

## News sheet

Spring 2010

Phone 01508 533784



### **This is important news that could affect you if you are a Blue Disabled Badge holder**

If you are a holder of a blue disabled badge **and** have no off street parking at all where your car is kept, could you please phone your Chairman, who has a few questions to ask you first, on 01508 481819. We may be able to help you, by arrangement, through the County Council's Equalities Group.

Age Concern Norfolk's Factsheet 73 provides further information relating to driving and parking that is particularly relevant to older people and those who have health conditions and/or disabilities. You can get a free copy by telephoning 01603 787 111 and asking for factsheet 73 to be sent to you.

### **Open meeting 21 October 2009**

The **Handy Man** scheme (part of the Care and Repair service) was reported on again and we were disturbed to find that, in spite of our support, this is being under used and could be lost altogether if it is insufficiently taken up. It is totally free to all older people on benefits and costs £10 an hour (maximum 2 hour jobs) with no call out fee or travel time included to any other older person – that means you get a full hour's work. Any materials have to be paid for (smoke alarms are free and can be replaced free too). **Where else can you get a service at this price?** For further help phone 0808 168 2000.

There was an update on ongoing work in both health and social care in the home and out of hospital for older people. There are several pilot schemes to integrate the work of both services that we hope will be developed to be rolled out County wide. This means teams working and meeting together from the same premises and being able to communicate regularly and better than in the past. Personal budgets seem to have caused some alarm and need better understanding. From a social services point of view, no one should be handed money to spend without help or an understanding of what it can do to aid independence and a better standard of life. Assessments should be health and socially undertaken in a single process to save having to explain the same things to many different people. From the NHS point of view personalisation is adapting treatment to suit the particular patient and their own condition taking account of their way of life. There is emphasis on a good end of life with many more people being able to die at home if it is medically possible and arrangements being suitably made for it. People are choosing different types of personal social care help, for example a lady who cares for her husband with dementia was finding doing any cooking or housework difficult because he followed her around and got in her way all the time. The social worker asked what really interested him and found out that it was

football, she then suggested that the couple purchased a Sky football package which he now watches avidly while she enjoys stress free cooking or cleaning times! Another gentleman who had worked in horticulture and loved his garden was unable to garden because he was unsafe on his own so they purchased someone's time to garden alongside him and make certain he was safe and not liable to cause himself harm.

### **EXTEND**

This is an organisation that runs exercises to music sessions for the over 60s and the less able of any age all over Norfolk (and the UK) in village halls, sheltered housing, day centres and residential homes. If you want to know more or to join your nearest classes you can contact Patsy Martin on 01508 570124. They also have a website [www.extend.org.uk](http://www.extend.org.uk).

If you are interested in becoming a teacher, there is an Extend 12 day teacher training course in Norwich from March to June. For those working in care the course can be subsidised by 50%. Patsy Martin can tell you about this.

### **Concessionary Bus passes and Discretionary fares**

These are due to become County Council responsibility from next year as far as we know, so perhaps there might be a better chance for those who cannot access or use public transport in the future. As long as the free bus pass remains for the over 60s, then there is always some chance of developments for such folk. We are told that 36,000 pensioners in Portsmouth now enjoy the option of exchanging their pass for taxi tokens if they wish. This is a great advantage for those not on a bus route, too far from a bus stop or who find it too difficult to get on a bus.

### **More chances to have a say**

The County Strategic Partnership Board for Older People that oversees the older people's strategy, Living Longer, Living Well and monitors the progress of the annual plans has undertaken a radical change in its structure and way of working. The number of older people elected to the group has been increased from three to ten covering all areas of the County. So, with more representatives, your voices can be heard more. The Forums have paid a great part in this by working well with officers who actually made the recommendation rather than Forum members. Some of these are also chairing working groups for the Board and having to present their findings to the Board as well.

### **New contact number for the Council**

Just to let you know that Tracy Brady is still our contact officer if you wish to use the South Norfolk Council phone number. She has moved departments but wished to maintain the arrangements we had from the start although her number has changed to 01508 533784

**Diary Dates for 2010 meetings at South Norfolk House at 10am  
17 March, 23 June, 13 October**

