain in your feet or hands - may affect your co-ordination or lead to an inactive lifestyle that puts you at risk of falls.

Bladder conditions: Incontinence or the need to urinate frequently, especially at night, can lead to falls in several ways. You may stand up too quickly, leading to faintness from a momentary drop in blood pressure. Or you may trip on your way to the bathroom because you are still sleepy or you did not turn on the light.

Footwear and foot care: Poorly fitting shoes or slippers and poor foot health contribute to the risks of falling. Research has shown that older people are more likely to fall in the home if they are wearing ill-fitting footwear.



Why you may fracture: Bone is being made and lost throughout our lives but from middle age, we lose bone strength faster than it is replaced. Sometimes this results in weak and fragile bones, called osteoporosis, which may fracture if a person falls. Although more common in women, as bone loss is experienced during and after the menopause, men are also affected. Risk of osteoporosis may increase with alcohol use; smoking; Crohn's or coeliac disease; corticosteroid therapy; hyperthyroidism; hyperparathyroidism and eating disorders (anorexia/poor nutritional intake). If you have a close family member with osteoporosis this may increase the risk of you having fragile bones.

Falls: Reducing the risks!

General physical fitness: Given that your daily routines may become less physically demanding as you get older, you can experience reduced physical fitness, increasing the risk of falls. Maintaining or regaining physical fitness is the most effective preventive measure of all. All forms of exercise, formal and informal, can help maintain strength and vitality and protect you from injury. If you have specific problems with your lungs, heart or legs and feet you may need a referral to a physiotherapist to teach you breathing control, breathing exercises and special exercises to improve your co-ordination and strength and balance.



Ability to maintain balance: Balance is an important element of fitness. Tai Chi, yoga, EXTEND and dancing are all exercises that increase balance and steadiness - proof that keeping fit can be fun. Exercise like Tai Chi is especially useful if you wish to keep fit and have not had a fall. Other exercises may be prescribed that are tailored to your needs if you have recurrent falls. Speak to your GP if you wish to take up exercise as there is a low-cost exercise referral scheme; visit your local leisure centre to find out about their activities for the 50 plus or contact Age Concern on 02920 578372 to find out about the activities in your area.

Vision and hearing: Regular free eyesight tests should be part of your routine and hearing tests if you have worries about your hearing.

Footwear and foot care: New, properly fitted shoes or slippers can help to eliminate one of the risk factors known to cause people to fall. If you have specially made shoes then they should be worn regularly or use slippers with adjustable fastening. Caring for your feet is important to make sure that painful feet or long nails do not stop you from walking properly. Nail cutting is available from Age Concern in some areas of Cardiff and the Vale, please phone 02920 560952 for more details.

Diet and eating habits: Regular healthy meals help keep up strength and vitality. If you do not enjoy preparing meals for just yourself, think about inviting friends, eating out or developing a routine that makes you look forward to your meals such as taking a walk to work up an appetite, trying out new recipes, or having a special treat. Missing meals can cause weakness and dizziness. Eating regular, balanced, healthy meals and having a regular intake of fluids will help you to keep your strength.



Alcohol use and smoking: Keep to a wise moderate consumption of alcohol and if you are worried about your alcohol use there are local agencies that can be accessed for advice; support and treatment. Reducing alcohol use and stopping smoking is also helpful in improving bone health. You can ask for a referral to a smoking cessation group.

Social Isolation: Depression, fear of falling and other psychological problems “post-falls syndrome” are common effects of repeated falls. Loss of self-confidence as well as social withdrawal, confusion and loneliness can occur, even when there has been no injury. To talk to a professional counsellor about these feelings please phone Age Concern on 02920 521125.

Hazards at home: Making simple changes at home - whether it's for you or someone living with you - also can reduce the risk of falling. For example, take your time getting up and make sure you can switch lights on from your bed and other appropriate places. Leaving a landing light on at night can reduce the risk of falling. Simple adaptations made, including hand rails or removing loose rugs also promotes home safety.

We have included with this magazine a separate home safety checker for you to use which explains this in more detail. If you are looking to make modifications to your home as a result of this home safety check please contact Care and Repair Cardiff on 02920 473337.

When going out: Take all the time you need - plan ahead, do not rush. Wear footwear to prevent slipping and avoid laces that may come undone. Use your walking aid if needed. Walk carefully - be alert of sidewalk cracks, obstacles, slopes, slippery surfaces and other hazards. Do not load yourself down with packages: take advantage of home delivery or use a pushcart (which can also act as a walking aid). Be a defensive walker, watch for traffic, bicycles and rollerblades. Plan your trip so you do not have to go out during the rush hour, darkness or bad weather.

Fractures: reducing the risks!

Keeping to a pattern of regular weight-bearing exercise helps to keep bones strong and healthy. Eat a varied diet that contains calcium, such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, baked

beans, tinned fish, spinach, broccoli and dried fruit. Low fat dairy products have as much calcium as full fat products. Vitamin D is necessary for bone health and is found in oily fish, egg yolks and cereals. It is also found in sunlight but safe sun messages still apply.

You may wish to talk to your GP or nurse about your calcium and Vitamin D intake if you have any worries and they might recommend a supplement.

If you have been diagnosed as having osteoporosis and have been prescribed medication, it is important that the instructions for taking it are followed. For example, it may need to be taken on a weekly or monthly basis and before any other food or drink. If you are experiencing any difficulties in taking the medication, please do speak to your doctor or nurse.

Talk to your doctor or nurse

If you have any worries such as those above or concerns about falling talk to your GP or nurse if you are in regular contact. Your GP may check for vision problems and / or review prescribed medications. Your GP may also evaluate your balance and movement. If necessary, he or she may prescribe physical therapy to help improve your balance and strength or recommend that you use a walking stick.

If you have any concerns that you may have fragile bones, for example, if you have broken a bone falling from standing height, please do talk to your GP, who can also advise on medications or other risks that you may have.

Where to get further information

Your GP: Always consult your GP following a fall even if you are not badly hurt. She or he can determine the cause of the fall and if necessary refer you on to appropriate help.

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) provides a variety of advice and information on falls: Phone 0121 2482064 or visit their website www.rospa.co.uk

Foot Care: If you feel you need chiropody treatment, you should discuss this with your GP. In many cases your doctor will be able to arrange free treatment through the NHS. However, owing to the pressure on this service you may have to wait for sometime before seeing an NHS chiropodist. If you would prefer to pay privately for chiropody treatment, ask your doctor to recommend a local Registered Chiropodist doing private work or contact Age Concern on 02920 560952 to ask about their nail cutting service.

Aid-Call: Age Concern Cardiff and the Vale provide a range of pendant alarms to suit different needs. The alarms consist of a lightweight transmitter (worn on a wrist strap or neck cord) and a unit connected to a standard telephone socket. Contact: 02920 527190

National Osteoporosis Society: This is the national charity set up to improve the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of the disease. It provides information and advice and provides information booklets. There are local support groups. Contact: 01761 471771 or helpline: 0845 450 0230



The Welfare Rights Service: - The Moneywise Project



Putting money in Pensioners' pockets

Helping Pensioners through the Credit Crunch

Its on everybody's lips when we look at the television and read the news the headlines are the same its the Credit crunch or recession! Everybody is looking at how investments fall and how much money is lost. The situation is made worse with heating bills rocketing and the cost of living rising. With the situation looking bleak never has our Welfare Rights service been more vital.

In the last financial year we have helped Clients claim benefit income totalling 5.3 million. This amount of money sounds very impressive but its not as impressive as an older person turning up the heating to keep warm because a Welfare Rights Adviser or a Welfare Rights Volunteer called to see them and was able to increase their income. The extra income obtained will help towards paying their bills and directly improving the quality of life of older people living in the local area. Making that difference is at the very heart of our service.

Just recently our Adviser Dawn helped a client claim a 'back payment' of £18,500 from the DWP this is truly a life changing amount.

To continue to help people raise their income we have made a successful bid to the Big Lottery to start a Moneywise project. The project is due to start in July 2010. The Adviser will support and advise older people (60+) affected by the recession by offering benefits advice, information on sources of charitable help and advising on sources of debt counselling.

Are you struggling to make ends meet? Do you need advice on your benefit entitlement or suggestions on how to lower your households bills? Then call our helpline on:

Tel 029 2083 8902

A Day in the Life of.... A Welfare Rights Service Administrator

A typical working day starts as I leave the house at around 8.00am making sure the dog, having had his early walk (he's a Pointer and very demanding), has a full bowl of water and a little dry food to see him through until lunchtime.

I am lucky in that my journey to work is only about 10 minutes and I can return during lunch break to give him his second of four daily walks (it makes my working day something of a rush, but I couldn't/wouldn't leave him alone for the whole day).

The office is within the 'Sbectrwm' centre in Fairwater which is an ideal environment for me to carry out my job. The complex includes a crèche, a café (both open to the public) and a shop selling produce and craft items produced by trainees with Vision21 - who have workshops and facilities in the centre, including an excellent, productive garden. So, when I get a short break, I can do a little shopping - maybe a birthday card or some organic tomato plants and when work has been particularly demanding it's a great leveller just to mingle with the trainees (all adults with learning needs) whose endless optimism and cheerfulness always brings a smile to my face.

From the moment I sit at my desk, I am immersed in a hectic schedule - with a seemingly endless flow of calls and referrals from members of the public who need advice and information regarding benefits which they (the over-60s) may be eligible for. Frequently I hear from someone with a harrowing story to tell and the unfairness of society is graphically illustrated. At these times the Sbectrwm environment helps me focus on the job in hand and maintain an essential objectivity.

Sometimes I am able to give direct advice - generally on eligibility for health-related benefits - but mostly my role is to establish if there is a need for a home visit by one of our Advisors. We currently have 3-4 advisors plus 10+ volunteers, whose help is invaluable to the service. If this is the case, there is usually a wait of between 2-3 weeks, as we usually have around 90 clients awaiting home visits. Perhaps the most rewarding aspect of the job is in knowing that I am involved in making a direct, beneficial effect on people's lives on a daily basis - with tangible results. The advisors are well-trained and often help improve the quality of life for people by guiding them through the sometimes bewildering processes required to obtain the benefits that they are entitled to.

So I work through a busy morning; review the out of hours calls, process the day's referrals, hurry home to walk the dog at lunchtime, hurry back for the afternoon, process more referrals, carry out all the associated admin' duties, schedule the visits for the Advisors and then, worn out but usually with a sense of achievement, go home.

Ann Flowers

Thousands of pounds go unclaimed by people not accessing their benefit entitlement you could be one of them. If you're struggling to make ends meet and need advice on your benefit entitlement we are here to help. Call us today on our mainline number: Tel :02920 567883 between 9:30am and 4:30pm and speak to me Ann Flowers or Sandra Abraham.

Tel 029 2056 7883

Tracing old pensions

Billions of pounds of unclaimed financial assets in the UK lie in old bank accounts, pensions, life assurance and investments – yet most are easy to reclaim. So whether the account's your own or an inheritance from a deceased relative or family member, it's worth spending ten minutes as you could have a treasure chest of £1,000s, or more!

Pension Tracing Service

If you've lost details about a pension scheme and need help contacting the provider, The Pension Tracing Service may be able to help. It can be easy to lose track of a pension if you change jobs through your working life.

The Pension Tracing Service (part of The Pension Service) will try and help you trace a pension even if you're not sure of the contact details. It has access to information on over 200,000 pension schemes. The Pension Tracing Service will use this database, free of charge, to search for your scheme.

The Pension Tracing Service may be able to provide you with current contact details for a pension scheme. You can then use this information to contact the pension provider and find out if you have any pension entitlement.

Information to give to the Pension Tracing Service

The more information you can give the Pension Tracing Service, the more likely you will be able to get an up-to-date contact address for the pension scheme you're tracing.

It will help if you can tell the Pension Tracing Service what type of pension scheme you are searching for. They hold details of two types of pension scheme: company pension schemes and personal pension schemes.

Company pension scheme

This is a pension scheme an employer offers to its employees. It can also be known as an occupational or works pension scheme.

If you are trying to trace a company pension scheme, start by working out:

- whether the employer traded under a different name
- the type of business the employer ran
- whether the employer changed address at any time
- when you belonged to the pension scheme



Personal pension scheme

This is a scheme bought from a pension provider, like a bank, life assurance company or building society. It is entirely your own, which means you can continue to contribute to it if you move jobs.

- If you are trying to trace a personal pension scheme, start by working out:
- the name of the personal pension scheme
- the address where the personal pension scheme was run from
- the name of the bank, insurance company or building society involved with the personal pension scheme

Contact the Pension Tracing Service by phone

Contact the Pension Tracing Service on 0845 600 2537 (lo-call rate) who will check the information you provide against their database of pension schemes to try and find yours. You can

then write to the administrators of each of the pension schemes asking for your pension to be paid.

Contact the Pension Tracing Service online

You can complete an online form and start tracing your old pension right away. It should take about 15 minutes to complete the form. Visit <http://www.direct.gov.uk> to complete the form.

Tracing Lost Bank accounts and savings bonds

The British Bankers Association, the Building Societies Association and National Savings and Investments (NS&I), have launched a joint venture, My Lost Account to replace separate account tracing tools. You can use this FREE service to find lost current accounts, savings accounts or premium bonds. It's estimated the unclaimed cash in these could be nearly £1 billion, so it's worth it.

To start reclaiming, simply go to the site, <http://www.mylostaccount.org.uk> select 'search' and you can fill in the details about the account you are looking for. The banks and building societies will respond within three months of the claim, while (NS&I), which provides premium bonds and a few other savings products, says it'll get back to you in one month.

Where the original bank or building society no longer exists – for example, because it has been taken over by another – the successor institution will carry out the search.

Because not everyone has access to the internet, you can complete a search by picking up a copy of the paperwork either from the website, or from the BBA, BSA and NS&I or can be picked up from your local bank or building society.

What is a lost account?

Banks, building societies and NS&I wherever possible seek to keep in touch with their customers. If, however, an account has been inactive for an extended period, the account holding bank or building society will write to the customer asking them whether they wish the account to remain open.

If no response is received, the bank, building society or NS&I will stop sending correspondence and will class the account as "lost". This ensures that financial details are not sent to what might be an old address. This reduces the risk of fraud and ID theft. It is not good practice to send statements, cheque books and other material to an out-of-date address, where someone other than you could try to access the account or use the correspondence for other fraudulent purposes.

The most typical cause of an account becoming lost is a change of address.

Can I reclaim assets of deceased relatives?

Yes. When using any of these searches you'll be asked whether the claim is for an account of yours, and if not, the name of the account holder is requested. At the point when the information is passed on to the account/investment provider, it will then contact you to confirm your identity, and work through ensuring the cash gets to the right person.

The process varies from case-to-case, but providing there was a will and there aren't any huge family rifts over who is entitled to the cash, it should go smoothly. Bigger reclaims are likely to take longer to sort out, but obviously the reward is higher too!

Remember: Do not pay a fee of any kind to undertake the search for your old bank, building society or NS&I account. This service is FREE if you apply direct to the institution concerned or through the website (mylostaccount.org.uk).

Coming Home from Hospital

A hospital stay can be a difficult time for you and those close to you. This article aims to give a brief overview of what should happen when it's time for you to leave hospital. To find out more contact 0800 169 6565 and ask for the Going Into Hospital guide.

Being Discharged from Hospital

All hospitals should be able to provide information on their discharge process. Most importantly, you should be told who is responsible. A hospital social worker and possibly a discharge liaison nurse are likely to be involved



If you are having planned treatment, you may be invited for a pre-admission check. This provides an ideal opportunity to find out about any support you are likely to need later. If you do not have such a check or you are admitted in an emergency, planning for your discharge should begin as soon as possible after admission. Arrangements will vary depending on your needs and whether you can go home, or should consider alternative accommodation.

The people responsible for your hospital discharge should arrange for relevant staff to assess your needs before you leave hospital. The arrangements made will depend on your health and social care needs.

You may need help from the Local Authority with things like personal care, meals on wheels, aids and adaptations to your home, a community alarm so you can call for help if you need it, a place at a day centre offering activities, meals and a chance to socialize or you may need NHS help such as services provided by a district nurse. These services may be provided as part of a care plan.

Practical Issues on Leaving Hospital

If the hospital believes you are ready for discharge, it is entitled to discharge you. However, you should not be sent home until the agreed support is in place – services are ready to start, adaptations have been made to your home and equipment has been delivered. Your carers should also be given adequate notice of the date and time of your discharge

Health Care

If you have health care needs, then subject to an assessment, the NHS will provide and fund services to meet your needs. This could be either in your home, a nursing home or in hospital.

Intermediate Care

Subject to assessment and eligibility criteria you may be offered intermediate care following a stay in hospital to help your recovery once you return home or to find out if, with support in place, you can manage at home. Intermediate care can last for up to six weeks and can include health and social care support. Intermediate care is provided free, when your intermediate care finishes, you should have an assessment to see whether you need any ongoing care or health services

Arranging other practical help at home after a hospital stay

You may only need help for a short time while you recover, particularly if you live alone. Age Concern offer short term support (02920 683693, see article on Hospital Discharge Services) to people over the age of 60 living in Cardiff and the Vale which are free. You may also wish to make your own arrangements and contact home care agencies to assist with domestic tasks.

Have you recently been in Hospital?

Do you need help & information on what services are available to help you?

Is the first thing you would like when you arrive home a friendly face to talk to and maybe a decent cup of tea?

Then Age Concern Cardiff & the Vale of Glamorgan's Hospital Discharge Service is for you.

If you are over 60 and have just been discharged from hospital or have come home after an unfortunate visit to the accident & emergency unit, perhaps with a broken arm or another injury due to a fall, you may be a little uncertain as to how you are going to cope in the few weeks ahead. This is where our friendly and experienced settlement aides can be there for you. Whether you live alone or with a partner but they are away, we can help.

Settlement aides can assist with personal care if required, make sure you have enough food and are able to make a meal, take your discharge letter to your surgery, unpack your bag, help you sort out your mountain of mail, collect prescriptions, make you a cup of tea, do some shopping and make sure all is well.

We will also discuss any other concerns you have and if we are unable to help, we can refer you to the relevant agencies. If your heating has packed up or you need some work done around your house we know what services are available, and our experienced Settlement aides are on hand to help.

We like to feel that the transition from hospital to home will be a little less stressful with our support and reassurance.

- There is no charge for this service.
- We aim to visit within 24 hours of your discharge.
- It is short term, on average 3 or 4 visits.
- We operate 7 days a week from 9am until 5pm.
- This service covers both Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan.

Age Concern Hospital Discharge Service is registered as a Domiciliary Care Agency with the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales

So if you or a family member are about to go into hospital and you think you will need some help please phone 02920 683 693 and speak to our friendly and knowledgeable administration staff.

If you are already in hospital you can also ask the nursing staff or the social workers to refer to us.

What people who have used our service have said about us...

"It was just what I needed to give me the extra bit of confidence to normality in my life after three weeks in hospital."

"All the ladies who came were well informed, efficient and very pleasant and put us at ease. Thank you."



Most people become happier with age, and you can too.

Studies conducted by Dr Heather Lacey and Dr Peter Ubel found that most people get happier as they grow older. Happiness, he says, is all about how well we cope with what life throws at us. "People get better at managing life's ups and downs. The result is that, as they age, they become happier, even though their circumstances, such as their health, can decline," he says.

Achieving a happy retirement can take work and patience. Many older people complain that they feel useless or don't know what to do with their time. Here are five strategies that research has found raise happiness levels:

Keep up a daily routine: We all know people who work hard for 40 years only to find retirement unsatisfying. Surprisingly, one of the keys to happiness after retirement is doing exactly what you did before. Keep getting dressed in the morning, keep cooking and going out, and keep making an effort. Research shows that people who maintain their personal standards and believe that retirement is just as important as working life are likely to be happier for longer.

Give attention to people you love: Once people have retired, friends and family are at the top of the list of things that make them happy. Being married can contribute to your happiness, but having friends is also vital. In fact, according to economist Professor Andrew Oswald of Warwick University, we would need an extra £50,000 to make up for not having friends. If you are looking to make some new friends Age Concern's Ageing Well team have a list of clubs in your area that you might want to attend, phone 02920 578372 for more details



Be realistic about money: Almost everyone thinks money will make them more secure and, therefore, happier. In fact, money is the one thing that has relatively little impact on happiness. Most research suggests that, once everyday needs have been met, more money makes no difference to long-term happiness. Even winning the lottery only gives a short-term boost before happiness levels return to normal.

Do interesting things: People may tell you to keep busy, but mindless activity won't have the same effect on happiness as hobbies that interest you. The most effective activities are ones that hold your attention so much that you lose track of time. It could be any activity, such as sudoku, gardening or learning a language. Research on retirement has found that people who spend at least six hours a week doing something active that they enjoy are more likely to be content.

If you want to develop new skills, most local councils and further education colleges hold evening classes in subjects from flower arranging to Pilates. Organisations such as the University of the Third Age (U3A) <http://www.cardiffu3a.org.uk/> can also introduce you to subjects from family history to the night sky.

Show goodwill to all men: Want to boost your happiness whatever your situation? Carrying out five acts of kindness, big or small, a week will help significantly, according to new research. You could help at a local school, look after your grandchildren, weed a neighbour's garden or say a heartfelt "thank you" to someone who made your day. These will all boost your sense of contentment.

For ideas about volunteering in the Cardiff and Vale area go to the Volunteering Wales Website <http://www.volunteering-wales.net/> or phone Voluntary Community Services in Cardiff on 02920 22 7625 and the Vale Volunteering bureau on 01446 421782.

If however you are not growing happier with age and would like to talk to someone in confidence Age Concern's Counselling service might be able to help. For more information and to book an appointment please phone 029 2052 1125.

Top tips when looking for a care home.

Moving into a care home is a big decision. Here are some top tips that will help you choose the right home. To find out more please read AgeUK guide "Care Homes" and their care home checklist, to order copies please call their free advice line on 0800 1696565.

Inspection reports.

-The first thing you should do is to look at the CSSIW inspection reports (Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales) www.cssiw.org.uk.

Be Prepared.

- Make a list of the questions you would like to ask?
- Take some time to think about this, what would make a difference to you in choosing one home over another home.
- Ask questions (lots of them) you could be living there for many years to come.
- Take a guided tour, take in the air, and soak up the atmosphere.

Is the home clean and tidy?

- Are there any unpleasant odours? The home of your choice should smell clean and fresh, not artificially perfumed to disguise stale odours.
- Are fire routes free from obstruction or hazards?
- Do you feel warmly welcomed and have a good feeling about the atmosphere.
- Visit again and make this visit unannounced.

View the residents

- Do they appear happy, contented and alert?
- Do they look cared for?
- Do the residents talk to each other; are they at ease talking to you?
- What are the residents doing, chatting, singing, and reading, walking around or sleeping?

View the staff

- Are they well presented and happy in their work
- Do they respond to calls for attention from residents
- Are they comfortable and at ease talking to you?
- Is there a full time activity leader on staff?
- Suggest that significant others take the opportunity to make their own visit.
- Relatives / friends / carers may have a different perspective of what a home should offer, and this may vary considerably.



Cost

-Cost is an obvious consideration, but you should find out what your money is paying for. Ask for a breakdown of the costs and find out if there are any costs excluded from your fees. The money being spent should meet the person's needs – so make sure this is the case.

Trial days

-A trial day is a great way to see what life is like in the home. This will enable you to see how the home is run and see how the residents live – and see if you get on with everyone. It is also a good way to compare one home with another.

And finally ask to see copies of

- The statement of purpose for the home.
- The terms and conditions or contract.
- Any written aims and objectives.

To obtain a copy of a Cardiff council care directory which lists all of the care homes in your area please contact C2C on 02920 872087 for Cardiff and 01446 700111 for the Vale.

Disposing of Bulky Household Waste

If you are like me, your garage is full of “unwanted junk” taking up space and causing clutter, amazingly I even had 2 lawn mowers when I don’t even have a lawn anymore. I recently had a clear out and arranged for the council to pick up my old sofa and bath and thought I would share with you some information you might not be aware of.

Did you know that the council provides a collection and disposal service for large or awkward items of household waste such as fridges, freezers and furniture?

Free Collection: The council will collect for free beds, settees, wardrobes, cookers, fridges, washing machines, and light fittings.

£5 Charge: Doors, kitchen units, work benches, cupboards, gas fires, and radiators. Cardiff Council will also take windows, baths, toilets, sinks, the Vale Council unfortunately will not.

Don’t Collect: Garage doors, fence panels, grates / gates, rubble / sand, garden sheds, pianos, tins of paint, car batteries, cast iron baths, bottles of gas, tyres and bundles of wood.

To find out more or to arrange a date and time for collection, you need to contact C2C in Cardiff on 029 20872 087 and 01446 700111 in the Vale.

After I arranged for the collection, I had the bright idea that the sofa could have been recycled, why is it you always have the thought a bit too late? So I looked into a few sources of recycling here in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan.

For larger items: Instead of binning why not recycle?

Track 2000: Track 2000 is a community based charity that works to alleviate poverty in the Cardiff and Vale areas. They operate three community shops that provide furniture and electrical appliances at affordable prices.

Track 2000 collects household furniture such as beds, sofas, tables and chairs. They also take white goods such as washing machines, fridge-freezers and electric cookers. There is a small collection fee which depends on how many items are being collected and where they are being collected from. Items that are donated to the charity are then put into their community shops to be redistributed into the local community. For more information please phone 029 20332 533.

British Heart Foundation: If you have any items of furniture that could be reused by someone else, you can also donate them to the British Heart Foundation. Ring 08442 489147 to find out more.

Welsh Air Ambulance Charity shop: This charity shop at 68 Merthyr Road, Whitchurch, will also accept donations of saleable furniture with fire tickets attached. For more details please phone 029 20693 111.

For smaller items: Support Age Concern by Recycling

Age Concern are expert recyclers – we were recently awarded the title of Recycler of the Year – and there’s very little that has no value at all. There are a number of ways you can show your support for Age Concern; which ever way you choose it will help to change the lives of older people.

Recycling mobile phones

Recently upgraded your mobile phone? Why not donate your old phone to Age Concern

and it will be transformed into vital funds to help older people.

Toner and inkjet cartridges

Recycle your toner and inkjet cartridges with Age Concern and you will help older people, reduce landfill and preserve resources. We work with Reclaim-it, a company that arranges cartridge recycling on behalf of charities. You can order inkjet cartridge recycling envelopes by emailing your details to AgeUK at recycling@ageuk.org.uk or by calling freephone 0800 169 8787.

Clothes

We all have clothes at home that we don't wear, donate them to us and we'll sell them in our charity shops to raise money that will go to help vulnerable older people. It doesn't matter if items are damaged or otherwise past their best, even ripped clothes can be sold as rags.

Home furnishing

Even if your old curtains or ornaments are not wanted anymore, we'll welcome your unwanted items with open arms. There's always someone who might be looking for that very item and the proceeds help older people locally.

What can I donate?

Here's just a selection of things we can sell in our charity shops:

- Clothes, shoes, accessories
- Curtains, linens and other home furnishing
- Vases, photo frames, plant pots
- Books
- Jewellery
- Toys and jigsaw puzzles
- CDs, DVDs and small electrical goods.



The only things we can't accept are large electrical goods, videos and batteries. These should be disposed of safely in accordance with your local council's advice.

How to donate

Drop off items at your local shop during working hours. Please do not leave them outside if the shop is shut. Our Age Concern Charity shops in Cardiff are located at:

91-93 Caerphilly Road, Birchgrove and 13 Whitchurch Road, Heath. To find out more, please phone 029 20620 992.

Shop Volunteers Needed

Do you know of anyone who would like to help out in our shops and gain some retail experience?

Our charity shop at 13 Whitchurch Road, Cardiff, is a friendly and busy shop which is in desperate need of volunteers. The main tasks would be to serve our customers and to help to create our shop window displays, which we aim to change every week to attract new customers. Volunteers are also involved in putting out new stock and arranging shelf displays.

Shop volunteers need to be available 3-4 hours a week, on Mondays, Wednesdays or Thursdays, between 11.00am and 3.00pm. If you know of anyone who might be interested, please contact Susan Hodge on 029 20616 765 or 029 20620 992.

75 Things to do when Visiting a Relative

Please note: The following list offers a wide variety of suggestions or possibilities which may or may not be of interest to your relative. Sometimes when a person is very frail or has advanced dementia, it can be hard to find things which can engage the person's interest. However it is hoped that there might be something new in this list which would be worth trying. (Ideas taken from various sources)

- 1 Bring photos of family & friends – from days gone by or recent snaps.
- 2 Take photos to send to family and friends.
- 3 Make a memory box of significant objects based on a personal life history.
- 4 Share favourite stories or memories.
- 5 Subscribe to a relative's home town newspaper and bring it along.
- 6 Read religious (where appropriate) or inspirational articles, magazines or books – 'a thought for the day' or 'hope for the week.'
- 7 Bring holiday snaps, souvenirs, postcards, even maps and tales of your journey.
- 8 Read newspapers & magazines aloud to keep your relative in touch.
- 9 Jointly look at magazines with large colourful pictures and invite opinions and comments on the contents whether fashion preferences or political views. Read letters from family and friends.
- 10 Bring messages from family and friends recorded on tape or CD.
- 11 Enjoy a favourite drink or food that you have brought.
- 12 Bring video tape or DVD greetings.
- 13 Help with writing or taping letters & cards.
- 14 Create a collage poster with pictures cut from magazines.
- 15 If you play an instrument offer to do a private concert.
- 16 Try teaching simple tunes on an instrument.
- 17 Sing along to favourite tunes together; obtain a Karaoke DVD if that would help.
- 18 Play 'name that tune' with CD's tapes or music on the radio.
- 19 Have an indoor or outdoor picnic whilst visiting.
- 20 Listen to music together.
- 21 Play simple charades e.g. miming an action to guess what it is.
- 22 Wind yarn together for a knitting or crochet project.
- 23 Write poetry or a short story together.
- 24 Look and listen to an old fashioned music box.
- 25 Make a 'joy box' (decorated shoe box) filled with fun and favourite things.
- 26 Discuss seasonal changes looking out of the window.
- 27 Keep a diary/journal of interesting discussions and up and coming events.
- 28 Make a pot pourri together and hang it up to keep the room sweet smelling.
- 29 Tell jokes to one another, bring along a joke book to keep it going.
- 30 Help with writing letters to family and friends.
- 31 Surprise your relative by bringing along one of their friends for a visit.
- 32 Take a walk together, or sit outside, weather permitting.
- 33 Bring grandchildren and enjoy watching them play.
- 34 Celebrate holidays or festivals together; in the home or outside when possible.
- 35 Keep a track of favourite sports events or teams.
- 36 Learn a new word, or words, together using a dictionary.



- 37 Challenge a relative in a spelling contest.
- 38 Play along with a TV game show or develop your own game.
- 39 Listen to your relatives favourite dance music and dance or tap your feet.
- 40 Bring a travel book or brochure and dream together about your fantasy holiday.
- 41 Use small rhythm instruments to make your own music together.
- 42 Read the astrology column in a daily paper and talk about it.
- 43 Do some simple baking/cooking together.
- 44 Talk about local land marks and how the community has changed.
- 45 Make lists of your relative's favourite foods, films, film stars, music etc.
- 46 Talk about what you would do if you won the lottery.
- 47 Design and make your own Christmas & holiday cards to send.
- 48 Try tossing cards or balls into a hat or bowl.
- 49 Hold your relatives hand and be a good listener.
- 50 Try drawing each others 'portraits' if possible.
- 51 Sensory quiz. With closed eyes, see if your relative can guess different flavours in the food and drink you supply.
- 52 Talk about, recite or play nursery rhymes and other songs from childhood.
- 53 Give hugs and affection when arriving and leaving.
- 54 A to Z quiz. Pick a category, say 'fruit and veg' and think of an item using each letter of the alphabet e.g. A – apple, B – banana, C – cherry etc.
- 55 Play simple card or board games. Dominoes as well.
- 56 Do simple crosswords together or a jigsaw.
- 57 Using a knife (if appropriate), see who can produce the longest apple peel.
- 58 Plant seeds (sunflower) together and see how they develop.
- 59 Make models together.
- 60 Bring flowers and do flower arranging together.
- 61 If someone has a suitable dog with the right temperament bring it along with you; throw a ball for it etc.
- 62 Have a bet, real or imaginary, on the horses! If races are on the TV pick a favourite horse and see if it wins.
- 63 Origami (paper folding) is good fun and encourages dexterity.
- 64 Take your relative out for a drive, perhaps into the local countryside.
- 65 Help them express themselves by painting with watercolours or colouring with crayons.
- 66 Bird watching. Set up a bird table/feeder in the garden and see how many different species of birds can be spotted from the window.
- 67 Borrow some books from the local library for them.
- 68 Is there a local pond where you could go to feed the ducks together?
- 69 If your relative is religious, perhaps you could accompany them to church. If not some clergy will visit and provide home services.
- 70 Take them to the local shops or supermarket for some retail therapy and perhaps a cup of tea in a café.
- 71 Make some table decorations together at Christmas and Easter.
- 72 Make up gift tags using old Christmas cards.
- 73 Put a simple household object into a box and challenge them to identify it by feel alone.
- 74 If you have a laptop computer take it along with you and introduce them to the Internet.
- 75 Watch a favourite 'Soap' like 'Eastenders' together and discuss the plot.



Meet the Trading Team and Recommend a Friend to us



Sarah lives in Cardiff with her two young children. She is an accomplished Cello player and a recorded vocalist.

Lorna lives in Bridgend where she keeps chickens and ducks. Before joining Age Concern in 2004 she worked as an Art Tutor.

Helen lives in Barry and before joining us in 2007, worked for many years in a well known Travel Agents where she was fortunate enough to visit lots of exotic places.

Pop into our office and say hello – we are at 93, Caerphilly Road in Birchgrove, Cardiff - open Monday to Friday from 9.30 to 4.30. We all very much look forward to welcoming new customers or continuing to help existing customers.

As you may already know, all products offered are designed with the over 50s in mind. In addition to this, any net profits we make from the sale of products and services go directly to supporting our charitable activities.

We would like more customers so that we can continue to offer more people like you a great deal while at the same time helping Age Concern Cardiff & the Vale of Glamorgan run valuable projects such as Good Neighbour Schemes, Ageing Well and Advocacy.

So what is the best way to attract customers? If we switch on our TV, check our letterbox or walk down our street we are bombarded by various companies imploring us to buy their product.

These companies have multi-million pound marketing budgets but many of us are now so overloaded with advertising that we simply 'switch off' and ignore it.

With this in mind we undertook a survey* of our customers and asked them:

- a) How they found out about us and
- b) What might have otherwise encouraged them to contact us?

The overwhelming response was that our services had been recommended to them by friends or family and that this 'word of mouth' advertising was the most effective way of bringing potential customers to us.

We then asked people what would motivate them to recommend their friends and family to us.

Most people we spoke to said that they would recommend us without any prompting or incentive simply because of the good service they had received.

Many of the people we asked said that, as we Age Concern Cardiff & the Vale are a charity, they would not expect any incentive from us to tell their friends.

We think, however, that sometimes an incentive or prompt is the difference that can persuade us to try something new. We all know that it can seem easier to stay with an existing Provider (particularly if you pay by Direct Debit) or to put off arranging our affairs than to take action.

Therefore we would like to offer our valued existing customers a special 'thank you' AND any friends they recommend to us a little reward for trying us.

For the first time ever and exclusive to Age Concern Cardiff & the Vale, we will have a monthly prize draw for all recommenders and their friends where together they will have a very real chance of winning £100!

There is no 'catch' and your friend doesn't need to buy a product with us.

If you are an existing customer of any one of our three main products you can take part and be a recommender!

The draw will be made up solely of our existing customers and their friends who have had received a no-obligation quote from us that month.

You will find a special postcard in this edition of Lifetimes – it explains more about the draw and its Terms & Conditions. If you are an existing customer of any of the products mentioned, simply fill in your details and give to a friend explaining why they might like to get in touch with us. If you need more postcards you can ring us using the number on the back of the card – (029) 20527190

Your friends can get in touch with us by phone or by calling in to our office at Caerphilly Road. When your friend has a quote with us you will both be entered into a monthly prize draw where you could win £50 each.

The draw will take place at the end of every month and we are hoping to feature our winners in future editions of Lifetimes.

* The survey was undertaken during November 2009. Approx 50 telephone customers and callers to the office were asked to complete a brief questionnaire. asking: if they would recommend a friend, if they would like an incentive for it and, if so, what that incentive could be. This was followed up with a more detailed telephone survey of selected respondents on January 2010. Of 138 customers asked during November 2009 67 were originally or recently recommended by a friend (from customer quotation records)

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My City



THIS GREAT BUSTLING CITY OF CARDIFF,
INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED SO I'M TOLD
COSMOPOLITAN AND EVER CHANGING,
BUT INTIMIDATING WHEN YOU ARE OLD.

THIS CITY OF SPORT AND CULTURE
WHERE THERE'S ALWAYS SO MUCH TO DO
ARE EVEN FILMING EPISODES
OF TORCHWOOD AND DOCTOR WHO.

TAKE OLD TIGER BAY, WHERE I NEVER DARED STRAY,
IT'S NOW THE HOT PLACE TO BE
THE MILLENNIUM CENTRE AND WATERFRONT BARS
AND HOME TO THE WELSH ASSEMBLY.



NEW CASINOS, HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS,
ICE RINKS, CINEMAS AND SHOPS
I CAN'T FIND MY WAY ROUND THIS CITY
WHERE I GO I GET LOST.



AFTER DARK TOWN TURNS INTO A WAR ZONE
BINGEING YOUNGSTERS ALL DRINKING CHEAP BEER
NO PLACE FOR A PENSIONER TEA DANCE
GETTING MUGGED IS MY ONE GREATEST FEAR.

OH HOW I YEARN FOR THE OLD TROLLEY BUSES
THE NUMBER 10A AND 10B
BANISH THOSE LONG BENDY MONSTERS
WITH HYDRAULICS AND CLOSED CIRCUIT TV.

BRING BACK THE TRAFFIC TO QUEEN STREET,
WITH MARMENTS, TOP RANK, C&A,
THE KARDOMA AND CAPITAL CINEMA
WHERE I ONCE HEARD THE BEATLES PLAY.



AND CARDIFF ARMS PARK, WHERE WE SANG SOSBAN FACH,
GREAT VICTORIES IN RUGBY WERE WON,
NOW REPLACED BY A MASSIVE WHITE SPACESHIP
CALLED MILLENIUM STADIUM.



MY NOSTALGIC JOURNEY NOW OVER
THIS PROGRESS, I KNOW WE CAN'T HALT
BUT THIS YEARNING FOR MY OLD CITY REMAINS
I'VE GROWN OLD, IT'S NOT REALLY MY FAULT!!

CROESO I'R CAERDYDD

By Yvonne Heenan

Images from www.cardiffians.co.uk

This was the Eisteddfod 2010 winner in the poetry competition and Yvonne's 1st time entering; can we tempt you to enter something next year?

What's On

Are you safe and sound for Winter? Free electric blanket testing for over 60's!

Cardiff residents aged 60 and over can get their electric blankets tested for free at the following 'Safe and Sound' events:

Tues 21st Sep	Llanishen Leisure Centre, Ty Glas Avenue, Llanishen, Cardiff, CF14 5EB
Weds 22nd Sep	Old Trelai Library, Bishopston Road, Ely, Cardiff, CF5 5DX
Thurs 23rd Sep	Eastern Leisure Centre, Llanrumney Avenue, Llanrumney, Cardiff, CF3 4DN

Anyone wishing to take advantage of the free electric blanket testing should book an appointment in advance by telephoning 029 2087 2059.

"Only Men Allowed" Men's (MOT) Health Event

Age Concern Cardiff and the Vale will be holding a Men's Health event on 15th October between 2pm and 4pm at Glamorgan Wanderer's rugby club.

Your car gets a yearly MOT so why not come along and have an MOT yourself? We will be providing health checks on the day, an opportunity to talk to a doctor, and advice on health matters. For more details and to book your MOT test, please phone Gloria on 029 20578 368.

Nordic Walking

Age Cymru now run Nordic walking sessions in 4 venues across Cardiff and the Vale:

Cosmeston Country Park, Victoria Park, Llandaff Fields and Forest Farm – Coryton. To find out more please ring Glenn Little on 029 20431 555 or email ageingwell@agecymru.org.uk

Alzheimer's Society

The Alzheimer's Society now has "Tea for Two" events in 3 locations - a friendly and supportive monthly cafe for people with dementia and their carers:

- Senior Health Shop, Holton Road, Barry, from 1pm – 3pm on the last Friday of every month.
- Llanrumney Library, Countisbury Avenue, from 10am – 12pm on the first Friday of every month.
- Beulah Church Centre, Rhiwbina, from 2pm – 4pm on the first Tuesday of every month.

For enquiries please call Kim on 029 20434 960.

Age Concern Nail Cutting Surgeries

We have now opened our 3rd venue and will be providing regular nail cutting surgeries every 3 weeks on Thursdays at:

- Barry, Highlight Park Medical Centre, Lakin Drive, Highlight Park, CF62 8GP
- Ely, The Old Trelai Library, Bishopston Road, Ely, Cardiff, CF5 5DX
- Canton, Feet in Motion, Sanatorium Road, Canton, Cardiff, CF11 8DG.

This is a simple nail-cutting service. We are unable to provide:

- Help with foot care problems such as corns or bunions
- Nail-cutting for anyone with a medical condition such as kidney failure, blood circulation problems, a history of ulceration or being treated with steroids
- Nail-cutting for anyone with diabetes or taking warfarin, unless they have been assessed by the GP practice as being low risk. (We have a letter for you to take to your doctor)

In these cases, we advise visiting a registered chiropodist / podiatrist. If you are unsure whether you are eligible for our service, we will be happy to discuss it with you. For more information or to book an appointment please phone 029 20560 952.

The Staying Safe campaign

Tuesday, June 15th, 2010 marked the 5th Annual World Elder Abuse Awareness Day and Age Concern Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan launched a local poster campaign to urge older people not to put up with ill treatment of any kind. The posters are being distributed around Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan and a set of posters can be provided upon request.

The staff of Age Concern's Advocacy Service are happy to come along to older peoples' centres, groups or clubs to tell them more about elder abuse, how to recognise it and where to get help.

Whilst most people enjoy a fulfilling retirement, It is a sad fact that in our society, some vulnerable older people may be the victims of abuse, neglect and exploitation. As a local charity working with older people, Age Concern wants to raise awareness about the issue of elder abuse and reassure everyone that they should not put up with it. The five posters in the campaign highlight the different sorts of abuse that vulnerable people may be subject to

Throughout the world, abuse and neglect of older persons is largely under-recognised or treated as an unspoken problem. Research indicates that public education campaigns like World Elder Abuse Awareness Day are vital for informing people in a growing number of countries about elder abuse.

The Staying Safe poster campaign was launched by Age Concern in partnership with Cardiff County Council, the Vale of Glamorgan Council and the Cardiff and the Vale University Health Board

We want to recognise and respond to the mistreatment of older people in whatever setting it occurs, so that the latter years of life will be free from abuse, neglect and exploitation. If you know of someone in this situation then please ask them to contact the Age Concern Advocacy Service on Tel. 029 20 683683

