

Changes in the Region

Farewell to Pam

Author: Linda George

As the current phase of the East Midlands Group Support project draws to a close we must say goodbye to Pam Simmonds, who is retiring at Christmas. Pam has been a committed and enthusiastic champion and supporter of Age Concern groups in the region. She has worked most closely with groups in the south of the region, but in addition to supporting groups with their individual issues she has made a particular contribution to developing the volunteering role throughout the region through the information she has



Pam is presented with flowers by the Chair of Age Concern Corby John Clark,

produced for publication and through her support to the Volunteering Network. Her knowledge, experience, and encouragement will be much missed by those who have benefited from her support, including her AC East Midlands colleagues. We would like to take this opportunity to send her, on behalf of all her colleagues throughout the region, our good wishes for better health, a happy Christmas and an enjoyable retirement.

We hope she will keep in touch!

Regional Chair, Mark Melaugh says of the Group Support Project,

“ There has been some very positive work done in this project and the Region is committed to continuing this level of support to groups if at all possible.”



New Regional Office Staff in Post

Author: Pam Simmonds

Regional Manager, Simon Main, starts the new year with all his new staff in place.

In the last issue of FACS it was reported that Linda George has taken up the post of Regional Operations Adviser. She is now joined by the Regional Administrator, Nichola Reed and the new Regional Service Adviser, Jan Ball. The work of preparing the new team and carrying out full inductions for all the new staff begins in earnest in 2008 with plenty of training events scheduled where our team will

meet their counterparts around the country. The work-plan for the team will come together when the Regional Strategic Review has been completed and the new Regional Strategy is in place. (See 'Will you be there?', page 3) All Age Concerns in the region extend a warm welcome to the new team and look forward to gaining from their knowledge and experience in the time to come. The team will be communicating with everyone soon. Best wishes to you all.

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Lottery success

Congratulations go to Age Concern Syston who were recently awarded a Lottery grant towards the cost of a new minibus. The award has come after a previous attempt was rejected at the final stage, which proves it is always worth having another try. One



thing that helped AC Syston put together an improved bid was calling on all the help available to them.

Assistance was received from the local Voluntary Action Centre, (formerly CVS). Tony Donovan and Troy Young from AC Leicestershire & Rutland were able to give the benefit of their advice and guidance and throughout the process the group were in touch with their group support worker. It just goes to show the benefits of teamwork. The real credit must go to the staff and trustees of AC Syston who persevered and dedicated their time to achieving their goal. Well done Syston and enjoy using your new bus.

News from the groups

Fancy a Free Trip Anyone?

This was the surprising offer promoted by Age Concern Glenfield recently. The trip was organised in November to a Garden Centre and Tea Rooms and was enjoyed by 60 villagers some of whom were new to Age Concern. This was certainly a good way to promote the local Age Concern and has resulted in greater take-up of their weekly drop-in and 'Mature Movers' class. Other Age Concern groups in the region might consider applying to the Barclays Fund, administered



by ACE for a grant towards a similar outing or celebration. These are normally excluded from this grant scheme but will be covered for a short period ending July 2008. So whatever party, celebration or outing you plan you may get up to £500 grant towards the cost. More information from Margaret Hulme Grants Unit Manager at ACE, Tel:02087657740.

We want to hear from you if you have something of interest to share with other groups. Next issue out April 2008.

Update on MoreMedia

The last issue of FACS carried a feature on the advertising-supported booklets offered to AC's by MoreMedia. Following concerns raised, a letter was sent out making all AC's in the region aware of the issues involved. There are undoubtedly risks involved in any such venture and all AC's should fully check out any such offers before signing any agreement. AC Derby & Derbyshire did do all this and decided to take up the MoreMedia offer. Their Chief Officer, Katy Pugh, having just received her 2000 excellent, glossy brochures, makes the following points:

“1. The two year notice period - we gave notice as we signed the contract
2. We were offered and took a high level of control over the adverts and their options for

contacting key statutory agencies
3. The end result looks good, has value to us because of the wallet section so is not just 'a pile of glossy's'
4. We got the £500 with the delivery of the brochures - no delay and no additional costs to us other than the time to create our sections
5. Anyone who has a Lifestyle newspaper like us could appear to be 'endorsing' services 4 times a year. The brochure offered far better definition between 'our text' and the adverts and a more prominent disclaimer.

I would not say the experience is perfect - nothing is, but with care and without money to fund the 'purer' alternatives it has not been a bad experience.” Thanks Katy.

Quality Counts

With the Quality Counts review very much underway it is easy to forget that quite a few Age Concerns in the region are still going through the current round of assessments. QC in its present form will not be completed until July 2008. Whilst most of us are engaged in responding to the QC questionnaire and thinking about the Quality Standard of the future, please spare a thought for the following groups:

Age Concern Corby
Age Concern Eastwood
Age Concern Glenfield

Age Concern Grendon
Age Concern Haworth & Bircotes
Age Concern Newark & Sherwood
Age Concern South Derbyshire
Age Concern Warsop & District

To all of you, keep focused and positive as most groups come out of the experience with a recognition of what they are doing well and a feeling of being appreciated by the wider Age Concern 'family'. The hope is that the new version will be simpler to understand and build on all the positives of the QC

Will You be There?

If you have ever considered attending the regional meeting then you must try and get next time. Why? Well the next meeting will be discussing and agreeing future plans for this region in the form of the new, Regional Strategy. This plan will govern how support is given to AC's across the region and guide the Regional Office in their work with you all. Regional Chair, Mark Melaugh said, "We very much encourage groups in the East Midlands and welcome their participa-

tion in the Strategic Review as they play a vital part in delivering services to older people. Groups' input is truly valued." The meeting is to be held in Melton Mowbray on **Thursday, 3rd April 2008**, 10.00am until 3.00pm, lunch provided. Please contact Nichola Reed, the regional administrator, on 0115 852 4308 or email her, nichola.reed@ace.org.uk Do try and get along as your views are so very important at this crucial stage.

Income Generation Network - 'The Great Sunday Lunch' is on its way

Hot off the press is news of Age Concern's answer to Macmillan Coffee Mornings - the '**Great Sunday Lunch**'. Watch out for more news on this in the next issue of FACS and in the all the usual places but to whet your appetite for this new annual event planned for October each year, here is some advance information. Age Concern will be asking everyone who cares about older people to get together with their family and friends have fun, and raise vital funds for Age Concern. ACE is fully committed to launching this fundraiser in a big way, with a break even budget to promote and support the new event. All money raised by local Age Concerns

and their volunteers and supporters will stay local. There is also a significant investment to provide materials and PR (print and broadcast) to support all activities and ensure their success. All Age Concerns will be encouraged to create their own version of the event to suit their own area. It might be friends, supporters and trustees holding a lunch, the whole Age Concern hosting a meal for a larger number of people or involve Businesses and Community Supporters to host a lunch. The key element, as well as the meal and the social gathering, is enjoyment so think of some unusual promotion ideas, entertainment or gimmick to help get your event noticed.

The 'Great Sunday Lunch' for more information contact - Vicky Babington
Age Concern England, Astral House
1268 London Road, London SW16 4ER
(T) 020 8765 7587 (F) 020 8765 7291
(E) vicky.babington@ace.org.uk

Regional Networks

Next Volunteering Network

Following the success of the first regional Volunteering Network, here is an open invitation to come to the next meet up. The regional Volunteering Network is set up to include people from all Age Concern groups and organisations in the East Midlands to share experience and give mutual support and guidance. It is run by AC's for AC's with administrative support from the regional office and funding from the East Midlands region and from the Volunteering Partnership. It can only be successful if it delivers what AC's need but it can only do that if it is supported so please do try to send a representative along.

**EAST MIDLANDS
VOLUNTEERING NETWORK
FRIDAY 25TH JANUARY 2008
VENTON CENTRE, YORK ROAD
NORTHAMPTON
10.30am to 2.30pm
Lunch will be provided**

Contact Jo Forbes on 01604 611200 or email: jo.forbes@acnorthants.org.uk

Please book your place by 18th January.



BME Showcase coming soon

Look out for an invitation coming your way soon for an event hosted by the Midlands Age Concern BME Practitioners Network. There will be up to six successful BME projects and initiatives giving presentations and an insight into how they have achieved such progress. There will also be plenty of opportunity to chat to people from the highlighted projects to get to know the best tips going from specialist practitioners in this field of work. One of the beneficial aspects of the showcase will be the expertise available to guide AC's to sources

of funding for projects with BME and 'hard to reach' sectors of the population. Please look out in January/February for more information about this valuable event and your opportunity to attend and learn more about this emerging area of work.

Your regional BME contacts are:
Saeed Malek, on 0116 2220555, email: saeed.malek@ageconcernleicester.org
or Chris Higgins on 0121 5257345, email: christine.higgins@ageconcernsandwell.org.uk

Contacts Regional Administrator: Nichola Reed
East Midlands Regional Office - Tel: 0115 852 4308
15 Wheeler Gate, Nottingham NG1 2NA
Email: nichola.reed@ace.org.uk

AGE
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