

FREE

The newsletter for

AGE Exeter
Concern

Grand Times

FEBRUARY 2009

A letter that says it all

YOU may well have heard or read about our puzzle campaign where we launched a Christmas appeal to raise £25,000 to save our Information and Advice service.

We are thrilled, humbled and amazed to report that we have reached our target and in such a short time too.

To everyone who helped, who gave money, time, ideas and encouragement, we couldn't have done it without you... you have successfully saved this service for older people in Exeter. Thank you so very much.

● Read the full story on **Page 3**

Dear Brian

Just writing to let you know I have now got my disability living allowance, house rate care £17.75 a week, higher rate mobility £46.75 p a week plus income support at £1.85 a week. Thank you very much for all your help. It means a lot to me. I have now cleared my back rent, booked a holiday for next year with my daughter and family, will be able to keep warm this winter and eat better. You might hear from me again next year when I'm 60 as I am not sure what I will be able to get.

Thank you again,

Yours sincerely

Why we are so thrilled that your support has saved such a vital service

www.ageconcernexeter.org.uk

Our phone number: **01392 202092**. Please ring this in response to any articles in this issue, unless another number should be given.

Also, our general leaflets are available on CD or cassettes, and this newsletter is available in big print. To order, please phone the above number.

Being safe as houses

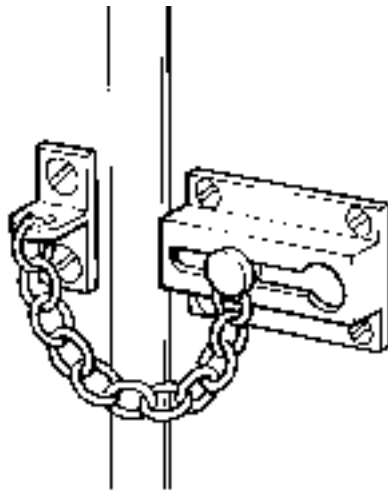
AGE CONCERN Exeter is launching a new crime prevention service called 'Safe as Houses'.

Completely free, it will employ a handyperson to supply and fit simple security devices such as door chains and viewers for people aged over 60 in the city. Steve Taylor, the handyperson, will also be able to give straightforward advice

about how older people can guard against falling victim to doorstep con artists, such as bogus callers and rogue traders. Volunteer Sandy Fleming, an ex-city red coat guide, will also visit clubs and groups to give advice about such issues.

It has been designed in partnership with the Devon & Cornwall Police Crime Prevention Service. Paul Taylor, Exeter's Crime Prevention Officer, said: "I think the scheme will provide a valuable service for us to use in conjunction with existing police activity such as the 'Stay out Stranger' advice.

"We look forward to using the new scheme as it will assist local Policing Teams in preventing crime, and the fear of crime, associated with bogus callers and rogue traders.



The service is funded by a trust established by the late Miss Sheila Robb, of Beacon Lane, a lecturer at Exeter University.

Trustees Philip Muzzlewhite and Alan Williamson commented: "During her lifetime, Sheila was passionately committed to the causes of crime prevention and victim support. We are sure she would be delighted to know that part of her estate is being used in such a direct and practical way for the 'Safe as Houses' project to help older people in Exeter"

Martyn Rogers, Director of Age Concern Exeter, said: "This is a major addition to our range of services. Only last week our local neighbourhood Bobby came in to see me concerned about the recent number of distraction burglaries committed against older people in the area.

"We know there are unscrupulous people out there who prey on the trusting nature of older people and that simply producing more leaflets is not the answer.

"This service can provide the practical help and face-to-face advice that could help prevent this type of distressing crime occurring in Exeter".

For more information or to arrange a free home visit contact Age Concern Exeter and ask about the Safe as Houses project.



Are you on pension credit?

HANNAH FOSTER (left) is the prospective parliamentary candidate in Exeter for the Conservative Party. She has asked us to help her broaden her understanding of the realities and difficulties of living on a basic state pension.

If you are living on pension credit and would be willing to meet with Hannah for a chat, please ring us and ask for Nichola.

Our Information and Advice service has been saved after the fantastic response to our appeal over Christmas

What was so brilliant was that so many people donated something. Hundreds of people gave us a contribution. It was a very heart warming feeling when it dawned on us, how many people were touched by our plight and moved to help us.

We publicly acknowledged some of the companies, who dug deep and helped us when they themselves were feeling the pinch, and we really appreciate their support but we also received larger donations from individuals who know of our work and whose help has made the campaign such a success. I would also like to personally thank all the staff and volunteers who, took up the gauntlet and went puzzle mad for 3 weeks, spreading the word and raising money left, right and centre. We had a production line of jigsaw piece makers, envelope stuffers, bag packers, to name but a few. What an incredible month it was, thank you.

This is a good time to let you know what the service will look like now and how your money will be spent.

From this March until further notice:

- We have an office at 52 Cowick Street, opposite our main centre, and here we house our Information and Advice service. We have to pay rent for this office space which obviously forms part of the cost the Puzzle Appeal will cover. People can be seen here for appointments to discuss their difficulties and we store all our information resource material here as well as providing desk space for the staff and volunteers
- Bridgette Dobinson, the co-ordinator, will from March onwards work three days a week. Her main role will be supporting the 15 volunteers who help in the service and provide expertise and guidance in many of the complex areas of inquiry. Some of the money raised will go towards this salary.



- There is also an Administrator who will be responsible for keeping all the records of inquiries, making appointments, ordering resource materials and various other administrative tasks. They will be employed for ten hours a week, a portion of the money raised will secure this post.
- The 15 volunteers will see people for appointments and support people over the phone. Money will be spent on line rental and internet access as well as the purchasing of bespoke computer packages needed for ensuring we provide accurate and relevant information. There will also be a portion of the money used to cover volunteer expenses, as they will still be visiting people in their own homes to help people complete benefit applications if they are unable to get to us.

How it will work

- The service will operate four mornings a week, Monday to Thursday.
- Two volunteers, supported by the service co-ordinator, will be available between 10 am and 1pm to answer phone inquiries and undertake limited follow-up work on behalf of clients.
- There will be one appointment slot in the office for people to come in for a face-to-face meeting to try to resolve problems that can't be dealt with over the phone.
- There will be a team of volunteers who will visit people in their own homes to help them complete various benefit forms.
- We will work closely with other organisations in the city to provide accurate and appropriate signposting so people know which agency can best help them and what to expect from that agency.
- If people need further help we will offer them support to get their query addressed or problem heard but, given the funds available, this will have to be limited to one 'session' rather than on-going help.

Thank you Fred!

RIGHT from Age Concern Exeter's conception back in 1987 Fred Webster and his wife Joan were loyal and committed supporters.

Joan volunteered in our shop until her death some years ago and Fred was a Trustee, Treasurer and latterly a member of the Senior Voice Panel prior to his death last year. Not only did Fred do so much for Age Concern Exeter (and a number of other organizations in the city) during his lifetime but he also, very generously, has given additional support to our work through his will by making a bequest of £5,000 to the charity.

We are hugely grateful for all he and Joan did for the benefit of others during their lives and for Fred's continued contribution after his death.

Volunteer vacancies

IF YOU have some time on your hands and want to get more involved with Age Concern Exeter and the local community have a look at these vacancies and see if any take your fancy.

All roles are subject to two references and most require an enhanced CRB check.

Reading in schools

This project is going well, with five volunteers now helping in five different primary schools in Exeter. There are more schools wanting to get involved. If you have an hour or two a week and like children, come and get involved.

Dining Room

Assistant (in the Fire Station Café, Cowick Street)

To look after and serve 20 people at lunchtime, one day a week. We need a volunteer who likes people, can work a simple til (training given) and who can give 2 hours a week to help serve good quality food.

Hospital Visitors

Can you pop up to the hospital once a fortnight to visit someone who doesn't receive any other visitors? It can be as flexible as you need it to be...a very rewarding role and you will be supported by a Co-ordinator at Age Concern Exeter.

Piece de la resistance

Potato peelers needed Thurs and Fri - (10-12) great fun, easy role but VITAL. We need our spuds, can you help?

Run, run run for



If you are planning to step out for . . .



the half marathon around the streets of Exeter on Sunday 3rd of May . . . getting sponsorship and raising money per mile

Please think of Age Concern Exeter. All money raised would help older people in the city

Contact: Jane Moffatt on 01392 202092



Why Penny has invested in some long johns

Your chance to have the experience of a lifetime

WINTER SURVIVAL CHALLENGE



From the Age Concern Exeter brochure

PENNY UNITT, co-ordinator of our Social Support service, has decided to take up the challenge and go forth into the wilderness.

We hear it's only minus 30 degrees in Northern Sweden, so don't know what the fuss is about really...goodness, we all managed a bit of snow in February didn't we?

Penny, in raising £1,500 for Age Concern Exeter, will be kitted up in thermal long johns, eating reconstituted egg, sleeping in snow holes she'll have to dig herself and generally trying to survive sub-arctic conditions.

Her voyage starts on 21st February and she embarks on her snowmobile for a week of survival and harsh conditions; a very brave woman in my book.

The survival week is organised by a company called Intrepid Expeditions and they arrange a schedule that challenges daring individuals to pit their wits against the ruthless environment.

They assure us no one has been



Penny kitted out to survive sub-arctic conditions

previously lost or left behind. I rather hope Penny does come back, because she is running a very successful service matching volunteer visitors with older people who live in Exeter and who would like some company. She would be sincerely missed if she did a Captain Oates on us. So we look forward to her return in March and I'm sure she'll tell us about her trip in the next edition.

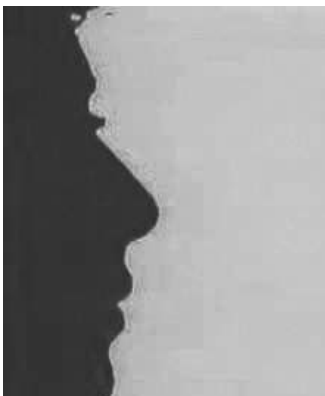
Good luck Penny, keep warm, keep focused and stay calm!



Who's Who on reception

We are growing, and that's not all due to what we ate over Christmas!

The team in Cowick street who answer the phones or who you may meet at our reception if you come in, has grown in numbers and we thought this would be a good opportunity to introduce you to the whole team



SUE MARTYR

Sue is the Office Manager who is responsible for managing our team of reception and admin staff and volunteers. You will meet Sue on the reception desk on Monday lunchtimes, Friday mornings and covering at other times, but you might speak to her on the phone too.



MARY WOOTTON

Mary works mainly in the admin office but she often answers the telephone and you may see her on the reception desk at odd times. Mary helps with co-ordinating all the training for staff and volunteers.

RACHEL STAMP

Rachel also works mainly in the admin office and covers reception desk on Tuesday lunchtimes as well as manning the telephones Monday to Wednesday. Rachel manages all the staff timesheets which is a huge job now as our Take-a-Break Service is growing so rapidly.



KAY MCGEORGE

Kay works in the admin office in various roles and will occasionally cover reception or answer phones. She is getting to know all the community staff and people who use our enabling and sitting and escort services. Kay also runs a community group at the Imperial pub on Tuesday mornings



KATHY KNIGHT

Kathy is our Senior Receptionist on the front desk, works Monday to Thursday and can help with all your enquiries or she'll know someone who can! Kathy plans the coach trips, helps *Careline*, the telephone support service, and generally links everyone together.

at Age Concern Exeter

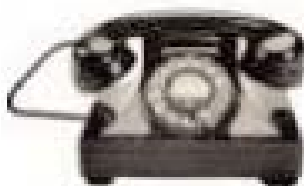


ANNE EDWARDSON

Anne volunteers and covers reception on Friday afternoons. This is a real bonus for us as we are very short staffed on Fridays and it can get very busy some weeks. Anne will speak to you on the phone, make appointments and help you with your enquiries.

JACKY

Jacky volunteers for Age Concern Exeter doing various tasks including covering the reception desk on Wednesday and Thursday mornings. She calls up the hospital wards every week to find out how people are, if we know someone has been admitted.



MARGERY

Margery volunteers on reception on Tuesdays. She answers the phone, so you may get to speak to her or meet her in the reception area. Margery helps 10am to 3pm.

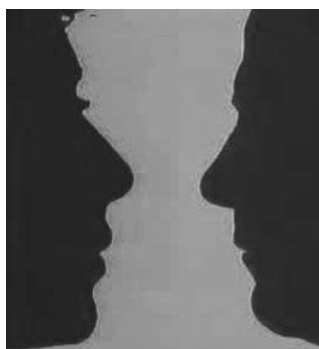
MARGARET

Margaret has recently joined us as a volunteer and helps out in reception on Monday mornings. Margaret can help you with your queries and she answers the phones and greets anyone coming to the centre on Mondays.



MARILYN

Marilyn volunteers Monday afternoons in reception and helps co-ordinators with various projects and is very creative. Marilyn also helps with the Careline telephone service and transcribes conversations on to



LYN

Lyn has recently joined the volunteer admin and reception team working on Fridays. She will be mainly in the admin office but you may find her answering the telephone or occasionally sitting at reception.



CORINNE BAILEY

Corinne is our Support Services Manager who has overall responsibility for the reception and admin team and you will sometimes see her on reception or answering the telephone.

OTHER co-ordinators help out on reception the first Wednesday of every month when all the admin staff have a meeting to be kept informed of any changes.

It's a vibrant and busy service, always different. No day is the same – it keeps us on our toes! We do have some volunteer vacancies if you like people and are good on computers – it's quite a challenge!



Volunteers Training Programme 2009

Course Title	Date	Tutor
Confidentiality & Boundaries	5 March 2009	Sue Witt
Managing Conflict and Aggression	12 March 2009	Alan Songhurst
Understanding Mental Health	FULLY BOOKED	Richard Brabrook
First Aid	27 April 2009	Martin Boulton
Effective Communication Skills	7 May 2009	Alan Songhurst
IT Basic (WORD)	14 May 2009	Martin Boulton
Chairing Meetings (½ day)	8 April 2009 (AM)	Alan Songhurst
Food Hygiene	27 May 2009	BHTS

● If you would like more information or would like us to reserve you a place on one or more of these courses, please contact Corinne Bailey at Age Concern Exeter

Other Training for Staff and Volunteers

Introduction to Age Concern Exeter with Corinne Bailey and Martyn Rogers for all new staff and volunteers: Early evening session, 6pm – 8.30pm, refreshments provided. Great evening filled with information and opportunities to find out more about us and how you are making a difference. April 23rd, 2009



MEMBERSHIP

Would you like to support our work by becoming a member of Age Concern Exeter? If so, please complete and return this membership form. In return you will receive your own copy of this Newsletter, sent to your home, a copy of our Annual Review and the opportunity to attend our AGM and have your say in the work of the charity. Thank you.

Name.....

Address.....

.....Post Code

I apply for membership of Age Concern Exeter and enclose my £5 annual Subscription (please make cheque payable to Age Concern Exeter).

Signed.....

Date

AGE CONCERN EXETER

138 Cowick Street,
Exeter, EX4 1HS

Phone: 01392 202092

Fax: 01392 204113

Email: reception@ageconcernexeter.org.uk

Web: www.ageconcernexeter.org.uk

Reg Charity No. 1010973

Winter Warmth Campaign

CAN we help you warm up your home? Do you want central heating? There are heating grants available for those on income related benefits or a one-off £300 towards the cost of a boiler.

Are you in a park home which is cold from lack of insulation? From April there will be financial help available in the form of a loan to pay for cladding the outside.

Please call Jill Coulter or Tony Harvey at Age Concern Exeter (telephone number on front page) if your house isn't warm enough. We may be able to help.



Village Yarns

DO YOU live in or near Whipton Village?

If you do and you enjoy wool craft and other handicrafts, there is a Knit and Natter Club that meets on Wednesdays and Saturdays, 2pm - 4pm.

The idea is you just drop in for a cup of tea, take along your knitting or craft projects and maybe make new friends.

You can call the Wool Shop on 01392 660 673, if you want to find out more. They would love to meet you.

They are also running learn-to-crochet classes on Tuesdays 7pm - 9pm. Give them a ring, it might be fun!

Anyone who has ever felt lonely or unable to do the things they need to do because of illness or disability knows how important companionship and help is.

By leaving a legacy to Age Concern Exeter, you will help us provide practical help, advice and friendship to older people in Exeter who really need our support.



Could you help bring a little happiness and friendship to others?

For a copy of our legacy information, please contact:

Jane Moffatt, Age Concern Exeter
138 Cowick Street, Exeter EX4 1HS
Tel: **01392 202092**

TRADING NEWS

2009 Looks to be a busy and exciting time in our trading department. Along with our regular products such as travel insurance, home insurance, motor breakdown cover, pre-paid funeral plans and utility supplies, the following will be new to Age Concern Exeter very soon . . .

Holidays

Age Concern Enterprises has teamed up with Grand UK holidays to offer a small selection of escorted tours, giving the opportunity for groups in Exeter to book a break away together. There is no single

room supplement either for lone travellers and group bookings are available.

Car insurance quotes

Age Concern Exeter will shortly be offering car insurance quotes both by telephone and face to face in their Cowick Street office. No more need to be kept on hold or deal with a call centre.

NOW!!

Beat-the-quote challenge!

For a limited period only and on a like-for-like basis (unlimited cover not available) on both buildings and /or contents insurance, see if we can do better.

Please keep an eye on notice board for more information and local information days.

We're all going on our summer holidays!

Age Concern is offering a range of escorted holidays for the mature traveller direct by coach from Exeter.

Benefits include:

- no single supplements
- services of a friendly tour manager
- luggage handling service
- direct coach travel to the resort
- free sightseeing excursions
- ABTA bonding

Something to look forward to in the summer –

Blackpool and the Lakes

5th ~ 12th July, £279 per person

The Heart of Wales

29th June ~ 3rd July, £199 per person

On the edge of the South Downs

2nd ~ 9th August, £359 per person

* * *

Travel insurance quotations available

Please contact Karen Trist at Age Concern Exeter

Wanted: Coach trip couriers



PLANNING for this year's coach trips is well under way. We have a small band of willing volunteers who go on these trips as couriers but, as there are more trips this year, we wonder if you know anyone who would be suitable couriers.

The main role is to be Age Concern Exeter's ambassadors and eyes and ears, and provide a friendly oversight on the coach. You are not required to give first aid or physical

support to people but you do need to be fairly competent and be able to cope in the event of someone going missing or becoming unwell and so on.

It is great fun and the trips go all over Devon and surrounding areas. Let us know if you might be able to help.

2009 TRIPS – MAKE A NOTE IN YOUR DIARY

DATE	DESTINATION	DATE TICKETS AVAILABLE	PRICE
Wednesday 25th March	Traditional English Market Day	February 25th	£7.50
Monday 11th May	Dartmoor (visiting Princetown and House of Marbles, Bovey Tracey, for af'noon tea)	April 14th	£7.50
Tuesday 16th June	Weston Super Mare (sunny seaside day out!)	May 9th	£7.50
Tuesday 21st July	Looe and Polperro (historic fishing villages)	June 23rd	£7.50
Thursday 20th Aug	Bournemouth (Dorset Coast tickets available)	July 23rd	£8
Thursday 10th Sept	Buckfast Abbey and Dartmouth	August 13th	£7.50
Friday 2nd Oct	Goosy Fair at Tavistock	September 4th	£7.50
Tuesday 24th Nov	Clarks Village (Christmas shopping!)	October 27th	£7.50

PLEASE note that tickets will not be available before the date specified and cannot be reserved in advance. If you wish to apply for tickets by post, please enclose an s.a.e and make your cheque payable to Age Concern Exeter. As always, tickets can be purchased from our Cowick Street centre reception.

All Age Concern Exeter services, including coach trips, are for those aged 50 and over. If you would like information about any of our services please give me a call – *Kathy Knight*, Senior Receptionist

**Pop in
for a
friendly
hour
or so**



THIS welcoming group has been meeting every Tuesday since April last year at the Imperial Hotel on New North Road.

We are a very friendly group who meet from 10.30 to 12 midday to have a chat and share our news over a cup of tea or coffee. We also enjoy the occasional quiz, raffle, game of bingo and lunch. If you would like to meet some new people, do come along and join us, we would love to see you. Kay and volunteers Mike and Stan will be there every week to meet you. Cost is 50p. For further information contact Kay McGeorge at Age Concern Exeter.

AND . . .

A chance to link to other fine folk!

LINK 2 service runs many groups and at the moment we have vacancies in several of them.

So if you fancy getting out of the house to meet some really nice people and to divert yourself from this winter weather, see if any

TAKE A BREAK SCHEME

JUST to remind carers that the Take-A-Break Scheme can offer a sitting or escort service to the person they care for. The service operates on a voucher system, providing up to 12 hours a month, at a subsidised cost of £2.50 an hour.

If you would like more information on the Scheme, please ring Westbank League of Friends on Exeter 823315.

of these groups take your fancy. Further details from Karol Chew on 01392 454383.

Pub Lunch group – Mondays, at the Royal Oak, Okehampton Street.

Current Affairs – monthly on Mondays.

Games Group – scrabble, cards, chess etc on a Wednesday morning.

Cinema group – once a month.

Craft Group – meets in a craft shop on Fridays.

Art Group (one space only) – Tuesdays.

Pottery – table top. Thursdays.

Coffee Potters – a coffee-and-cake morning in House of Fraser store (formerly Dingles), on a Thursday.

Bowling – Fridays at 5.0pm.