

“Party ‘til you drop off your perch” Report of the Regional Conference

If the hallmarks of a successful conference are excellent speakers with thought-provoking messages, useful workshops, informative displays, good organisation, lots of networking and opportunities to contribute and to learn from each other, then all these ingredients were in evidence at the 2nd Regional Conference held in the comfortable and convenient surroundings of the Hinckley Island Hotel.



© John Boyce, Age Concern Leicester

It was a weekend with ‘buzz’. We were stimulated and involved, challenged and made to think. The speakers gave us inspiration. The workshops enabled people to get together, to share experiences and to take away practical information and ideas for their own groups.

Clive Newton asked us to consider the idea of being able to ‘party till you drop off your perch’, and how Age Concern can help to make that possible in later life. He also talked about the importance of wellbeing - ‘if you feel better, you do better’ and how Age Concern can encourage this

by supporting older people through adverse events in their lives, helping with ways and means to improve the quality of life and by offering opportunities for social and productive activities. Help that ‘can make all the difference’.

Following a similar theme, Prof. George Giarchi entertained us with a lively presentation, full of wit and wisdom, about the enjoyment of life in later years. The aim should be for a ‘second summer’ not a ‘bleak midwinter’.

Gordon Lishman spoke about Age Concern’s continuity of purpose and ethos from its beginnings as an organisation set up to support older people made homeless by the London blitz to the environment in which it now operates and the importance of its trading activities in offering services and products that meet the needs of older people. He acknowledged the invaluable contribution and importance of trustees throughout Age Concern, and the strength of an organisation made up of autonomous Age Concerns which are interdependent.

In finale, Hilary Bath spoke eloquently on Age Concern’s place in the bigger picture of society and government’s response to an ageing population. The lasting impression from the conference is of commitment to a common purpose. People from all areas of Age Concern, with different roles and responsibilities working together to enable older people ‘to have and to enjoy the fuller life’.

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News and Views from AC Groups

Art Auction in Eastwood

Pictures in Oil, Watercolour and Pastel donated by local artists, (85 lots in all) went under the hammer to raise funds for the Age Concern Elderly Citizen's Centre in Eastwood. The paintings included some local scenes and one, donated by a retired doctor, was even sold for £90.

Local chartered surveyor David Hammond acted as auctioneer, doing a wonderful job, and was thoroughly entertaining too!

But it was not just the paintings that raised money. Refreshments including home made cakes and a raffle with the first prize of a beautiful hamper helped to boost funds. Alan Wilson, a local photographer, took photos of each of the donated paintings and



© Age Concern Eastwood

produced greetings cards from them which sold really well.

Josie Forrest, AC Eastwood's Treasurer said, "We are delighted with the day and grateful to those who donated a painting.

We raised over £1900, a magnificent contribution towards the centre's running costs which will make a big difference to the service we provide to our elderly members".

The Auction was well attended by local people including the Eastwood Town Mayor and the Mayor of Broxtowe

An excellent fundraising event Age Concern Eastwood, really well done everyone.

Success breeds success for AC North West Leicestershire

In the last three years the I&A team at North West Leicestershire have helped over 3000 people, and have secured over £500,000 in benefits. This success convinced new funders to give financial support to the group to continue their valuable work.

Following a re-branding of the service and a commitment to reach many more people in need, the new "Phone, Post and Paperwork" project is secure for the next two years. This is thanks to the generosity of

the **Coalfields Regeneration Trust**, who awarded a grant of **£23,000**, supported by a grant of **£10,000 from the Lloyds TSB Foundation for England and Wales**.



Congratulations to the staff, trustees and volunteers at AC North West Leicestershire on this magnificent achievement.

We want to hear from you if you have something of interest to share with other groups. Next issue out July 2006 - items to Pam or Linda by June 9th 2006 please.

Members of AC Boston and South Holland's Donington Lunch Club took part in the grand opening of the Ruby Hunt Centre on April 6th. Organiser Margaret



© Age Concern Boston & South Holland

Kenworthy has worked tirelessly to help secure the £400,000 funding, from the Lincolnshire Community Foundation, required to transform the redundant doctor's surgery

Ruby Hunt Centre opens

into a wonderful community resource to be used by all age groups and interests in Donington, Lincolnshire. Over 40 Age Concern members meet there weekly for lunch and activities, and the new improved facilities mean that more people can be invited to join. One 94 year old regular attendee described it as her 'favourite day', and 'not to be missed'.

Quality Counts

Reporting slots put back

Local groups and one organisation have been told their Quality Counts reports will be needed later than their original time slot. The current round of Quality Counts has now been extended until June 2008.

In all eleven local groups will be affected. The postponement will ensure that all the remaining Age Concerns receive an assessment visit. All AC's affected will have received notification of their new dates.

“Jane Mitchell-Barnes answers your frequently asked QC questions” is held over to our next issue

Essential Information Digest

New law on age discrimination

Coming into force on **1st October 2006** are the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006. The new law will cover discrimination on the grounds of age in employment, training and education but not discrimination in goods and services. This law does not normally relate to volunteers, only to paid staff. Key points are:

- a default retirement age of 65 for all
- a right to *request* to stay on in work past age 65
- recruitment can be targeted at older people providing the post is open to all age groups

- over 65's can claim unfair dismissal; be entitled to redundancy and claim statutory sick pay
- education and course providers should not discriminate on the grounds of age; access to training should be fair to all age groups

Exemptions to all the above apply in exceptional cases but it has to be proved that age discrimination is justified.

Further information is on the Factsheet IS/17 available from [acknowledge](#) or contact us.

A reminder that postal charges have been increased. Standard 1st class letters now cost 32p, 2nd class mail is now 23p.



Employment Issues: Part One - Who is an employee?

Generally speaking, If you pay someone a wage to work for you, even if it is only for one or two hours per week, they are your employee and employment legislation applies. There is no minimum hours limit. It is important to recognise their entitlement to employment rights and your obligations and responsibilities as an employer.

Be careful to take account of the distinction between volunteering and employment. In general any reasonable expense incurred as part of the voluntary work should be reimbursed, but expenses payments that exceed a volunteer's actual costs may be seen

as a payment in return for the work they have carried out. This could be regarded as a contract by a tribunal or similar body, giving the volunteers the same rights as workers or employees including the national minimum wage. Some organisations try to avoid the above problems by referring to payments to volunteers as honoraria. If the honorarium is in any way expected it may also be regarded as a payment for services, affecting the legal status of the volunteers

For more information or help with employment issues please contact Pam or Linda.

Later in this series: employment legislation, NI, sick pay, pension, statutory holidays

Q & A

Q Have any groups any tips on reaching out to and involving older people from minority ethnic communities? AC Mansfield

Q Does any group know of a source for equality and diversity training, preferably low or no cost. AC Oadby & Wigston

A If you can help with answers to these questions please get in touch, we'll publish them next time.

Big Lottery—New Programmes 2006

Voluntary & Community Sector Infrastructure - BASIS

From March 06 - up to £155m

- Financing advice
- Resource centres
- A new generic infrastructure
- Sharing learning
- Governance
- Influencing management

Advice Services

From June/July 2006 - up to £50m

- Improving the infrastructure of advice services
- Strategic service delivery
- Local innovation, planning and partnerships

Well-being

From April 06 - up to £165m

- Increase participation in physical activity including active travel
- Educate communities about healthy eating
- Develop early intervention approaches to common mental health problems

Community Learning

From June 06 - up to £140m

- Flagship community libraries providing lifelong learning opportunities
- Family learning, family relationships and support activities

Changing Spaces

From Feb 06 - up to £234m

- Enabling communities to improve the local environment
- Social enterprise around food production and distribution
- Recycling and composting initiatives
- Community cohesion through sharing of food cultures
- Communities restoring, creating or preserving wildlife-rich spaces

Community Buildings

From June 06 - up to £50m

- Capital programme for new or refurbished community buildings

Further information – call: Big advice line – 08454 10 20 30 or web: www.biglotteryfund.org.uk

Promotional items for loan

Pam and Linda have acquired a set of items to use for promotional events. We have sashes, T-shirts, caps and badges to loan out to you for your event.

Please contact us if you would like to use any of these items.

Don't forget the Groups' Helpline

There is really valuable help at the end of the phone for all groups in the person of Phil Stevens, who is a great source of Age Concern information. Call Phil weekdays between 9.30am and 12.30pm on

0845 6011269

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