



Age Matters

The quarterly newsletter
from Age Cymru

Autumn Edition 2022

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 **ageCymru**

Creating an age friendly Wales

Welcome to this busy autumn edition of Age Matters

By Victoria Lloyd, Chief Executive,
October 2022

As the nights draw in and the leaves start to turn, it is inevitable that we start to think about winter. This edition you can find out how to get hold of a copy of our Winter Wrapped Up guide and about the work Nest are doing in Wales to help with energy issues which is particularly pertinent when energy prices have figured so highly in the news this year. We are delighted to be able partner with Mirthy to offer a range of online talks, virtual tours, dance, and fitness classes and much more - all to enjoy from the comfort of your home and all free of charge.

We're also pleased to be able to share information about our 'Why are we waiting report?' which details our findings about delays in assessments for care in Wales and what we think needs to be done.

It is so important that people can get the care services they need when they need them; the delays some people are experiencing means this is simply not the case at the moment and we are determined to continue our calls for improvement.

If you are affected by delays in care please let us know, together our voices for change are stronger.



Victoria Lloyd

There are some great stories on the work of all local Age Cymru partners and opportunities for you to get involved.

Until next time.



Why are we waiting? Our research shows increased delays in social care provision

Nearly one in ten older people had to wait more than 30 days to have their social care needs assessed through local authority social care departments last year. And once their needs had been assessed, nearly a third had to wait more than a month for a social care package, while nearly one in seven had to wait more than 60 days, according to recent research by Age Cymru.

It was carried out after Age Cymru advice and advocacy services reported worrying delays in older people being assessed by social care departments for their needs, as well as delays in sourcing care packages once an assessment had been completed.

The report found poor communication between local authorities and those asking for help. It also found that the number of people asking local authorities for help went down during the pandemic.

So, there may be people who need care that have yet to come forward and ask for the help they need and have a legal right to receive.

However, it did find that local authorities are making genuine attempts to improve the delivery of adult social services, but the changes needed will take time. So, some quicker changes are needed for those that must wait.

The report makes several recommendations including the improvement of communication with people waiting for care, focus more on helping those people waiting the longest, and for local authorities to share good practice on what works well.

To read the full report visit: www.agecymru.org.uk/cymru/get-involved/campaigns/why-are-we-waiting/

We are looking to talk with more older people, families and loved ones about their experience of waiting for an assessment of social care needs or waiting for the implementation of a care package. If you can help, please contact Age Cymru's Helen Twidle at policy@agecymru.org.uk or call 029 2043 1571.



Help with the cost of living

You've probably noticed many of your bills going up, particularly the cost of energy. Therefore, Age Cymru has developed a dedicated page on its website that brings together information on the support that is available to help older people stay on top of increasing costs.

It contains information on the various one-off payments and schemes as well as [welfare benefits and other entitlements](#). It is worthwhile checking if you qualify for any of the support available.

Roughly a third of those eligible for pension credit in Wales are not claiming it, with an estimated £175m worth of support and benefits going unclaimed each year. In addition to the extra income from pension credit and the cost-of-living payments, pension credit can also open the door to a wide range of support including help with energy bills in the winter, free TV licences for the over 75s, dental treatment, help with rent and council tax reduction.

If you've been turned down before, it may still be worth making a new claim, as benefits rates change, as can your finances.

To make a claim for Pension Credit, call the DWP Pension Credit claim line direct on 0800 99 1234 or visit www.gov.uk/pension-credit/how-to-claim.

You may also contact Age Cymru Advice. If you want to talk to someone directly, in Welsh or English, call us on 0300 303 44 98 charged

at local rate (open between 9:00am and 4:00pm, Monday - Friday). You may also email us at advice@agecymru.org.uk or visit www.agecymru.org.uk/benefits

Get Ready for Winter with Age Cymru and Nest

Age Cymru is working with the Welsh Government Warm Homes Nest scheme to help older people in Wales prepare for the colder months ahead.

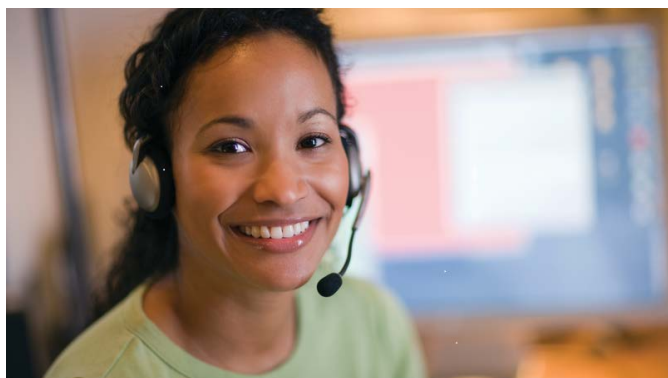
The rise in energy bills and cost of living crisis means it's more important than ever to do what you need to do to keep your home warm and yourself safe during winter.

Through this campaign you can access Age Cymru's Winter Wrapped up guide, which is full of great ideas to get yourself and your home ready for winter. For example, it explains the importance of checking and servicing your heating system to make sure it's working safely and efficiently, ahead of when you need it the most.

It also outlines what benefits and financial entitlements might be available to you as well as a comprehensive listing of useful organisations that may be able to support you throughout the winter.

You can view the Winter Wrapped Up guide online: www.agecymru.org.uk/advice or order a copy from Age Cymru Advice 0300 303 44 98 (9am to 4pm, Monday - Friday) or email: advice@agecymru.org.uk





The Welsh Government Warm Homes Nest scheme aims to make homes warmer and more energy-efficient places to live.

Nest offers a range of free, impartial advice and, if you are eligible, a package of free home energy efficiency improvements such as a new boiler, central heating, insulation, or solar panels. This can lower your energy bills and benefit your health and wellbeing.

Thousands of homes in Wales have had free home energy efficiency improvements from Nest, helping reduce energy bills and keep homes comfortable all year round.

Call 0808 808 2244 or visit nest.gov.wales

Deputy minister highlights the importance of human rights for older people at the 2022 National Eisteddfod

Age Cymru hosted the Deputy Minister for social services, Julie Morgan MS, at this year's National Eisteddfod in Ceredigion to help highlight the importance of human rights for older people.

The charity used the visit to launch its toolkit 'Human Rights are Lifetime Rights' that can be used by older people and anyone who



advocates on their behalf such as family and friends, as well as professional and volunteer advocates.

It also showcased its ground-breaking film called 'Don't get me started' that featured animated illustrations of older people talking about human rights to raise awareness of rights in our everyday lives and what they mean to us as individuals. Together these pieces of work form part of a campaign supported by the Welsh Government.

Age Cymru's chief executive, Victoria Lloyd said "We were delighted to host the Deputy Minister at our Eisteddfod stand to help highlight our work on human rights for older people. In many areas of society such as health and social care, and in shaping our local communities, the rights of older people often overlooked. While many older people are often unaware of their rights.

"So, it is important that we continue working with the Welsh Government to help raise awareness of rights among older people and to help them understand where and when such rights can be used. Everyone, regardless of their age, has the right to live with dignity, make their own choices, and have their views respected."

Deputy Minister for social services, Julie Morgan said: "It was a pleasure to have the opportunity to watch Age Cymru's 'Human Rights are Lifetime Rights' film and meet some of the people behind it.

"The film is a great reflection of the Welsh Government's Age Friendly Wales Strategy that aims to raise awareness, empower and support older people to ensure that their rights are not compromised."

Join our Culture Club and help isolated older people visit cultural sites across Cardiff and the Vale

Age Cymru is seeking volunteers who are not only passionate about local cultural sites such as museums, public art, and parks, but who are also willing to accompany isolated older people to visit and enjoy such sites through the charity's Culture Club project.

Funded by the Welsh Government, the project aims to encourage vulnerable older people to get out and about to safely enjoy their local cultural sites with the help of a friendly volunteer.

It also hopes to build the confidence of isolated older people, many of whom have been shielding for the best part of two years during the pandemic.

The volunteers, who will receive training from the charity, may travel with the older people, or they may meet them at the site, whichever suits both parties best.

Age Cymru's Kelly Barr, who is overseeing the project, says "We know that some older people are living lonely and isolated lives and even though they may be interested in visiting our cultural sites, they do not have the confidence to visit them on their own. We have already seen that Culture Club can support them to get back out into their

communities once again and start enjoying all that Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan has to offer."

If you feel you may benefit from either joining, or volunteering with Culture Club please email kelly.barr@agecymru.org.uk, call 029 2043 1555, or visit www.agecymru.org.uk/volunteer



New dementia support service launched

Age Cymru West Glamorgan has launched a brand-new Dementia Support Service to help those living and caring for someone with dementia across Swansea and Neath Port Talbot.

The charity is leading the partnership with five other organisations; Swansea Carers Centre, Neath Port Talbot Carers Service, Care & Repair Western Bay, Citizens Advice Swansea and Neath Port Talbot.

The service offers free support including help at home, specialist unpaid carer training, housing adaptation and repairs, respite at home for carers, and information and advice to help people adapt to living with dementia.

To find out more call 01792 277778, email info@dementiasupportservice.org.uk, or visit <https://dementiasupportservice.org.uk/>



Have a cuppa and a chat with us

Age Cymru's Engagement Team are looking forward to meeting people as part of our new series of drop in events. Following several successful events earlier this year, we have booked a series of venues across Wales so we can hear from people about growing older in Wales.

Our drop-in events are informal with free refreshments available to attendees. We'd be happy to speak to you about anything that's important to you, or let you know how we can support you. We provide a wide range of services, including our Carer's Project, our human rights work, and our wellbeing programmes.

We know that the cost of living will be a topic that many people will want to discuss, and we will bring along details of the help available to older people, and signpost you to our advice service and local partners.

At the events we will be encouraging people to help us to feed into an important consultation on the response to Covid-19 in Wales. Even if you don't have any burning questions or pressing concerns, we'd love to just sit and chat with you.

Here are the dates and places where you can find us:

Ararat Baptist Church, Whitchurch, Cardiff - 19 October 10am - 1pm

Wyeside, Builth Wells - 26 October 1pm - 4pm

Acton Community Centre, Wrexham - 8 November 1pm - 4pm

Townhall, Welshpool - 9 November 9am - 12pm

Bridges Centre, Monmouth - 15 November 10am - 1pm

Ton & Gelli Community Centre, Ton Pentre - 23 November 9am - 1pm

St Anne's Hall, Aberystwyth - 1 December 10am - 1pm

For more information contact Rachel Dawson on 07943 186 771 or email rachel.dawson@agecymru.org.uk



Unlock the benefits of age inclusion in the workplace

Wales' population is getting older and approximately one in three workers in Wales are over 50. Successful organisations will be those who can adapt and respond to the needs of an ageing population and address key workplace issues that affect older workers including the menopause, caring responsibilities, financial wellbeing, flexible working, and planning for retirement.

Studies show that an age diverse workforce drives innovation through different perspectives, can reduce employee turnover, improves overall performance, and provides an environment where employees can learn and grow.

Business in the Community Cymru (BITC) supports organisations to take action on age inclusion in the workplace through the **Age at Work** programme, in partnership with Age Cymru and funded by the National Lottery Community Fund.

Through Age at Work, BITC helps employers to understand the benefits of recruiting, retraining, and retaining individuals aged 50 and over, so they can put practices in place that create age-inclusive, multi-generational workplaces where employees of all ages can thrive.

Age at Work is **FREE** to employers of all sizes and sectors and provides a suite of practical tools, support, and guidance.

For more information on Age at Work and how your organisation can get involved, visit www.bitcni.org.uk/agewales or contact Jill Salter, BITC Cymru, on 07793 443893 or at jill.salter@bitc.org.uk.



Join our Consultative Forum

Age Cymru's Consultative Forum is a group of older people who provide feedback on everything the Charity does. Members share their experiences of living as an older person in Wales, scrutinise the Charity's policies and priorities, and contribute to its policy development programme.

Any older person living in Wales is welcome to join the Forum and we would particularly like to hear from those living in sheltered or supported housing, Welsh speakers, and people from ethnic minority and LGBTQ+ communities.

In addition to individual members, the Forum also has representatives from older people's organisations and groups who make contributions from national, regional, local, and individual perspectives.

For more information contact Kathy Lye on kathy.lye@agecymru.org.uk or call 029 2043 1570.

Later Life Planning

Planning for the future and putting your affairs in order can provide peace of mind and security for both you and your loved ones. That's why Age Cymru offers a range of services to help you plan for your future, now and after you've gone.

Our Later Life Planning Officers are fully trained and accredited in will writing and estate planning by The College of Will Writing. They hold the Society of Will Writers' Wills and Estate Planning Certificate and are professional members of the Society of Will Writers.

You can trust Age Cymru to provide a quality service and ensure your wishes are communicated with empathy and sensitivity. Our Later Life Planning Service can help with the following:

Will Writing

Making a will is the only way to be certain that your wishes will be met after you die. Maybe you haven't got around to it, or you've deliberately put it off, but the process can be quite simple.

Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA/POA)

No one has the right to automatically take control of your finances or your care (not even your spouse). They need your authority. A Lasting Power of Attorney is a way of giving someone you trust the legal authority to make decisions for you, if either you can't make them yourself or don't want to.

Advance Decision (Living Will)

While you have mental capacity, you can make choices about your care. This includes the types of medical treatment you want, or would refuse, if you were unable to make or communicate your own decisions in the future. An Advance Decision (sometimes called a Living Will) is legally binding and health professionals must follow it.

Safe Document Storage

The original, signed document is the only legally binding version of your Will, so it's important that it's kept safe. We offer a low cost, secure solution for document storage through The National Will Archive.

Call the Later Life Planning Team on 07772 697097 or 07772 461585 or email us at LLP@agecymru.org.uk for more information and a list of prices for all our Later Life Planning services.





Supporting more older people within Gwent

Age Cymru Gwent is looking to strengthen its Help at Home Service, to ensure that even more people can benefit across Gwent.

We understand getting older or living alone can bring many challenges. A task like cutting your own toenails may become time consuming, or there may be difficulties in completing domestic chores or jobs around the house. Whatever it may be, our 'Help at Home Service' is here to help.

It offers a range of services designed to support independent living such as toenail cutting, handyman jobs around the home, general domestic chores as well as wellbeing activities such as going out for walks, playing board games or baking cakes.

Recently appointed Chief Executive, James Shaughnessy, says "It's an honour to join a charity that makes such a difference to people's lives within Gwent. Our mission is to build on the great current work and ensure we can reach everyone in Gwent that needs us.

"As the 2021 census results has shown, the population of older people within Gwent has grown significantly in the last decade. To meet that growing demand, Age Cymru Gwent is now looking for more staff to join our mission. Together, we can support older people in the way they need, and when they need it."

For more information about our Help at Home Service call 01495 360 159, email: helpathome@agecymrugwent.org or visit www.agecymrugwent.org



Tribute to the late Nancy Davies

26/09/1934 – 16/08/2022

Everyone at Age Cymru was saddened to hear of the passing of Nancy Davies. She was an educator.

During her long career as a teacher and while bringing up her own children, she achieved Bachelor's and Master's degrees in education. In retirement, she continued to educate and help others as an advocate for older people's rights.

Nancy was a significant figure in the older people's movement, always at hand with her encyclopedic knowledge of the issues facing her peers. She was involved in the introduction of the Strategy for Older People in Wales, served as Chair of Pensioners Forum Wales for many years, was a founding member of The Welsh Senate of Older People, a board member of Cymru Older People's Alliance, a representative to National Pensioners Convention Wales and a long-term member of Age Cymru's Consultative Forum.

We will miss her intelligence, her passion, her wisdom and her smile. Older people in Wales have lost a passionate campaigner and Age Cymru has lost a friend who we will greatly miss. Our thoughts and condolences are with her family and friends at this sad time.

Mirthy – a brand new online resource for older people

Age Cymru has launched a new partnership with Mirthy, to bring you online talks, virtual tours, dance and fitness classes and much more - all to enjoy from the comfort of your home.

There's more than 100 online events per month to try, with activities including insightful talks and lectures, fitness classes, a monthly book club, cooking demonstrations, creative workshops and more! Events can be accessed from your computer, smartphone or tablet, all you need is Zoom, and an internet connection.

Thanks to our partnership, Age Cymru

followers get access to all of Mirthy's events and seven-day replays completely free of charge.

A few of Mirthy's most popular recent events include a virtual walk from St Paul's to London Bridge, a talk about travelling in Tasmania and a series on women writers who changed the course of English Literature, along with their variety of different Pilates classes.

To sign up visit <https://www.mirthy.co.uk/accounts/registration/CPFREE>, create your free account and pick any events which interest you.

Age Cymru Gwynedd a Môn – providing care in the community

Age Cymru Gwynedd a Môn are excited to announce that they've been successful in their bid to provide care services in the Felinheli and Nefyn areas of Gwynedd. This is part of a new and innovative approach to care provision by Gwynedd County Council which is much needed in a time of crisis in many areas.

As part of this new approach the service won't be for the traditional time and task packages of care but will be focused on an individual's needs. To do this, the new service will include community-based hours so that care staff can work with local businesses

to make the best use of local assets within their community. For example, the local gym could provide gentle exercise classes, or a local pub could start a lunch club for older people. At the same time such an approach could provide sustainability for some small businesses.

The new service is currently in the early stages of development, but Age Cymru Gwynedd a Môn have already been in contact with local councillors, organisations, community groups, and businesses to see how they can work together.

For more information contact Age Cymru Gwynedd a Môn on 0128 6677711.



Look out for our Christmas Box appeal

We are pleased to announce that our Gift Box Appeal is back for 2022. We're asking you to fill a wrapped shoe box with gifts in our aim to help make this Christmas a little brighter.

Christmas can be a lonely time for many older people who have no close family to visit over the festive period, we hope that having a gift to open may make a huge difference. Your gift boxes will be delivered to either care homes in Wales or someone who receives a friendship call from our Friend in Need befriending service.

How you can help: Find a shoe box and wrap the box and lid separately in Christmas paper, or you can use a festive pre-printed box. Fill the box with gifts and attach a label marking whether your gift is for a male, female or generic. Please don't include any personal information about yourself.

Your filled boxes can be dropped to our Cardiff office from Monday 28 November to Friday 2 December 2022. If the Cardiff office is not suitable, please contact us on 02920 431555 and we will let you know of any closer drop-off points.

Age Cymru, Mariners House, Trident Court, East Moors Road, Cardiff CF24 5TD.

Get in touch

If you have a story for Age Matters then please get in touch with the editor Michael Phillips on 07794 366 224 or email michael.phillips@agecymru.org.uk

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