

Newsletter

Summer / Autumn 2011

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South Norfolk
Older People's Forum



Age UK Norfolk News

Age UK is developing its Community Support centres in Costessey (Grays Fair Court Centre) and Diss (Denny Centre) assisting older people to keep well and independent at home through being well informed, plus having a range of services to meet specific requirements. Information and Advice will be at the heart of the service with specialist services being available at the centre or in your local community. They need your views about the services and support which would benefit your community, particularly in Diss, so please contact Eamon McGrath or Doreen Harrison on 01603 787111 if you would like to be involved in any way. Age UK Norfolk provides information and advice about older people's entitlements and benefits. In the last 12 months they have made 868 home visits and reviewed the benefits of 541 people. They helped 517 people to complete Attendance Allowance applications and 80 Disability Living Allowance applications. They also assisted people to claim Pension Credit, Housing Benefit, Council tax Benefit and Carers Allowance, so helping to get over £1.5 million extra in benefits for Norfolk's Older People. The service is free and confidential to all by contacting 01603 767111 between 10am and 4pm.

Payments Council to keep cheques and cancels 2018 target

The Payments Council has announced that cheques will continue for as long as customers need them and the target for possible closure of the cheque clearing in 2018 has been cancelled. The Payments Council Board will continue to focus on security, efficiency and encouraging innovation in all types of payments to ensure customers have options best suited to the 21st century. The cheque guarantee card was abolished on 30th June.

Over the hill?

This is a multi-media project that examines the housing and financial problems faced by older people in the English countryside. All across England, older people are devising and delivering innovative solutions to the challenges they experience living in rural communities, in partnership with voluntary and statutory agencies. Each of the case studies is featured in a DVD; the report demonstrates innovative ways in which local communities can lead and help to provide successful solutions to local issues. The report can be found on the internet.

NBFA - Helping to break the isolation of elderly people

The National Benevolent Fund for the Aged (NBFA) has been working since 1957 with disadvantaged older people on low incomes across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Their aim is to combat social isolation and encourage independence. NBFA provide three main services, all for free: Breaks-Away trips of 5 days; TENS Pain Relief Machines; and Emergency Telephone Alarms. This year a new initiative of NBFA Day Trips is starting. All services are designed to give older people who are feeling lonely more social opportunities and confidence. To contact call 0207 828 0200

Contact the Elderly invites older people to “be their guest”

Contact the Elderly is inviting older people to join one of the 385 friendship groups across the country that meet once a month on a Sunday afternoon to enjoy a cuppa, some cake and good company. The charity aims to relieve social isolation and any feelings of loneliness among people aged 75 and over who live alone, need a bit of help getting out and about, and do not have the support of family nearby, by organising monthly Sunday tea parties for small groups and volunteers within their local community. Experience has shown that acquaintances turn into friends and loneliness is replaced by companionship. To join a group or refer someone call Freephone 0800 716 543

Grandparents get new voice on-line

A new social network has been set up for the UK's grandparents. Gransnet, from the creators of Mumsnet, is a forum-based website aimed at the older generation. The site gives the country's 14 million grandparents an online space to discuss subjects including relationships, hobbies, news, culture and grandparenting

A vanishing convenience

Lack of conveniences, or uncertainty about whether they will be available, inhibits mobility. The National Key Scheme offers people with disabilities independent access to almost 9,000 locked public toilets around the country. A RADAR key can be bought from £3.50 by calling 020 7250 3222

Report shows value of Handyperson services

A new independent report commissioned by the Department for Communities and Local Government shows that handypersons services around the country are showing that they are value for money and help elderly people to carry on living in their own homes with confidence. There is strong evidence about the impact of handyperson type interventions on improved wellbeing, independent living and easier access to appropriate services including minor home adaptations on reducing falls and hospital discharge.

Your Human Rights - A Guide for Older People

There is little information available about human rights and how they relate to older people. Too often a person may not realise that they are able to do something about their situation, or even that there is something wrong with the way they are being treated. It is vital that older people are able to access information about their human rights so they can challenge poor treatment and demand better services. Funded by Comic Relief and produced by Age UK the updated British Institute of Human Rights (BIHR) “Guide on Older People and Human Rights” is now available.

Blue Badge Disabled Parking Scheme Reforms. The government has announced reforms of the “blue badge” scheme, including transferring eligibility assessment from GPs to ‘*independent mobility assessors*’. Local councils are at different stages of implementation but some have already set up teams of occupational therapists as assessors. The simplest way to apply for a blue badge is via the DirectGov website; typing in the applicants’ postcode directly gives a direct link to their local council’s application process

