



Beyond 50 Newsletter

November 2025

To our readers,

Welcome to the winter edition of Age Cymru West Glamorgan's Beyond 50 Newsletter!

As we step into the cosy season, we're delighted to bring you a warm and inspiring mix of news, stories, and opportunities to help you make the most of the colder months. Whether you love the magic of winter walks, enjoy trying comforting recipes on chilly evenings, or simply like to stay informed, this issue is full of ideas to support your wellbeing throughout winter.

We're also sharing smart tips for managing your finances in retirement, as well as special guest features offering information from local organisations to further support you or keep you entertained, and to brighten the darker days.

If you're searching for the perfect festive gift, don't miss our Coach Club Gift Vouchers, an ideal way to treat loved ones to memorable day trips and friendly adventures across South Wales.

You'll also find updates on local services, winter events, and community activities designed to help you stay active, connected, and supported during the season. As always, this newsletter is for everyone interested in ageing well - whether you're 50 or 95, a carer, a family member, a healthcare professional, or a community organiser. We're here to offer helpful information, inspiration, and a little seasonal cheer.

Your feedback continues to shape every edition. If you have ideas or suggestions for future issues, we'd love to hear from you at communications@agecymruwestglamorgan.org.uk

Many thanks and happy reading!

Warm wishes,
The Age Cymru West Glamorgan Team

Don't miss out!

[Sign up here to receive the next issue of our Beyond 50 Bulletin](#)

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Get Winter Ready with a Smart Meter

As winter approaches, managing energy use becomes more important than ever.

A smart meter can help you stay in control of your energy bills and make budgeting for the colder months a little easier.

Smarter energy use at home

Smart meters automatically send your gas and electricity readings directly to your energy supplier, meaning you'll always receive accurate bills based on what you've used and not estimates. This can help you to plan ahead, avoid surprises, and keep your home warm without worrying about unexpected costs. You don't need internet access to have one installed, so everyone can benefit.



See your energy in action

Smart meters come with an optional In-Home Display, which lets you see your energy use in near real time. It shows when you're using more energy than usual, such as when you're running energy-hungry appliances, so you can make small changes that could help lower your bills.

Accessible displays are also available, with features that can read information aloud. If you need one, just let your energy supplier know when arranging your installation.

Working together with Age Cymru

Age Cymru is helping older people across Wales take control of their energy use by sharing information about how smart meters can make a difference. To learn more about how a smart meter could benefit you, call our advice line on 0300 303 44 98 or visit www.smartenergygb.org/agecymru. You can also contact your energy supplier directly to discuss your options.

Find out more

Eligibility for smart meters may vary and some consumer action may be required. To discover other ways to save energy and stay warm this winter, visit our Warm Homes project for more energy-saving tips and support.

Coach Club Gift Vouchers

This Christmas, why not give someone special the joy of friendship, laughter and a memorable day out?

Our Age Cymru West Glamorgan Coach Club Gift Vouchers make thoughtful presents for anyone who enjoys good company and new experiences.

Since launching earlier this year, many of our relaxed, sociable day trips for adults aged 50+ have sold out, a sign of how valued these outings are. A Coach Club Gift Voucher is more than a ticket; it's something meaningful to look forward to during the winter months.

Flexible and easy to use

Vouchers can be used towards any upcoming Coach Club trip, giving your loved one the freedom to choose a scenic outing, cultural visit or festive adventure. All trips are fully supported by our friendly team, making them welcoming and stress-free.



Gift options

- £20 Voucher
- £35 Voucher
- £50 Voucher
- Make a donation – Fund a place for someone who would otherwise miss out, helping combat loneliness locally.

Every voucher includes a small charitable donation to support our services for older people and are provided as e-vouchers with a limited number of physical vouchers available for an additional £5 admin and postage fee.

Give the gift of connection this Christmas and help someone enjoy a truly special day.

Head to our [TicketTailor page](#) to browse our vouchers and upcoming trips.

Give the Gift of Support

Christmas is often seen as a season of joy, yet for many older people it can be the loneliest time of the year.

In our recent survey of more than 100 local residents aged 50+, 72% told us that being without nearby friends or family makes Christmas especially hard. 65% said the season is a painful reminder of someone they've lost, and four in five have either experienced loneliness themselves or know someone who has.

Behind these figures are individuals across Swansea, Neath Port Talbot and Bridgend who may face the festivities without a warm conversation, a friendly smile, or the company we often take for granted.

But our survey also highlighted something hopeful: simple acts of connection mean the most. People told us they feel supported by invitations to join others, meeting friends, and having someone pop in for a cuppa and a chat.

These are exactly the moments our services help create. Through our Coach Club, Information & Advice, Dementia Support and Digital Inclusion programmes, we offer connection, confidence and companionship all year round — and at Christmas, this support matters more than ever.

Your donation makes a local difference

Every gift, no matter the amount, helps older people feel included and valued. Last year, we supported more than 3,000 people across Swansea, Neath Port Talbot and Bridgend. Over 200 enjoyed days out through our Coach Club, building new friendships and rediscovering confidence.

With your support, we can reach even more people - offering comfort, companionship and something to look forward to. Your kindness can make all the difference.

**[CLICK HERE TO DONATE AND HELP SOMEONE
FEEL LESS ALONE THIS CHRISTMAS](#)**

The Magic of Winter Walks

As the seasons change, and the weather gets colder it can be tempting to stay indoors, where it's warm and comfortable.

This winter why not layer up, and head out for a brisk, nature filled walk?



There are many benefits from talking walks outside – even in the winter. Spending time outdoors, even on a chilly day, can significantly boost both your physical and mental health. The fresh air and natural light help lift your mood and energy levels, while gentle exercise helps improve circulation, strengthen muscles, and improve heart health. Studies have shown that regular walking can reduce stress and anxiety, helping you to combat any negative seasonal moods.



With shorter days, and colder weather, it can be challenging to stay social and active. However, taking time out of your day to dedicate to a walk around local sites such as Penllergare Woods, Swansea Bay (if you're in Swansea) or any of the many other locations offering walking groups. Click [here](#) to take a look at some of the fantastic walking groups in and around Swansea.

Whether you use winter walks as a way to engage and socialise with friends – old and new, or to have some alone time, the benefits are endless...

Staying Safe on Your Walks

Winter weather can make walking routes more challenging, but with a few simple precautions, you can stay safe while enjoying your time outdoors.

1. Start by wearing sturdy shoes or boots with good grip to prevent slipping on icy or muddy paths. Waterproof footwear is ideal, keeping your feet warm and dry even on damp days. Walking poles can also provide extra balance and stability, especially on uneven terrain or steeper paths.
2. Dress in warm, layered clothing that allows you to adjust your temperature as you move. Reflective gear or bright colours are recommended.
3. Always check the weather forecast before heading out, and if conditions look too icy, choose a well gritted route or postpone your walk until it's safer. Slow, steady steps are best.
4. Walking with a friend or joining a local group can make the experience more enjoyable and help keep you motivated. Plus, walking together is a great way to socialise and strengthen community ties, something that can be especially valuable during the darker months.

So, this winter, don't let the cold keep you indoors, embrace it. Wrap up warm, step outside, and discover the many rewards of connecting with nature on a winter walk. Your body and mind will thank you for it.



Recipes for Chilly Evenings

As the crisp air of Winter rolls around, there's nothing quite like wrapping your hands around a steaming mug of something warm and comforting.

Whether it's a spiced tea that fills the room with the scent of cinnamon, or a creamy hot chocolate that melts away the chill, these little moments of comfort make the darker evenings so much more enjoyable.

This season is all about slowing down, looking after ourselves, and finding warmth, both in our cups and in our connections. Here are a few easy, nourishing recipes and tips to help you stay cosy, healthy, and happy as the temperatures drop.



Spiced Tea for Warmth and Wellness

A simple spiced tea can do wonders for your wellbeing. Bring a pot of water to a gentle boil, then add a few slices of fresh ginger, a cinnamon stick, and a couple of cloves. Let it simmer for 10 minutes before straining into your favourite mug. Add a drizzle of honey and a squeeze of lemon if you like a little sweetness. This tea isn't just comforting - ginger and cinnamon are known to help circulation and boost immunity, perfect for keeping colds at bay.

Classic Hot Chocolate with a Healthy Twist

Who says hot chocolate can't be good for you? Use cocoa powder (which is rich in antioxidants), warm milk, and just a touch of honey or maple syrup for sweetness. For extra richness, stir in a teaspoon of coconut oil or a sprinkle of cinnamon. If you're feeling indulgent, top it with a few marshmallows or a light swirl of cream - it's all about balance!

Nourishing Autumn Soup

Nothing beats a bowl of homemade soup when the evenings turn chilly. Try a simple carrot and lentil soup: sauté an onion and a clove of garlic, add chopped carrots, red lentils, and vegetable stock, then simmer until tender. Blend it smooth, season with black pepper, and add a dash of turmeric for an immune-boosting kick. It's hearty, healthy, and perfect for sharing with friends or neighbours.



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Combating Loneliness During the Festive Season

As the nights draw in and temperatures drop, it's not unusual to feel a little more isolated.

The darker months can be particularly tough for older people, especially when the bustle of summer fades and the festive season highlights the absence of loved ones. But staying connected both emotionally and socially is one of the best ways to look after your wellbeing this winter. Here are some simple, practical ways to keep warm and connected during the holiday season.



1. Reach Out and Reconnect

It's easy to lose touch over time, but a quick phone call, letter, or message can make all the difference. Don't wait for someone else to make the first move most people will be delighted to hear from you. If you're not confident with technology, local libraries or community centres often offer free sessions on how to use video calling or social media safely.



2. Get Involved Locally

Volunteering is a wonderful way to meet new people and feel part of something meaningful. We have several volunteering opportunities for people looking to give their time to supporting a great cause – whether that's sharing your digital skills, joining our Coach Club trips with a helping hand, or answering phone calls and providing information and advice. Giving your time can boost your mood and bring a real sense of purpose. [Click here](#) to view our volunteering opportunities.

3. Join Group Activities

Community events can be a real lifeline during the winter months. From book clubs and shared reading groups to knitting circles, craft sessions, and social meetups, there's something for everyone to enjoy no matter your interests or ability level. Age Cymru West Glamorgan supports a wonderful variety of local activities designed to help older adults stay connected and creative, whether that's through storytelling, making something by hand, or simply sharing good company over a cup of tea.

[Click here](#) for a look at our What's On Guide and events happening each month.

4. Try Some Gentle Exercise

Staying active during the winter months can be a powerful antidote to loneliness. Exercise not only boosts mood through the release of endorphins but also provides valuable opportunities for social interaction. Joining a gentle exercise class, such as chair yoga, tai chi, or water aerobics, can help older adults stay connected with others while maintaining strength and flexibility.



What's On in Your Local Area

There are lots of exciting events, classes, and dates to mark in your calendar this winter. We've put together some of our favourites to help you get out and socialise, including local book clubs, knitting and crocheting, yoga classes, group walks and much more.

Find our full [What's On Guide](#) for Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, Bridgend and surrounding areas, on our website.

Feature in our Newsletter

Are you a charity, organisation or a service provider and would like to be included in our next issue?

Get in touch today at communications@agecymruwestglamorgan.org.uk

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Have Your Say on Social Care

The Older People's Commissioner for Wales wants to hear directly from older people about their experiences of social care. Your views will help make sure services meet people's needs now and in the future.

A short survey is now live at olderpeople.wales/socialcare. If you receive social care - or have done recently - your feedback is important. Please also share the survey with friends, neighbours, and community groups so others can take part too.

An independent team will look at all the responses and provide a clear picture of what is working well and what needs to improve. The Commissioner will use this information to help drive better support for older people across Wales. The survey is open until 30 January 2026.

Your voice matters. Please take part and help shape the future of social care in Wales.

[Complete the survey here and have your say on social care in Wales today.](https://olderpeople.wales/socialcare)



Smart Tips for Finances in Retirement

Retirement is a new chapter and with it comes fresh opportunities to enjoy life, prioritise what matters most, and feel confident about your money.

Yet for many, the unknowns around budgeting, pensions, benefits and scams can feel overwhelming. Here are some smart, practical steps to help you stay in control, and where to turn for local support.

Create a simple, realistic budget

It sounds basic, but a clear budget is your best starting point. First, list your regular income (state pension, private pension, investments, etc.). Then add your essential outgoings (housing, utilities, food, transport). Finally, set aside a category for “nice-to-have” items, hobbies, day trips, social activities.

If you spot areas where your costs are creeping up (for example, home-energy bills or unplanned health costs), this is a good time to review. Planning ahead means less stress later.



Understand your pension options

When you reach state pension age, it's important to check what you're entitled to. On top of that, if you have other pensions or savings, think about how and when to draw them and whether withdrawing a lump sum or phased income suits.

Age Cymru West Glamorgan's [Information & Advice team](#) offers a free Full Benefits Check a great chance to review your state pension, any eligible benefits and make sure you're not missing out.

Don't overlook benefits and entitlements

Many people assume their pension covers everything, but you may be eligible for extra support. For example:

- Attendance Allowance for daily-living help at home
- Pension Credit if your income is low
- Council Tax reductions, fuel-poverty schemes, and other local supports

Age Cymru West Glamorgan can help you check what you're eligible for, through their free advice service.

Stay vigilant against financial scams

Sadly, older people are often targeted by scam-calls, investment frauds, doorstep offers and bogus pension-schemes. If something seems too good to be true, it probably is.

Use reputable sources, always ask for written confirmation, and never rush a decision. The [Legal Advice](#) section of Age Cymru's website has help on spotting scams and protecting yourself.

Review and adapt regularly

Your finances aren't set in stone; life changes (health, housing, family, cost-of-living) may mean you need to revisit your plan. A yearly check-in is a good idea.

At Age Cymru West Glamorgan, the Information & Advice team offers support whenever you need it just a phone call or email away. Call us on 01792 648866 or email enquiries@agecymruwestglamorgan.org.uk to get in touch.



The Power of Music and Wellbeing

Music has a remarkable way of lifting our spirits and bringing people together.

Whether it's an old, favourite song that stirs up memories or a cheerful tune that makes you want to move your feet, music can have a real and lasting effect on our wellbeing, both emotional and physical.



Why Music Matters

Listening to music can be deeply soothing, helping to reduce stress and boost your mood. Research shows that it can even lower blood pressure, ease anxiety, and improve sleep. For many older adults, familiar melodies can spark powerful memories, helping reconnect with special moments, people, and feelings from the past.

But the benefits of music don't stop at listening. Joining in, whether by singing, tapping along, or even having a gentle dance can do wonders for confidence and connection. Singing, in particular, helps with breathing, posture, and memory, while being part of a group provides that all-important sense of belonging.

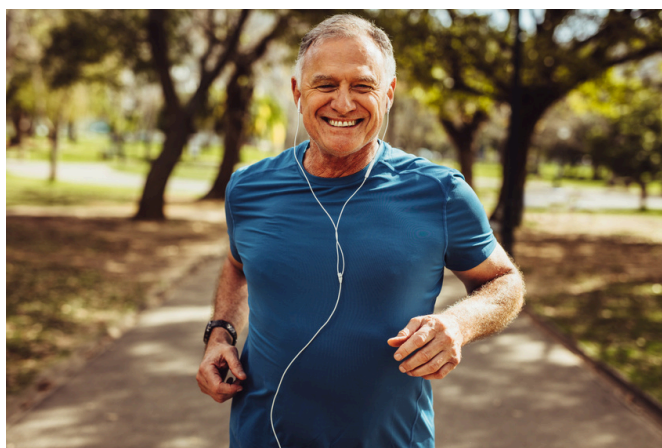


Music in Your Community

There are some fantastic opportunities to get involved with music, no matter your level of experience, across Swansea, Neath Port Talbot and Bridgend. Here are some welcoming groups you might like to try:

- **Ageing Well Choir** in Swansea meets every other Wednesday afternoon at Swansea Arena. It's designed especially for older adults, to socialise and sing together. You don't even need to have sung before!
- **Valley Rock Voices** in the Neath-area is a large ladies' choir (21-80 yrs) that not only sings together, but also has social walks and other activities built in.
- **My Kinda Choir!** in Bridgend is a mood-boosting, confidence building and feel good weekly opportunity to have fun and make friends with a reduced monthly cost for over 65s.

By joining groups like these, you benefit from the shared experience of music and meet new friends at the same time. It's a powerful way to reduce isolation, feel uplifted and build your community.



Make Music Part of Your Day

Even small doses of music can make a big difference. Try starting your morning with an upbeat song, playing soft tunes while you relax, or revisiting the albums you loved years ago. If you have an instrument gathering dust, why not dust it off and play a few notes?

Received a smart speaker as a gift and not sure how to use it? Smart speakers can be an excellent way to play your favourite music from radio stations to music streaming services with hundreds of songs at your fingertips.

Get in touch with our Digital Services team for information on drop-in sessions to get tech-savvy.

Help Us Support Even More People

Age Cymru West Glamorgan is a local, independent charity dedicated to promoting wellbeing and helping people age well and enjoy life.

We support some of the most vulnerable individuals in our community, often those who have no one else in the world.

We listen to everyone who needs us. We support people at crisis. We empower them to live life on their own terms. We help people to enjoy life.

You can support us and help us help more people within our communities by donating to our charity, or by joining our team of volunteers.

Here are several ways you can donate:

Online Donations

Donating online is quick and secure. Visit our website or our JustGiving page to make a direct donation, it's never been easier to show your support.

Telephone Donations

If you prefer to donate over the phone, you can call **01792 648866**. A representative will assist you in making your donation securely.

Standing Orders

Setting up a standing order is an excellent way to provide ongoing support. Information on how to establish a standing order can be found on our website.

Cheque Donations

If you would like to write us a cheque, please make it payable to Age Cymru West Glamorgan.

Our address is;

Age Cymru West Glamorgan
250 Carmarthen Road, Swansea,
SA1 1HG

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50 Newsletter

Discover the Richard Burton Centenary

Guest feature - RB100

2025 is the year of the Richard Burton Centenary, celebrating 100 years since the iconic actor of stage and screen was born in Pontrhydyfen, Afan Valley.

To mark the occasion and celebrate the remarkable legacy of the ‘voice of Wales’, Neath Port Talbot Council has developed a series of events and activities in partnership with Swansea University, supported by Welsh Government through Event Wales, and by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Richard Burton was known for his charismatic performances and electric energy on stage and screen, treading the boards as Shakespearean heroes, Broadway and West End leads, and making his name as a Hollywood legend.

But how did Ritchie Jenkins from Port Talbot become an internationally renowned actor?

To discover how the landscapes and communities of Neath Port Talbot shaped young Ritchie Jenkins into the peerless Richard Burton, Neath Port Talbot is welcoming visitors to walk the [Richard Burton Trails](#).

[The Birthplace Trail](#) leads walkers through the charming village of Pontrhydyfen, with scannable QR codes sharing video clips, photos, voice recordings and anecdotes from the young actor’s life. [The Childhood Trail](#) weaves through Taibach, sharing more insights into the actor’s childhood and early years in Port Talbot. The Birthplace Trail offers a gentle walk option with some inclines, whereas the Childhood Trail is wheelchair-friendly and leads you around the town.

Both Trails will lead you past the newly erected Blue Plaques – the first in Neath Port Talbot – honouring Richard Burton and his mentor and adoptive father Philip Burton.



After enjoying the Richard Burton Trails, why not explore more of Neath Port Talbot? A striking landscape of contrasts, the South Wales region is also known as the Dramatic Heart of Wales and is home to many low- and no-cost accessible days out. [Margam Country Park](#) welcomes visitors 7 days a week to its sweeping parklands, with mobility scooters available to hire from the Friends of Margam Park for £2.00 / day.

[National Trust Aberdulais Tin Works and Falls](#) is open Thurs – Fri 10am – 3pm, sharing tales of Neath Valley’s storied industrial past at its wheelchair-accessible site.

If you’re staying near Pontrhydyfen for the Richard Burton Trails, the small but fascinating [South Wales Miner’s Museum](#) shares tales from retired miners from the Afan Forest Visitor Centre. Warm up with a coffee and cake or decadent lunch from Base Wales, which sits just beside the Museum with views out to the surrounding forest.

Throughout December, you can also experience the wonder of [Luminate Wales](#) at Margam Country Park. The lights trail is accessible for wheelchair users and is dog-friendly, welcoming visitors to marvel at the stunning light display in the country park.

Find out more about the Dramatic Heart of Wales and the Richard Burton Centenary on the [Dramatic Heart of Wales website](#).



Newly-created Admiral Nurses for LGBTQ+ community



Guest feature - Dementia UK

Admiral Nurses are specialist dementia nurses who are supported and developed by Dementia UK - the specialist dementia nursing charity that is there for the whole family.

Our newly created Consultant Admiral Nurse service for the LGBTQ+ community is an exciting step for the charity. It serves to represent the needs of people within the LGBTQ+ community, their families of choice and carers and raising awareness of the challenges they face.

Members of the LGBTQ+ community face many challenges and obstacles when accessing health care services. This can lead to poor health outcomes and people avoiding accessing timely support due to fear of judgement or discrimination.

Research shows that LGBTQ+ individuals may face a higher risk of developing dementia. This increased risk is linked to certain lifestyle factors that are more commonly reported within the community, such as smoking, alcohol use, challenges with mental health and experiences of social isolation.

Our Consultant Admiral Nurse for the LGBTQ+ community provides clinical advice and support via the telephone, online platforms and in virtual clinics. Our UK-wide service will also help to raise awareness and promote inclusivity, influencing policy work, research, and developing educational resources.

Early diagnosis of dementia is vital. It allows access to treatment and support sooner, helping people maintain independence and quality of life for longer.

Planning ahead is especially important for LGBTQ+ individuals, as decisions may otherwise fall to professionals or biological family members who may not reflect the person's wishes.

This is a free service, and referrals can be made via the Dementia UK Helpline 0800 888 6678, or directly [online via the Dementia UK website](https://www.dementiauk.org).

Contact our Helpline on 0800 888 6678 (Monday-Friday 9am-9pm, Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays 9am-5pm), or email us via the following: helpline@dementiauk.org.

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