

### Older People's Commissioner for Wales opens New Resource Centre for Older People in Pembroke

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September was a big day for Age Concern Pembroke with our 17<sup>th</sup> AGM and the grand opening of our new premises at 37 Merlins Hill, Haverfordwest.

Ruth Marks, MBE, Older People's Commissioner for Wales very kindly spoke at the AGM and then performed the honours in the afternoon, officially opening the Resource Centre facilities. The sun shone on the proceedings and people were able to mingle within the building and also in the lawned gardens.

The AGM was a celebration of the success of Age Concern Pembroke's new Independent Living Structure which was established in June 2008 with the appointment of Karen Butler as Contact Centre Manager and coinciding with the move to the new premises.

The Trustees Report showed the increase in activity and how older people are now supported in a far more effective and person centred way. Support to people on discharge from hospital increased by 65% in terms of referrals with the time spent with each client on average has more than doubled. Carers support has increased ten fold, mainly due to the ability to now identify carers within the new centralised structures but also the deployment of volunteers in

a far more responsive and flexible manner.

Praise for volunteers was evident and it was particularly noted that the success of Independent Living was due to their willingness to embrace the change and this was shown by the 80% increase in volunteer time within weeks of implementation. Volunteers now give over 10,000 hours of support to older people per year which is the equivalent of 6 full time paid staff, more than those actually employed.

A new Care Call System was also initiated as part of the proactive approach to maintaining contact with clients and over 500 people were receiving regular calls by the year end.

Ruth Marks commended Age Concern Pembroke on its foresight in responding to the need to provide person centred care and support, responding to people as individuals and using resources to best effect.

Following a buffet lunch back at the new premises, Ruth then kindly spoke a few words and unveiled a plaque to

commemorate the occasion. Amazingly Ruth noted that this was the first plaque (she was aware of) with her name on. Ruth complimented Age Concern Pembroke on its wonderful building and commented on the wonderful feeling within the organisation that is not due to bricks and mortar but the people who work within it.

Mark Bendon from the WCVA then officially presented Age Concern Pembroke with the Investing in Volunteers Award noting that Age Concern Pembroke had shown exemplary practices, policies and procedures within their assessment that more than met the standard required for accreditation. 'There is a clear ethos of passion for the aims of the organisation and support for anyone involved in its work.'

*Pictured are Ruth Marks, MBE, Older People's Commissioner for Wales and Olive Evans, President of Age Concern Pembroke unveiling the plaque at the Opening of Age Concern Pembroke Resource Centre for Older People.*



## Pembrokeshire's Charity for Older people

In times of recession, Charities are feeling the pinch as much as anyone and Age Concern Pembrokeshire is unfortunately no exception.

Age Concern Pembrokeshire is a local, INDEPENDENT charity, able to provide what we feel appropriate to older people in Pembrokeshire but, at the same time, having to raise all our own funds and resources locally with no central help or finances.

Following restructuring in June 2008, Age Concern Pembrokeshire has achieved a more customer centred approach that is delivered in a very cost effective and consistent manner with the statistics on page 4 speaking for themselves. The new structure has also given us flexibility in responding to

needs and developing new services.

We achieved these results whilst radically restructuring and moving/settling in to new premises.

In order to provide the services and support that older people tell us they want, and also to develop ongoing income streams to support our wide range of work, Trustees have agreed to look at developing chargeable services on the proviso that we are the best placed organisation to deliver.

In response to this we have launched a new Domestic Help Service and are also developing a basic nail clipping service. We are also reviewing our charging policy for bath lifts and mobility aids. We are pursuing all possible funding sources for grants and contracts, but these are extremely competitive and success rates are small.

*Jane Slade, Chief Officer*

## How You Can Help Us Help Older People

Help and support can take many forms and can be as large or small as you are able and willing to give. All support is gratefully received.

Raising funds is a huge challenge at the moment and we have a small team of volunteers looking at ways in which income can be generated. Ideas to date include establishing a retail area and coffee shop within the existing premises, various sponsored events, supermarket collections, auctions, concerts and shows and establishing our own lottery.

Volunteering is also an obvious option. Giving however much time you are able can make a significant difference to an older person and can give you a surprising amount of satisfaction as well.

ACP needs your help to promote our work and make sure that people value and appreciate what we do and are willing to support us.

If you have been involved with us in any way and have been impressed or satisfied with your experience either as a customer or a volunteer, please spread the word and let people know what you think of us.

### Where Does Your Money Go?

As mentioned previously, Age Concern Pembrokeshire is an *independent local* charity responsible for raising all its own funding and resources and I would urge all people wishing to donate or leave money to benefit older people in Pembrokeshire to check that instructions specifically state  
Age Concern  
PEMBROKESHIRE  
as your money may otherwise end up in Cardiff or London.



### CHRISTMAS RAFFLE

For the chance to win a new Ford Fiesta. Proceeds from all tickets sold by Age Concern Pembrokeshire will go to Age Concern Pembrokeshire.

If you could help by selling tickets for us, please contact Sally in the Office.

### Appeal for Artwork

We have had an excellent response to our appeal for original artwork from local people for our Art Auction in the Spring but need more. If you are a budding local artist and would be willing to donate a piece of your work to raise funds to help older people in Pembrokeshire please contact Sally in the Office.

# Domestic Help Service Up and Running

In response to huge demand, Age Concern Pembrokeshire has launched a Domestic Help Service.

As we get older it becomes more difficult to manage the little things we once took for granted. Maintaining a home is no exception. Simple tasks like vacuuming, shopping, and general housework can become hard work and quite daunting or we still lead such active lives that we have no energy or desire to do the work ourselves.

We receive many enquiries from people asking about help with housework and domestic tasks, especially as statutory provision is now limited to those people with personal care needs. In order to respond to these requests, we have set up our own Domestic service, delivered by paid ACP staff. We have to make an hourly charge in order for the service to be sustainable but customers also have access to other ACP support and a welfare benefit check is offered to all customers to make sure they are receiving maximum entitlement.

There is no fixed definition of the support provided but some examples are

- vacuuming and washing floors
- polishing and dusting
- washing dishes and cleaning work surfaces
- making beds or changing bed linen

- laundry and ironing
- small amounts of shopping
- escorted shopping
- escorting to appointments
- paying bills and collecting pensions
- reading and helping with correspondence.

Any of these can be provided as a one-off or regular appointment.

Basic cost is £12 for the first hour and £3 for each subsequent quarter hour (or part), with a minimum one-hour call out.



## In the Pipeline

**Basic nail-clipping service:** Volunteers are needed to help to deliver this service. If you are interesting in training as a volunteer nail-clipper please contact Jane or Sally in the office.

If you would be interested in having your nails cut, please contact us as well so that we can gauge interest.

**Coffee Shop and Retail area** We are awaiting the outcome of a grant application to develop the above within our existing premises in Haverfordwest. If you would be interested in helping out as a volunteer, please contact Jan, Volunteering Coordinator in the office.

## What a Difference Your Money Can Make

**£5** pays for 25 phone calls to lonely older people to check they are OK and have a chat

**£10** pays a volunteer 's expenses to make a home visit to get shopping, do a home safety or welfare benefit check, help sort an issue with a utility company or other organisation or give a carer a break.

**£20** pays expenses for 2 volunteers make a home visit to move a bed downstairs or clear an attic ready for insulation.

**£30** can pay for a training day for up to 10 volunteers to learn how the Welfare Benefits system works and how to complete forms

**£50** buys a replacement battery for a bathlift

**£100** pays for trainer to teach staff and volunteers how to provide low level advocacy and representation for older people.

**£200** buys a new electric bathlift for the loan service

## ART & CRAFT EXHIBITION

The 2010 Age Concern Pembrokeshire Art & Craft Exhibition will take place from 4<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> March at the Haverfordwest Library Gallery. The exhibition will be open to anyone aged 60 or over who is resident in Pembrokeshire. Entry forms will available in the New Year. For further information, please look on our website [www.acpembs.org.uk](http://www.acpembs.org.uk) or contact the office on 01437-769207.

## Diary dates

**Volunteer Christmas Party**  
2 December 2009

**Christmas closing**  
25 Dec – 1 Jan  
inclusive

**Older Persons 50+ Forum meeting,**  
Pembroke Technium Centre,  
Pembroke,  
26 November 2 – 4 pm.

**Christmas Raffle**  
Closing date – 8 January  
2010

**Art and Craft Exhibition**  
4 – 19 March 2010

**Art Auction** – Spring 2010

## Volunteer training

A grant from the WCVA has enabled ACP to purchase a range of training manuals to develop a range of courses for volunteers ranging such as customer care, working safely, managing time, adult and child protection.

With more and more clients asking for our help in applying for benefits, we are continuing to train volunteers in the intricacies of filling in Attendance Allowance and Disability Living Allowance forms. We held in-house training days in April and July, and more are being planned in line with changes in benefits.

We also held a very successful Advocacy Training Day in June 2009, led by Advocacy for Older People of Greenwich and attended by fourteen volunteers.

## Statistics

Independent Living was implemented on 1 June 2008.

To date ACP has:

- nearly 3000 customers on its database
- over 1500 referrals, of which over 1400 were new contacts
- raised nearly £2 million in new benefits for older people in Pembrokeshire
- undertaken over 2500 low level advocacy interventions
- developed a care call system with over 500 clients receiving regular calls
- increased hospital discharge support by 65 per cent and doubled the average time spent with each client by volunteers
- increased carer support by over 400 per cent
- increased volunteer time by 80 per cent to over 10000 hours or the equivalent of 6 full time posts
- increased home visits by over 100 per cent with a ratio shift to more one off and short term visits, reflecting the objective to encourage independence
- developed a mobility aids purchase scheme, linked to occupational therapists where necessary, to help older people access aids at a more competitive price.

## And finally ....

**Thanks** to everyone who made the Official Opening and AGM such a wonderful success this year. We are receiving feedback from all directions about how much people enjoyed the day.

**Congratulations** to Karen Butler on achieving her Professional Certificate in Education at Pembrokeshire College. We have all in the office endured her stress every step of the way and know her qualification is well deserved.

**Congratulations** to Val Dust (now Freeman) and Alex on their wedding in July.

**Get well soon** wishes to Olive Evans, President who has been in Morrision for several weeks. Our thoughts are with her for a speedy recovery.



**As this will be the last newsletter before Christmas, wishing you a very merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year from all at Age Concern Pembrokeshire.**

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**Deadline for next edition:  
29 January 2010.**