



Welcome

I hope that you enjoy this edition of the Village Agent newsletter, and find something in it of particular interest.

Working Together in partnership is a recurring theme in this issue; perhaps slightly out of kilter with party politics at this time of political upheaval, but very much the way forward for all of us at Age Concern Hampshire and our multiple partners.

Earlier this year ACH celebrated a renewed agreement with **Hampshire County Council** to continue to manage the Village Agents project, now in its sixth year. Our partnership with **Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service** continues to develop as their remit widens to a more proactive role, through the Safe and Well programme.

Throughout the county, new working relationships are being forged between Village Agents and **GP surgeries**. And inside, Judy, our new Chief Executive, tells you about the new links she is making with other organisations.

But most importantly, I need to thank you, Hampshire Village Agents, for the amazing and caring things you do for your clients – you make a massive difference to their lives.

Thank You.

Anne Harrison

Village Agent Co-ordinator
01962 892443



Village Agents Project—year six!



Hampshire County Council has again funded Age Concern Hampshire to manage the day to day running of the Village Agents project, now in its sixth year.

Let's revisit the remit of a Village Agent when the idea of Hampshire Village Agents was first conceived in 2011: – ***“These will be volunteers who become a community resource, and who offer their time to enable older people in their community to obtain information and guidance which will help them to stay safe, maintain their independence and optimise their quality of life. Village Agents will become the link between rural communities and individuals, and local councils / other providers and agencies, signposting to a wide range of services as appropriate.”***

This is what the 50 Hampshire Village Agents achieved between them between January and the start of April this year:

Total hours given by Village Agents	809
Key contacts made with other organisations	39
Articles submitted to local magazines	29
Total of people met representing the role of Village Agent	1,308
Individual one to one contacts made	443
Number of enquiries dealt with and / or referred to other organisations (transport, benefits and social groups and clubs were the most frequently raised)	278

We all know that Village Agents are people with big hearts, but one Village Agent in particular, Ray Betsworth, from Liss, has been given an official acknowledgement of the fact. Ray was nominated, and awarded, **Radian Good Neighbour of The Year**, by Radian Housing Officer, Richard Bingham, for his work with residents in Rother House and around the village. Congratulations, Ray!



(Photograph courtesy of the Petersfield Post)

Meet the Village Agent—Leslie Barry

Leslie has been our first Village Agent covering Enham Alamein since the start of 2016, and she in turn has recruited Caroline to help her. I asked Leslie about herself and why she volunteers for us as a Village Agent.

What motivated you to join Age Concern Hampshire?

We have been in the village for twelve years, at the Enham Post Office and Village Stores, so I get to meet a lot of the Enham residents each day. When I saw the Village Agent role advertised, I thought “that’s what I’m doing already!” It’s also a means of learning more and helps to encourage people to come forward and ask for help.

What has been the best thing about the voluntary work you do for us?

There’s a real satisfaction in it. For example, many of the Enham Trust and older residents in the village depend on benefits, and when legislation changes the benefits system, it can be daunting for them. So Caroline and I can help ease the worry and make sure that they get what they are entitled to—with sometimes just the simplest advice. And to make people aware of what Age Concern and Hampshire County Council can do to support them is amazing.

Tell us about the Enham Trust?

The Enham Trust is a disability charity that works with over 7,500 individuals each year, helping them have increased independence and choice in their lives. It’s based in the village, and dates from early in the 20th century, when Britain needed to help retrain disabled servicemen from the Great War and Enham was chosen to be the pioneering ‘Village Centre’. When Enham received a gift from Egypt to mark the gallantry of British forces at the Battle of El Alamein in WW2, the village was renamed Enham Alamein in the 1940s. Later, in the 90s, Enham introduced accessible bungalows and 24 hour supported care homes.

What do you enjoy most about your role?

I like the fact that I can help make a visible difference to people’s lives. When people need help, they need it now, and often Caroline and I are in a position to be able to offer that help. And the shop is a natural meeting place. Fish and Chip Fridays are the most popular days, I think.

How do you and Caroline work together?

I’ll let Caroline answer that – Caroline says: “I enjoy helping people find the information they need, and I know a lot about benefits which are available to Enham residents, so I do the people contacts – for example, I helped someone with the statement from the Water Authority last week – and Leslie’s really good at the admin and organisational side of things too.”

What do you do in your spare time?

There isn’t much of it! But I like to spend time with my husband Tim and my family



Meet Our New Chief Executive Officer Judy

Dear colleagues – it is just about two months since I joined Age Concern Hampshire as Chief Executive. I am very pleased to have been asked to lead such a well-respected and valued organisation. Age Concern seems to be in my blood – previous employments include Age Concern England (now Age UK national) and Director of Age Concern Wandsworth. Before coming here, I was Director of Life After Stroke Services covering the south of England with Stroke Association based in Southampton. I live in Romsey, and until recently was a Trustee of Citizens Advice Test Valley.

I must say that I have been made very welcome by everyone I have met, visiting all our services and our shops. I hope that you will find this newsletter interesting and of use, and will get in touch to share your news and your views. Over time, I will write to let you know how you can help shape our plans for the future of Age Concern Hampshire. In the meantime, if we have not met yet, I hope to meet you soon and to find out more about our achievements and impact on the lives of older people and their families and carers in the county.

Judy



Village Agents - Eyes and Ears of HFRS



Reminder— Anyone aged 65 and over in Hampshire, who is registered with a GP, automatically qualifies for a **Hampshire Fire and Rescue Safe and Well visit**, which is designed to help older people stay safe in their home for longer.

This free home safety visit will usually be arranged in advance, so there should be no surprises when the uniformed member of Hampshire Fire and Rescue (HFRS) calls at the door. He, or she, will talk with the residents about what it is like living in their home, and carry out a Home Safety check to reduce the risk of fire and accidents. They can even fit some equipment there and then, if required.

HFRS can provide free of charge:

- A custom-made information pack
- Install new and check existing smoke alarms
- Advice on where to get additional help if needed

Over the last few months, members of Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service have been visiting homes around the county and they would be very pleased to have their local **Village Agent** accompanying them if the VA has made a referral.

Referrals should, ideally, come via your Village Agent Coordinator, so if you know someone who would benefit from a Safe and Well visit, then please call Anne or ring Age Concern Hampshire on 0800 328 7154.

Alternatively, if you would like to know more about Safe and Well visits, then call HFRS on 023 8062 6751 and ask for the Community Fire Safety Team, or visit their website, www.hantsfire.gov.uk

Take Five - Visibility for VAs

1. **Work with / use your village shop, library or community hall** for notices, news, and meet and greet events (Nick in Boldre and Pilley, Janet and Graham in Overton)
2. **Make friends with your GP surgery** (David in Wickham, Colin, Angie and Frances in Twyford, Ray in Liss)
3. Make sure you're involved with **your local Good Neighbours** or Voluntary Care Group scheme
4. Offer to organise **relevant talks** for existing groups (Denise and Fiona in Alresford)
5. Ask to give a regular update at your local **Parish Council** meeting—you will benefit each other.

Training and Resources

We have been working hard over the last few months to train volunteers to undertake form filling home visits, for Attendance Allowance and Personal Independence Payment applications. This is in response to a growing demand for this service and a lack of other organisations offering it.

We now have 27 people within the organisation who are trained, with several more part-way through their training. Twelve of these are Village Agents. We say a big Thank You to Christine Walker for giving her time to run training sessions at HQ, on top of her commitments as a HQ Advice Team volunteer. Thanks also to Rob Chapman (I&A Outreach Co-ordinator) for accompanying some of the trainees on home visits.

Well done to everyone who has completed the training! Please get in touch if you are interested in training too.

Other training currently available:

- 1st June – Emergency First Aid at Work, 9:30 – 16:30 – Alton
- 6th June – Emergency First Aid at Work, 9:30 – 16:00 – Havant
- 7th June – Manual Handling Training, 10:00 – 15:30 - Alton
- 14th June – Emergency First Aid at Work, 9:30 – 16:30 Eastleigh
- 19th June – Food Hygiene (Level 2 Certificated), 9:30 – 16:30 – Winchester
- 21st June – Safeguarding / Lone Working training, and VA Cluster Group meeting (Kershaw Day Care Centre, Fareham)
- 22nd June – Lone Working and Safeguarding training, and VA Cluster Group meeting (Level 10, Winchester)
- 29th June – Lone Working and Safeguarding Training, and VA Cluster Group meeting (Rosefield Day Care Centre, Odiham)

If you would like to book yourself onto one of these training courses, please contact Tiffany Overton on 01962 892453 or email tiffany.overton@ageconcernhampshire.org.uk

Guide to Better Care and Support

This very useful publication is produced by Hampshire County Council and lists help available to older people living in Hampshire. A new edition (Spring 2017-Spring 2018) is now available. It is possible to get boxes of these delivered to HCC offices and libraries around Hampshire free of charge, for collection (20 in a box). To order or to find out which locations they deliver to, contact Jeannette Smith by email at Jeannette.Smith@hants.gov.uk or ring on 01962 847253.

Age Concern Hampshire Day Care Centres

Don't forget that that ACH operates thirteen day care centres around the county, offering stimulation, care and opportunities for older people and their carers.

Please arrange a visit—you would be very welcome, and you could see at first hand the range of services provided, including specialist dementia care, bathing, hairdressing, foot-care—and loads of fun!



Have you visited one of our shops lately? We have two stores, in New Milton and Portchester and they are overseen by Jane Turner, Area Retail Manager.

The shops have recently been redesigned and they are looking amazing! Each shop sells a wonderful range of products, from books, jigsaw puzzles (one of our best sellers) to designer clothes, all at low, low prices! There is something for everyone, and in ladies and men's fashion we like to think that we lead the way in the charity sector, with an eye to current trends. Our knowledgeable teams can help put together an outfit for an interview, party or wedding. We also have a comprehensive range of DVD's and children's toys to keep everyone amused.

Latest news

We are now selling reconditioned/repackaged DVDs and they are going down a storm - we have been ordering extra boxes each week.

We have just started selling PAT tested small electrical goods in our Portchester branch, with other branches to follow. You can buy anything from a mixer to a hairdryer. There are only a few charity shops selling electrical goods, so we are hoping that this will become a good source of income for us. Electrical items are guaranteed for three months and PAT tested for six months.

All our shop management teams are trained to be dementia friendly and our shops are now registered as Dementia Friendly shops. The Dementia Friends initiative is supported by businesses such as Boots, Marks and Spencer and Asda, and celebrities including Alesha Dixon and Eamonn Holmes. There are now over 1 million Dementia Friends registered in the UK.

www.dementiafriends.org.uk

All items are donated; perhaps you have some items to donate, which we can check and then sell on? All donations can be gift-aided too...

New Milton

Open Monday 9.30am to 3.30pm
Tuesday-Saturday 9.30 am – 4.30pm
88 Station Road, New Milton, BH25 6LQ
Telephone: 01425 618364

Email: newmilton.shop@ageconcernhampshire.org.uk

Manager: Paula Curtin

Portchester

Open Monday 9.30am to 3.30pm
Tuesday- Saturday 9.30am – 5 pm
20 West Street, Portchester, Fareham, PO16 9UZ
Telephone: 02392 176116

Email: portchester.shop@ageconcernhampshire.org.uk

Manager: Rachel Faller

Unity Lottery, and Friends of Age Concern Hampshire

Age Concern Hampshire has joined forces with Unity Lottery to raise vital funds to support our work. It costs from just £1 to take part each week, with a weekly top prize of £25,000. Age Concern Hampshire receives 50p from every £1 ticket. Here's how the money is spent:

- **£15** allows our accredited advice service to help two older people by providing much needed information and support
- **£25** provides a counselling session for someone with dementia or their carer
- **£40** provides a group music therapy session
- **£100** goes a long way to supporting the cost of a group outing to the coast.

Alternatively, you may like to become a Friend of Age Concern Hampshire. Our Friends enable us to plan for the future by making a regular or one-off gift. An application form can be downloaded from our website if you, or someone you know, would like to support Age Concern Hampshire in this way. Or give us a call on the office number—01926 868545.