

THIS IS WHAT WE'RE MADE OF!

Some facts and figures about Age UK Shropshire Telford & Wrekin

- ★ We have 42 day centres, run by 345 volunteers with 650 members ★
- ★ We have handled over 10,000 advocacy cases in the past 10 years ★
- ★ We raised £1.3 million in benefits for older people last year ★
- ★ Shrewsbury Reception handled over 14,000 enquiries last year ★
 - ★ We have 160 befrienders and 18 telephone buddies ★
 - ★ 4000 attendances at our Living Well projects last year ★
 - ★ All the money to run our services is raised locally ★
 - ★ We have 52 pub clubs with over 1200 members ★
- ★ Every year we take over 100 older people to Llandudno for a week's holiday ★
- ★ We have over 850 volunteers helping us to run services for older people ★
- ★ Volunteers give us over 90,000 hours of their time every year;
if there was a cash equivalent their time would be worth over £1 million!!
Why not join them and do something amazing!!!

CONGRATULATIONS!!

Well done and thank you to Reception Volunteer Steph for winning us the 'Shrewsbury's Best Dressed Shop Window' competition (Charity Shop category)! This is an annual competition organised by the Shrewsbury Business Chamber and Shropshire Newspapers and has to be a 'floral Flower Show theme'. Pictured opposite is Steph with our trophy (sponsored by the Darwin & Pride Hill Shopping Centres) and in the background you can see the beautiful window display she created.



Diamond Success!

Age UK Shropshire Telford & Wrekin has now opened TWO Diamond Drop in Centres to support local people with dementia and their carers and have places available at both centres.

The centre in Telford is at Frizes Leasowe sheltered housing scheme at Ketley Bank and opens on a regular fortnightly basis between 10.30am and 12.30pm on a Tuesday. It has been open since the end of October and all the people who come along have said how much they enjoy attending and how it helps to have a special place to go to. The building is modern and very welcoming and we also have the use of an enclosed garden [when it's not raining]. We even offer hand massage and manicure sessions and the opportunity for carers to have some time by themselves to share experiences and talk together or with other support workers whilst our trained team of volunteers look after their loved ones.

The centre in Bridgnorth is at Innage Bungalow off Innage Lane and is very accessible. It opens on a regular fortnightly basis on a Wednesday, from 1pm until 3pm in the afternoon. The centre has a great team of volunteers and have organised some varied and interesting activities. As we have only been open since May this year we are really keen to increase our numbers.

Both centres provide a chance to get to know others and share experiences in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. The cost is only £2.50 per person and this includes tea and light refreshments and the cost of all the activities that are arranged. The sessions also provide members with support and information and an opportunity to take part in interesting activities, co coordinated through our team of trained volunteers.

If you know of anyone who would like to join us then please pass this on or ring Neil Brookes our Dementia Support Worker on 01743 233123 ext. 252.

Heather Osborne, Chief Executive said *"We are very proud to have opened our two Diamond Drop In Centres in Telford and Bridgnorth. Living with dementia touches the lives of over 5000 people in Shropshire and the people who care for them and we hope that by coming along to these groups we can help to put a little sparkle back into their lives."*



New CRB and Barring procedures from September 2012

Did you know that new procedures for CRB checks and Barring were introduced from September this year? The new ID checking process requires applicants to produce three ID documents from a new, reduced list. If they cannot do so for whatever reason, they will then be required to undergo an external identity check arranged and paid for by the registered body. If after further checks a person's identity cannot be established then they will have to undergo fingerprinting before the CRB check is issued.

In addition, new regulations coming into force on 10 September set out new criteria for "regulated activity". You can only request a check of the ISA barred lists if the applicant will be working under the newly defined Regulated Activity, which is quite different from the old definition. If they will not, you will have to answer "no" to questions 64 or 65 on the CRB application form. You can however continue to ask for an enhanced CRB check (but without a check of the ISA barred lists), if the applicant's role qualifies for this under the old definition of "regulated activity".

There will be more changes to CRB procedures over the coming year, we will keep you informed! Further information can also be found on the Home Office website - <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/agencies-public-bodies/crb>

Keeping you 'Living Well'

The Living Well Project aims to provide a range of activities for people over 60 to help them keep fit, maintain good health and stay mentally stimulated. Our weekly and monthly activities in Shrewsbury include a **Tea Dance** each Tuesday afternoon, **Reading Groups**, **Lunch Clubs**, **EXTEND (Movement to Music)**, **Latin Steps Dance Exercise** classes in Shrewsbury and Ketley in Telford. EXTEND is recreational exercise to music which can be taken standing or sitting. We also run EXTEND sessions in our Day Centres across the county.

We have a new Reading Group which will meet on the first Wednesday of each month starting on the 3rd October 2012. The group will meet at 10.30am in the Hobbs Room at Shrewsbury Library, Castlegates, Shrewsbury.

Our activities work on all levels and can change people's lives by keeping them healthy, both physically and mentally, helping to maintain independence for longer. People also have the opportunity to meet and make new friends. Some of the groups organise amongst themselves days out, lunches and walks. For example the EXTEND group visited Blists Hill earlier this year and other trips are planned for the autumn.

We arrange a variety of projects throughout the year. For the second year running we have organised guided town history walks which have been very popular despite the weather. In February this year we hosted Asian Dance Workshops that ran in Shrewsbury and Telford. We have a sewing project planned for next year and a music project in November and if these are successful we hope to run more in the future.

Every year we hold an Afternoon of Entertainment at the The Place, Oakengates, Telford. Pictured opposite are the 'Fusion School of Dance Tap Dancers' with our compare, Martin Brookes MBE, who performed at this year's event.

Next year the show is called a 'Variety Special' and will be held on 14 May 2013. All are welcome and if you would like to go on the mailing list for details and application form for tickets or for information about any of the Living Well activities mentioned above please contact Susan 01743 233123 ext. 225 or email susan.stefiuk@ageuk.org.uk.



Shropshire Older Peoples Assembly celebrates its 1st Birthday!!

This year the Shropshire Older Peoples Assembly (SOPA) celebrates its first birthday and a very successful first year. SOPA was launched at a public meeting at the Barnabus centre on the 13th October 2011. The meeting was well attended and there was a unanimous agreement to establish an assembly to listen to and represent the voices of older people across the county. The meeting identified four key areas it wished the Assembly to concentrate on in the first few years. They were Social Care, Housing, Health and Transport.



The Assembly has held four public meetings to date to discuss and debate these issues. Meetings adopt a 'question time' style format with presentations and then a 'Question and Answer panel' where members of the audience can ask questions of the speakers. The first meeting in January 2012 focussed on adult social care and the proposed budget changes, the April meeting discussed housing and heard of and debated the recent restructuring of supported housing as well as what is available for older people in the private sector. July's meeting concentrated on health which was such a vast topic that a request was made for a further meeting to focus on mental health. October's meeting will focus on transport.

Membership of the Assembly is open to any individual older person or any group working with older people and all are welcome to the meetings. To find out more about the work of the Assembly you can contact Bridget on (01743) 244640 or on the websites of Age UK Shropshire Telford & Wrekin or the Shropshire Senior Citizens Forum. The next meeting will be in January and will focus on Mental Health.

Come along and bring your friends 😊 😊 😊



WISE UP TO RURAL AGEING
A RURAL MEDIA COMPANY PROJECT

New campaign highlights the challenges of rural ageing

Rural retirement is the dream of many an urban dweller and perhaps this isn't surprising when one considers the way that rural life is depicted on our TV screens. Rolling countryside, beautiful scenery, wholesome country folk and traditional lifestyles all contribute to the vision of a great place to retire. Undoubtedly, the reality often does live up to the dream – especially for those in their middle years who are fit, able and willing to get involved with their local communities. However, for the frail, immobile or isolated, rural living can present difficulties not always appreciated by the aspiring rural retiree.

A new campaign aims to redress this balance. Through a collection of short films and supporting documentation, *Over the hill?* encourages those planning a rural retirement to think carefully about what this involves, to plan effectively and take action to ensure the services they need are not found wanting. The films include eight case studies drawn from across England showing examples of 'best practice' services for rural older people – particularly with regard to housing and financial inclusion. Also included is a drama short that graphically portrays the difficulties of an isolated elderly lady who is desperately trying to sell her rural family home.

All resources are available free of charge from the campaign website: www.overthehillcampaign.org.uk. A DVD resource pack is also available to purchase at £15, or free of charge to those who use it as part of a wider debate about rural older people's needs. **The aim of the campaign is not to put people off rural retirement, but to encourage them to take an active and informed approach to rural retirement.** For further information, please contact Jan Bailey on 01432 344039 or email janb@ruralmedia.co.uk. Over the hill? is funded by the Nationwide Foundation. Partners are ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England) and Age UK.

Queen visits RAF Cosford for Diamond Jubilee pageant

The Queen paid her first visit to Shropshire for two years when she visited RAF Cosford on 12 July to attend a pageant as part of her UK Diamond Jubilee celebrations. Accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh, she arrived for the event at midday. The royal party toured the RAF Museum and airfield before watching the procession. About 20,000 people attended, and more than 5,000 children and a number of Shropshire businesses and voluntary groups took part in the parade. Each colour of the 'Reignbow' procession represented each decade of the Queen's reign and brought to life significant events in Shropshire's history over the past 60 years. Age UK Shropshire Telford & Wrekin was one of the voluntary organisations invited to take part. We borrowed a 1950s coach from local company Boultons and the outside of the vehicle was decorated by a team of volunteers and staff (see photo below). Members of Ellesmere and Donnington day centres travelled in the coach and nominated volunteers and members of staff accompanied it on foot in the procession.

There was also a display of work from the different voluntary groups and commercial organisations in the Showcase Hangar throughout the day. We had a stand with a display of our work throughout the 60 years of the Queen's reign together with a royal quiz to test people's knowledge, as well as information on our current services and the role of our 800 volunteers. The day was a great success for the organisation, bringing our work to the attention of so many Shropshire people. We are most grateful to all the volunteers and members of staff for all their efforts in making it a memorable day for everyone.



News from the Telford Office

Now that we have settled into our new offices in Meeting Point House we will be having our **'official opening'** on 24 October. Throughout the day we will be using our offices and the Walker Room to display Information Stands from both ourselves and other agencies that we work closely with. Individuals will be able to come along and talk to staff to gain information and advice.

Since our last update there have been a number of staff changes. We welcome four new members of staff: Jenny Cartwright, Angela Jebb, Lakhvir Hunjan and Brenda Patrick. Jenny has a wide range of experience working for other Age UKs (Age Concerns) prior to joining the team and is our Living Well and Volunteer Recruitment Coordinator. This involves coordinating the current Living Well activities and looking for new ones, supporting the existing the Pub Lunch Clubs and forming new ones and also recruiting volunteers for our services in Telford. Angela's role involves the coordination of our Visiting Scheme where we provide a volunteer who will visit an older person regularly offering companionship, support and friendship. Lakhvir is one of two Contact Officers in Telford and her aim is to reach older people who may feel isolated or lonely and to ensure they are given the help support they need. The post primarily focuses on working with older people from black and ethnic minority communities. Brenda has taken over the Information & Advice role and the office is open to the public Monday to Friday 9.30am to 1.30pm. Outside of these hours, help can be obtained over the phone on (01952) 216018 or from our Shrewsbury office on (01743) 233123. Our new 2012/13 Telford Information Booklet is now available.

LLANDUDNO 2012

A seaside holiday complete with great food, trips out and nightly entertainment was much enjoyed by 110 Shropshire older people and a small team of volunteer helpers in Llandudno in July. The annual holiday, organised by Age UK Shropshire Telford & Wrekin, is principally for older people who wish to have a holiday but, for whatever reason, find it difficult to get away.

The week's stay at the family run Queen's Hotel on the sea front provided a wonderful base from which to explore the magnificent scenery around Snowdonia. Despite the somewhat inclement weather, holiday makers enjoyed a ride on the Ffestiniog Railway as well as trips to Llanberis (for the slate museum), Anglesey, Beaumaris, Betws-y-Coed and Caernarvon. For others, strolling along the promenade, listening to the band or walking the pier was the highlight of the holiday.

The evening entertainment provided much fun and laughter plus music to suit all tastes, some of the holiday makers took to the dance floor for the first time in many years. The highlight of the week's entertainment is a fancy dress competition on the final night (*see photos below*), won this year by Mrs Roberts from Ellesmere dressed as Tiger Woods.

Heather Osborne, Chief Executive of Age UK Shropshire Telford & Wrekin said: *'This holiday is organised each year on our behalf by a wonderful team of volunteers. It is an enormous amount of work and they do a fantastic job ensuring the smooth running of the holiday and that everyone has a great time. We are very grateful to them all.'*

If you are interested in going along on next year's holiday please contact Age UK's Shrewsbury office; applications will be sent out in March 2013.



NEW STAFF TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT THEIR WORKING BACKGROUND!

MEET...

Rachel Whitney – Volunteer Recruitment Assistant

I have spent over ten years living and working in East Sussex to co-ordinate the music programme for Europe's biggest Christian festival. After which I moved to Oxford to co-ordinate the volunteer programme for a mission agency which sent volunteers overseas to use their skills where most needed. In addition I have had a variety of temporary jobs which have varied from inputting data at Aston Villa football club, running a tea shop in Bridgnorth's historic town hall, selling vintage china and helping people facing redundancy to find jobs.



Steve Rush – Admin Assistant based in Shrewsbury

I have a seven year history of working in Social Services, firstly with Brighton & Hove City Council, dealing with the provision of homecare services and care home placements for older people. Most recently, I have moved to Age UK Shropshire Telford & Wrekin from an Occupational Therapy service based in Bridgnorth. I'm very excited to be joining Age UK STW in what promises to be a varied and rewarding role. It's great to be working in a strong, friendly team of staff and dedicated volunteers and I'm looking forward to being a part of it.

Julie Gildie – South Shropshire Schemes Co-ordinator based in Ludlow

I've worked and volunteered in the charity/third sector for approximately 5 years. During this time I have worked as a Generalist Advisor and Outreach Advisor with the Citizens' Advice Bureau in Newark, Peterborough, Lincoln and Shropshire, have volunteered with Oxfam Shrewsbury - both in the high-street shop and in their on-line Hub, and also Home-Start Shrewsbury as a Trustee; I'm also a part-time law student (for my sins!).



NEW...NEW...NEW...NEW...NEW...NEW...NEW...NEW...NEW...NEW...NEW...NEW...NEW...NEW...NEW...NEW

Prevention of Falls Through Exercise



**How does she do that??
No, it's not part of our
exercise session!**

Staying fit and healthy to enable us to enjoy a full and active life well into our senior years is very important for our confidence and wellbeing. Particularly important are activities and exercises which are effective in strengthening muscles and improving balance to keep us steady on our feet and help maintain independence for as long as possible.

We have recently had the opportunity of sending staff and volunteers on an NHS approved Prevention of Falls through Exercise Training Course. The first course ran in July and there is another planned for later in the year. The exercises are specifically designed to improve muscle strength, balance, posture and coordination and help reduce the risk of falling. The exercise sessions are free to Age UK Day Centres and run for blocks of six weeks to gain the maximum benefit. The duration of each session is approximately half an hour.

Rachel Hurford, Heather Ireland and Sandra Ingerson successfully completed the course in July and are now available to deliver safe and enjoyable exercise sessions. **If you would like more information please contact Susan on 01743 233123 ext 225 or susan.stefiuk@ageukstw.org.uk.**

Summer is now over and winter is on our doorstep. Winter can be a tough time for people in Shropshire, as it is amongst the top five most fuel deprived areas in the UK. Rural homes often rely on expensive, often ineffective, heating solutions and many older properties cannot be fully insulated. Local and national research into fuel poverty, including work by Shropshire Council, University of Bristol and the English Housing Condition Survey, shows over 30% of households are living in fuel poverty in Shropshire - well above the national average (18.4%) and one of the highest figures in the country. Every year the health of 360 people in Shropshire will be adversely affected as a result of their homes being poorly insulated or the heating system being inadequate. As a result, 114 of these will lose their lives. The cost to the NHS is over £6 million. Help is available to tackle issues you may have keeping warm in winter and there are financial benefits available to people on a low income: -

The Warm Front Scheme: This is a grant-led government scheme that can provide a package of insulation and heating improvements tailored to each property up to the value of £3,500. Some homes that need oil or LPG central heating may receive a grant of up to £6,000. The scheme is available to people on Pension Credit and it is free to enquire on 0800 3166011. To find out if you may be eligible for Pension Credit please call Age UK STW on 01743 233123.

The Warm Home Discount: This is a scheme that can provide a direct rebate of £130 off your electricity bill. You may be eligible for this help if you receive the guarantee credit part of Pension Credit (that is you do not receive any savings credit **OR** you are aged over 80 and in receipt of the guarantee credit and savings credit part of pension credit). Providers operating this scheme are Atlantic, British Gas, EDF, EON, Equipower, Manweb, M&S Energy, npower, Sainsbury's Energy, Scottish Gas, Scottish Hydro, Scottish Power, Southern Electric, SSE, Swalec & Utility Warehouse. If you have not already received this discount (which should be automatic), apply to your energy provider, or contact Age UK STW.

Community Foundation Grant - Age UK Shropshire Telford & Wrekin has a small amount of money from the Community Foundation Shropshire Telford & Wrekin for people experiencing difficulties with paying their heating bills, or problems with their heating systems. To see if you are eligible for a grant please get in touch with Age UK on 01743 233123

Cold Weather Payments / Winter Fuel Payments: A Winter fuel payment is a lump sum paid at pensionable age (may be younger for men) to help with fuel bills payments. These payments can be £200 plus per household dependant on your circumstances. For any queries regarding winter fuel payment, please call Age UK on 01743 233123.

A Cold Weather payment is a one-off payment of £25.00 for any week where the temperature drops below 0 degrees Celsius for 7 consecutive days. This payment is available to anyone in receipt of Pension Credit and is paid after the 7 consecutive days of cold weather.

Keep Shropshire Warm: This scheme can help reduce your fuel bills and make your home more affordable to heat. Keep Shropshire Warm can arrange grants and discounts for loft and cavity wall insulation, help with new heating systems, energy efficiency advice and benefit entitlement checks. Contact them on 01743 277123

Schemes run by energy providers: Some Energy providers have set up charitable trusts to help vulnerable people pay off debts if they are in financial difficulty. British Gas, EDF and npower have such trusts. Other providers, eg npower, have schemes to help you pay for boiler repair or replacement. Get in touch with you supplier to see if you can get help and how to apply.

Health Through Warmth. This is an npower funded scheme for homeowners only, which provides a minimum of 20% funding for insulation and heating improvements, and then aims to source the rest from foundations and grants. They focus on those that have a long term illness that could be exacerbated by cold conditions. Referrals are normally made via the local Home Improvement Agency (HIA) but Shropshire Council and Keep Shropshire Warm can refer directly. Contact: 0845 070 2809. Website www.healththroughwarmth.com

SSAFA (Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen Families Association). They will help with heating, insulation etc. anyone who has served in the armed forces or has a close family member (Father, Mother, Brother, Sister or Child) that has served in the forces, even if this is someone killed in the Second World War. Contact Tel: 01743 344220 (ansafone). Website: www.ssafa.org.uk

Shropshire Heatsavers: If you have an issue or any concern about keeping warm in the winter, we may be able to refer you to Shropshire Heatsavers, who will assess your need and refer you to the right agency to assist. Please contact Age UK on 01743 233123.

For more advice on any of the above schemes, please ring Age UK Shropshire Telford & Wrekin on 01743 233123.

What does Age UK Shropshire Telford & Wrekin do?

Age UK Shropshire Telford & Wrekin is a local charity working to help older people within the county of Shropshire. A mix of staff and volunteers undertake a wide range of services which are either free or charged at a very minimal cost. Whatever the support needed, whatever the problem, Age UK will do its best to help.

- **Advice & Information** : A free service that helps the public with all manner of queries and problems. Information booklets and factsheets are available.
- **Advocacy** : Independent and trustworthy support for older people facing problems, such as care home charges or disputes with a service provider. Volunteers also visit local long-stay psychiatric wards unannounced to check on conditions and act as a caring friend for patients who do not receive regular visitors.
- **Befriending** : Age UK volunteer befrienders reduce the loneliness and isolation felt by many older people. Befriending schemes vary in different areas of the county.
- **Benefits Advice** : Benefits officers answer enquiries, provide benefits checks and assist in the completion of claim forms and representation at tribunals.
- **Day Centres** : Over forty day centres linked to Age UK around the county provide a friendly day out and a hot meal once a week for frail older people. All our day centres are run by volunteers.
- **Diamond Drop-Ins** : Provide help and support for older people with dementia and those who care for them.
- **Help at Home** : The scheme, funded by Shropshire Council and operating in that area alone, gives older people practical support in their home by means of support workers. There is a small charge. Within this service is a befriending scheme to provide social support.
- **Home from Hospital** : This South Shropshire scheme gives short-term support to people over sixty on their return from a stay in hospital or a visit that has resulted in treatment.
- **Insurance** : Funeral plans, personal alarms, gas and electricity, travel, home and contents, motor insurance and motor breakdown services are available plus charity flowers and a weekly lottery.
- **Intergenerational Projects** : Bringing older and younger generations together to create art, drama, reminiscence work and to recruit older volunteers to work in schools as mentors.
- **Involving Older People** : We set up and continue to support Telford & Wrekin Senior Citizens' Forum which now has over a thousand members.
- **Legal Surgeries** : Solicitors offer free fifteen minute advice sessions on a monthly basis at the Age UK office in Shrewsbury and Telford.
- **Living Well** : Classes in dancing, Tai Chi and art, as well as reading and creative writing groups. Gentle exercise classes are available to day centre members and the general public over sixty. Regular events include a literary competition, art exhibitions and an Afternoon of Entertainment.
- **Llandudno Holiday** : Older people normally unable to take a holiday due to illness, disability or isolation, are able to enjoy a week away.
- **Neighbourhood Contact Scheme** : The Neighbourhood Contact Scheme is there to give assistance to older people who have become isolated from society, whether as individuals or as groups, to become once again involved with their community.
- **North East Shropshire Interdisciplinary Team** : The team provides a multi-disciplinary approach to community rehabilitation after illness or a crisis. Age UK's role is to help with daily living tasks and support.
- **Parish Links** : Volunteers act as information links between Age UK and local communities within the Shropshire Council area.
- **Pub Lunch Clubs** : Members enjoy a reasonably priced meal and a chance to get out and meet people. Over fifty clubs exist in all areas of the county.
- **Tax Help** : Independent free tax surgeries, run by professionals, are available at the Age UK offices in Shrewsbury and Telford. These are intended for people over sixty on low income who have tax concerns.

HOW TO GET HOLD OF US IN SHROPSHIRE

Age UK Shropshire
Telford & Wrekin

Tel: (01743) 233123

North Shropshire Office
Age UK NESIT Co-ordinator

Tel: (01948) 665317
Tel: (01630) 650850

Advocacy Service (Direct Line) Tel: (01743) 357748

Insurance Service (Direct Line) Tel: (01743) 357749
or (01952) 200010

Telford Office

Tel: (01952) 201803

Information Line

Tel: (01952) 216018

Help at Home (Direct Line) Tel: (01743) 233788

Home from Hospital, Ludlow Tel: (01584) 878046

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www.ageukshropshireandtelford.org.uk email: enquiries@ageukstw.org.uk