



Continued success for the Information and Advice team

We have just compiled our year end results for 2014/15 and the total of weekly benefits achieved inclusive of arrears is **£1,858,429**. This is a fantastic result and represents a 16% increase over the amount gained in the previous financial year. We are a small team and the figures reflect all the dedication and hard work of our advisers aided by help with administration. The demand for our service is continuous and it is envisaged that this will increase over the coming years because of the implications of the Care Act and the rising population in people of pensionable age. The impact of income maximisation on people's lives has a positive effect on well being and we are always looking for special volunteers who could give their time to this worthy cause.

Will you help us to make more of a difference by volunteering with our team? Contact 01942 241972 and ask to speak to Jilly McKiernan.

AUKWB Easter Fair a resounding success

On Wednesday 8th April 2015 Age UK WB held its first Easter Fair at St Thomas' Church Hall in Ashton in Ashton-In-Makerfield. The event was jammed packed with fun things to do for all the family, including 'Kids Corner' where children could get their faces painted, take part in colouring competitions and have a go at biscuit decorating. We also had our range of stalls, where visitors could pick up a bargain or play tombola and take part in our raffle. We also had two fantastic musical performances from singers Shannon and Ellie to entertain us on the day and our event even included a visit from two extra special guests – 'Princess Anna' and 'Cinderella'.

The event went really well with over 90 people heading through the doors and helping us to raise money to support the hard work our staff and volunteers do.

We'd like to thank everyone who helped us in the run up to the event by promoting it or bringing in donations as well as everyone who helped us throughout the day. We'd also like to thank St Thomas' Church for the use of the Church Hall.



What people say about us

We monitor the services that we provide and ask the people using them to tell us what they think. Here is what they have said:

- 99.4% say that staff treated them with courtesy;
- 99.3% say that our staff were reliable;
- 96.9% say that the service was helpful to them;
- 98.3% would use the service again;
- 98.6% would recommend us to their friends and family.

In addition, 71.5% describe us as 'excellent' and 26.6% as 'very good', with only 0.8% as 'average' and 0.6% as 'poor'.

We also monitor the longer term impact on the lives of older people using our services. As a result of being in contact with us:

- 13.2% feel less lonely as a result of using our services;
- 39.9% feel more positive;
- 77.1% know where to find information they need;
- 37.6% feel safer at home; and
- 29.5% find it easier to manage around the house.

These figures are based on feedback from older people using our services over the period January to December 2014 *.

We are pleased with this strong endorsement of the services that we provide and always strive to improve what we do.

* Based on 516 returns to our Quality Monitoring Questionnaires in this period across all our services. 942 questionnaires have been sent, representing a response rate of 55%.

A Dilemma: Eat or Heat by Sandra Houghton

To make ends meet, such a feat.
To have some heat, what a treat.
I would enjoy a piece of meat,
Some decent shoes for my weary feet.

Long ago my coat looked better.
I'll have to wear an extra sweater.
I sit in the dark with the fire turned down,
Wrapped up snugly in my dressing gown.

A woolly blanket around my knees,
Anything's better than to sneeze and freeze.
It's too cold to go to my bed.
So I'll sit in my chair and rest my head.

How I would love a hot cup of tea,
But electricity is not for free.
A hot water bottle would be nice,
But that would cost twice the price.

So I cannot put the kettle on
Oh! How I yearn for the summer's sun!

Meet new people and discover different cultures

Are you interested in meeting new people? Would you like to learn about new cultures from the comfort of your own home? Then why not invite an international student to spend a day or a weekend with you?



HOST is a charity promoting cultural exchange and international friendship by matching adult international students with friendly hosts across the UK. Students get a real taste of British life by joining in with everyday activities such as chatting, cooking, and perhaps exploring a little of the local area. Hosts can gain a unique taste of a different culture and meet interesting young people from around the world.

Joan Potts, a retired teacher, began hosting in 2012 and has never looked back: “It is very stimulating to meet a young person from another country, to share something of my life with her and to learn about her experiences and her hopes and dreams for the future. It is fun to show someone around my local area and to see things with fresh eyes”.

Students, too, are interested in the parts of British life which we often take for granted. Joan’s Chinese guest, Yucheng Qiao, was most impressed by conversation and traditional British food: “We tried British breakfast and fish pie.



We also talked about life in the UK and in China, educational problems, religions and so many other aspects that interested us. Through this I knew more about the UK and people's life here.”

Hosting is available throughout the year and hosts can request a small sum towards expenses after each visit. You do not need to live close to a University, as many students are keen to travel to different parts of the UK. For more information, please contact Kimberley on 020 7739 6292 or info@hostuk.org, or visit the HOST website at www.hostuk.org.

Age UK Wigan Borough welcomes international visitors

Age UK Wigan Borough recently welcomed Elisha Sibale, Director of the Good Samaritan Social Services Trust in Tanzania to give a talk to staff and volunteers. During his presentation, Elisha gave an interesting insight into his involvement supporting the elder members of his community.



Elisha also took time to visit Deanery High School and observe the Silver Surfers programme and our work offering one-to-one IT support for the over 50s.

Alongside Elisha Sibale is Ann Longworth and Anne Green plus Tyukio Mpopo from Age International.

The things we overlook . . .

1.4 million people in the UK wear hearing aids, however it is unknown how many are actually protecting themselves against loss! A hearing aid is probably in the top five most expensive things that users own and forget to insure. There are many things in life that we all overlook but we want to urge all hearing aid users, especially those in later life, to review their home insurance contents policy to ensure they have appropriate cover in place. This should cost very little, and will result in a huge saving if the worst happens. Age UK Household insurance will cover hearing aids at a minimal charge but it is important that the hearing aid(s) are specified on the policy. Without being specified a hearing aid will only be insured in the home and only against the risks covered such as fire and theft.

Hearing aid users should check whether their hearing aid needs to be included under Unspecified Personal Possessions on their Home Contents Insurance Policy to ensure full cover. Both Unspecified and Specified Personal Possessions are also covered anywhere else in the world, providing additional cover is taken as part of the policy - so it's crucial to check this before purchasing. If a user needs more than £2,000 cover for a hearing aid it might also need to be added to their policy as a Specified Personal Possession.

Age UK Home Insurance, which is provided by Ageas Insurance Limited, can provide such cover for Unspecified Personal Possessions for individual items to the value of £2000 on request. Items of greater value than £2000 can also be insured up to the value of £9,999 under the Specified Personal Belongings cover.

As well as providing insurance, Age UK Wigan Borough provide FREE Hearing Assessments for customers in the comfort of their own homes or, if they prefer, at our office in Market Street. With a fully trained Audiologist carrying out their assessments and no obligation to buy our hearing aids, our customers can rest assured that they're in good hands! For more information or to book an appointment, please call us now on: 01942 241972, or pop into Age UK Wigan Borough, 68 Market Street, Wigan WN1 1HX.

'We Stand Together' is a national campaign to unite communities. **#WeStandTogether** It comes following a number of events that have caused concern locally and further afield. We want you to join this movement to celebrate the diversity and differences across the globe and encourage a sense of unity. This is a community initiative to reduce hate crime, create solidarity and make a difference. Join us by using #WeStandTogether and sharing messages and group selfies on social media. To report an incident of hate crime, please contact Greater Manchester Police on 101, or 999 in an emergency. Alternatively, please report online to True Vision (www.report-it.org.uk) or use the True Vision app.

