

Newsletter



Welcome to the R&RA(Essex) November Newsletter

It feels like yesterday, but it is now just over one year since our official Launch in October 2008. We didn't have a party, but, as reported in the summer newsletter, we do plan to hold a "celebration" event in the spring, to which all our Members, friends and stakeholders will be invited. This will be an opportunity to put faces to names and names to faces and for us to thank everyone who has supported and encouraged us through our early development. We are also very keen to hear YOUR suggestions and ideas about the path we should be taking.

Autumn can feel like a time of endings rather than beginnings, but we at the R&RA(Essex) are certainly not going into hibernation! Membership numbers continue to rise, as do calls to the Helpline and hits on the website. We are beginning to get quite a clear picture of the problems and questions that lead people to seek our help as well as quite a lot of feedback from those that have done so. We are also working very actively to build our partnerships with other organisations and our own network of local representatives and volunteers all across Essex, Southend and Thurrock, as well as establishing our new Management Board. More within!

We would like to thank all our Members and friends for the wonderful support and help we have received over the past year. And, of course, to send you our very best wishes for this festive season!

Issue No 5 November 2009

Our Services - Covering Essex, Southend and Thurrock

Helplines:

0845 017 7720

0845 017 7730 (Dedicated line for Care Homes)

Website: www.relresessex.org

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News from the R&RA(Essex)

The Evaluation

The first six months of our activity was the subject of a formal evaluation which was conducted for us by Pamela Graham, an independent consultant with substantial experience in the evaluation of community services.

Pamela's investigation was very wide ranging and comprehensive, covering four key topics:

- Are the residents of Essex, Southend and Thurrock getting the information they need from the R&RA(E)?
- Are they getting the support they need to use that information
- Is the R&RA (Essex) able to feed back relevant information to service commissioners and providers?
- How effectively is the R&RA(E) operating?

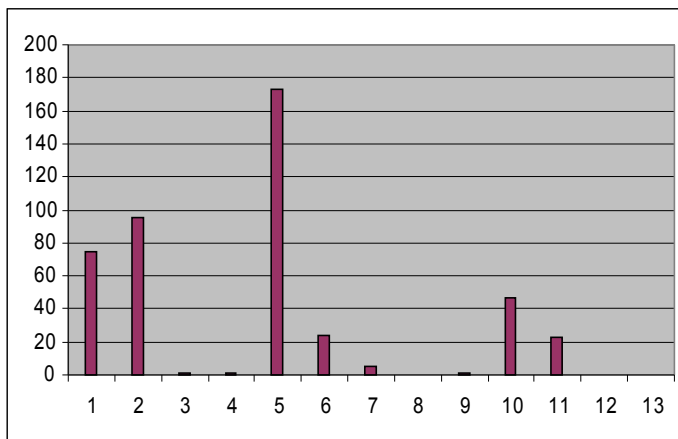
All stakeholders, members and volunteers, as well as a number of people who had used our services, were given the opportunity to contribute and a number of people who had used the helpline were also able to give their feedback. We were pleased to note the level of support offered by those who sent in comments and, in particular, the appreciation expressed by Helpline users for the information and support they were offered.

The report acknowledges the work already undertaken to develop and publicise our core services and also points to the need to continue to develop our communications and publicity and our systems for systematic collection and analysis of feedback. It also stresses the need to create a strong Management Board that will be able to make a clear strategic plan to build on the foundations laid in the first six months. More details of our work in our second six months of operation are in this newsletter.

If you would like a copy of the Evaluation Report, please e mail or call Janet Russell (Contact details on page 12)

From the Evaluation: Helpline Callers – What are the Issues?

The graph below gives a general indication of the topics raised by Helpline Callers.



KEY

1. Admissions/Evictions
2. Care
3. Care Home Management
4. Daily Life
5. Financial
6. General
7. Human Rights
8. Inspection
9. Interpersonal
10. Legal
11. Other

The high proportion of callers with questions about **funding** is mirrored by statistics from the website, where the page devoted to financial issues is consistently the most frequently visited.

Of these calls, about 30% concerned self funding, with questions about sale of property and assets and Local Authority funding making up about 37% of other calls. A much smaller number – around 4% - concerned “top up” funding and another 4% or so related to Continuing Care from the NHS.

We were pleased to note the relatively high proportion of enquiries about self funded care, as the “self funders” are a group we are particularly keen to reach with whatever help and support they may need. As we believe that between 30% and 40% of care home residents are self funding, it appears that we may be having some success in realising this intention.

Helpline Callers - continued

The next most significant category is “**Care**”. In this group, by far the greatest proportion of callers (89%) wished to discuss the assessment of needs. Most of these were in contact with the Local Authority, but in 3% of cases they raised the question of assessment for Continuing Care by the NHS.

Under the heading “**Admissions/Evictions**”, The majority (61%) of callers wanted to discuss admissions to residential care. The question of choice was raised by 29% of callers and in 9% of cases changing care homes was the topic.

Under the heading “**Legal**” the majority (68%) of callers had questions about the legal powers of the Local Authority. The issue of sale of property to fund care figured in 13% of cases and a smaller number (9%) raised the topic of “deprivation of assets”.

Since March, which was the last month of operation to which the Evaluation refers, the word about the R&RA(E) has spread and calls to the Helpline and visits to the website have been steadily rising. Nevertheless, it seems to us that these patterns continue to be consistent as the numbers of callers and visitors continue to rise.

Feeding Back

As is evident from this very brief summary, We are beginning to be in a position to collect some useful information about the experiences of people considering or living in residential care and their families. Behind the “raw data” are the personal stories that the Helpline team hears every day.

These stories, together with the statistics, are helping us to identify some common themes, such as the problems some people encounter with the exercise of their right to choice; inconsistencies in the information given about fees and funding etc. Our feedback has already influenced the way some calls are handled at the County Council and we will be looking to develop our channels of communication for systematic feedback as we go in to our second year of operations.

Calling Potential Volunteers!

“At last, I feel I have some support!”

These are the words we often hear when we talk to the people who call us for help. In addition to the work done by the Helpline



team we are building up our capacity to give personal support to many people who, in many cases, simply do not know where to turn in their journey through what can seem like the maze of residential care.

Our local volunteers don't give technical information or advice, because they don't have, and are not expected to have, the expertise of the Helpline. Instead, we work with the caller and the Helpline to keep in touch through what is often a very difficult and stressful time, offering encouragement, support and a sympathetic ear. It sounds simple, but it means so much!

At the moment we are mainly offering telephone support, although we are planning in the longer term to offer practical help as well. This might include accompanying people on visits to homes, helping people find and interpret inspection reports etc.

If you think you would like to join the R&RA(E) team and offer this kind of telephone support we would be very pleased to hear from you. Of course, we would meet any expenses involved and offer you training and support. We wouldn't want or expect you to do this without your own backup, support and any training you may need and we would ask you to give only the time that you can afford to offer.

If you would like to talk to us about it, with no commitment on either side, then please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Contact our Development Officer, Debbie Tanner

Telephone: 0845 017 1045

E Mail: debbie@tanner.eclipse.co.uk

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Telephone Support in Action

Development Officer Debbie Tanner writes -

During the first few months in my role as Development Officer, an area that has become evident is telephone support for individuals that are going through the process of looking into care.

I have been forwarded names and telephone numbers of individuals contacting the helpline from Chris Ardill our Helpline Manager, who feels at the time of the call some support or very localised information is needed. Chris informs them at this time that they will be called.

When called most of these individuals just need the time to discuss their feelings and have some one just listen to them at this very stressful time in their lives. Finding care for a loved one can be an extremely lonely process.

Advice is not given at any time during the conversation, but callers are advised to call the helpline as many time as required.

This telephone support could be an ideal opportunity for Volunteers who feel they have good listening and communication skills.

If you are interested in finding out more, please contact me on 0845 017 1095.

Membership

Since Development Officer Debbie Tanner got to work, we have been delighted to



welcome an influx of new members, both individual and corporate. This is excellent news and we are keen to hear from our members and develop our dialogue with them. We are hoping to meet as many as possible at the "Celebration Event" we are planning for the spring.

Thanks to all our members who have responded so positively when we have been in touch about "My Home Life" and other matters of common interest.

Spreading the Word

Our experience over the past year has demonstrated over and over again the need for the specialised services that we can offer, both in helping people make good, informed decisions and in offering personal support at a time of great stress and anxiety.

We are delighted to find that calls to the helpline and visits to the website are rising steadily and coming from all over Essex, Southend and Thurrock. Much more needs to be done, however. It is vitally important that people who may need our services both know how to contact us and have the ability and confidence to do so. Our approach to making this happen is twofold – direct through publicity and partnerships with other organisations whose members may need help themselves or be in touch with those who do.

We have excellent publicity and presentation materials available and are increasingly making use of other media such as articles in local publications, radio interviews. We are also receiving frequent invitations to be represented at relevant events and, in some cases, to make presentations to local groups. Since we cannot reach into every corner of our large "catchment" area by ourselves, we see existing networks and organisations as a vital key to reaching the people who need our help.

Can You Help?

We would love to hear from people who may be willing to represent us in their own area. The main task would be to distribute our publicity materials (for example in shops, churches, doctor's surgeries etc.) and to develop links with local organisations. Representatives may also be able to advise us on the best ways to make contact with people in their locality and what facilities may be available.

If our local representatives are also able and willing, occasionally, to attend local events on our behalf and, perhaps, make presentations to local groups, then so much the better. We do realise that many people don't like "public speaking" of course, so no-one would be expected to do anything with which they were not comfortable. We will be offering our representatives plenty of support and any training they may need and any expenses will be paid. There is no set time commitment – we are grateful for any time you can give. For more information, contact Debbie.

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Managing the Association

In our last Newsletter we reported on our plans to establish a Management Board to take forward the running and development of the Association in the long term.

We now have the nucleus of a very strong Board, led by Chairman, Brian Mister. Brian has a distinguished record of voluntary service and we are very fortunate to have the benefit of his knowledge, wisdom and commitment in this important position.

Working alongside Brian are Tom Cooper, another tireless worker for the good of our community, who has been giving sterling service to the Association from the beginning, and the redoubtable Chris Harvey, who has extended his role with the Association from IT guru and webmaster to Vice Chairman.

Also on the Board are Development officer, Debbie Tanner and Consultant Jill Jimson, who brings substantial expertise in all matters relating to funding residential care and who will be helping us develop our partnerships in north west Essex as well as working with the Helpline team to build up our database of local knowledge. We will be looking to strengthen the Board with members representing Southend and Thurrock and/or bringing some specific expertise to the Association. If any of our members or stakeholders knows of potential Board members who may be willing and able to give some time to working with the Association, we would be glad to hear from them.

We would like to extend our thanks to all the members of the Core Development Group that steered this project to the Launch last year and beyond – both representatives from other organisations and volunteers. In particular, we are grateful to the members of the Older People's Planning Group who contributed their time and experience so freely to help us get off the ground. Peter Coleing, Joan Robertson, John Morgan and Chairman, Barbara Williamson – thank you!

A Note from Vice Chairman, Chris Harvey

At a recent meeting of the Management Board I was invited to act as Vice-Chairman of R&RA (Essex), and readers may like to know a little about my background and views on the future prospects for the Association.

Biographical details

I was born in Cheshire and studied mathematics at Reading University. Following graduation I worked for a computer manufacturer (Marconi) before joining a major IT consultancy (Scicon), where I specialised in health care systems development. In 1983 I established my own business specialising in healthcare computing including provision of consultancy to the Department of Health. Later in 1990 I joined the NHS; subsequently, I managed the Year 2000 project for Great Ormond Street Hospital before spending 6 years working as a website manager for the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence. I retired from the NHS in 2007. Since retirement I have helped a number of charities in developing or reviewing IT and web systems and have recently supported R&RA (Essex) in managing its own website as well as providing support for business development.



Prospects for the future of R&RA (Essex)

I joined the Association when it had already been operational for about a year, and have been impressed by the dedicated commitment of both volunteers and management in bringing the Association the recognition and credibility it has gained to date. In addition, the support of both Essex County Council and the national R&RA based in London has provided the impetus to review our structure and management of the organisation now it is over one year old.

At a recent business planning meeting of the Management Board, we determined the ongoing steps necessary to promote the organisation and the benefits of belonging to it, not only for individuals, but also for corporate members such as care homes.

We intend to increase our contact with other organisations with the care of the elderly as one of their aims, as well as meeting many of our individual members over the next year.

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This will be achieved by direct contact with individuals and homes, and to achieve this we intend to involve not only our employed staff but also our volunteers, many of whom have experience of caring directly or indirectly for relatives or friends in a care home setting.

In conjunction with the national association we plan to provide additional training for those of us who explain the aims of the R&RA through the public meetings we hold with other interested organisations. We are particularly interested in meeting and talking to members of organisations who may be thinking about residential care for either themselves or relatives; e.g. local U3As (University of the Third Age) and Women's Institutes, but there are many others.

We are also planning our first general meeting to take place next Spring when we aim to have speakers on a range of topics, presentations about our work and provide the opportunity for those interested in our work to meet us in a central Essex location and learn more about our achievements and future hopes, as well as providing up to date advice and support in a friendly, relaxed environment.

However, the organisation can only thrive and develop if its members and others actively participate in its activities and help us identify and spread specialist information and expert advice about residential care.

Elsewhere in this newsletter or on our website - <http://www.relresessex.org> you can find more information about our services and support as well as more detailed plans for our future

Meanwhile, on a practical level may I recommend our Helpline on 0845 017 7720 for advice. The Helpline Manager and his team are there to work with you and, if necessary, help you to decide on the best course of action.

The service is free and confidential and we will support you for as long as necessary to deal with the matters you need to discuss. Finally, feedback and your own views about any aspect of our work and future plans may be sent to any of our officers, and if you wish you may contact me directly at:

chris.harvey@greatbaddowonline.co.uk

I look forward to hearing from you.

Chris Harvey

Recommending Homes

We are occasionally asked whether we can recommend a Care Home. This request has been made both by people who are looking for a suitable Home and from Care Homes themselves. It might be helpful, therefore to make our position clear.

We never recommend or endorse any particular Home. Our job is to help people make good decisions for themselves. This means that we will help them to find out about Homes in their chosen area, talk through with them what they are looking for and what questions they might want to ask, help them to find Inspection Reports and give them other information they need to find the best place to suit their needs. Above all, we encourage them to visit homes and talk to the staff and residents.

Of course we also deal with a lot of issues relating to funding as well and many other aspects of life in residential care.

Owners and Managers of Care Homes are always welcome to call the Helpline if we can be of assistance with questions they may be asked or issues they need to deal with on behalf of residents.

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News From Our Members

In this section we are delighted to include news, information and comments from our members. Please do get in touch with anything you would like us to include in the newsletter.

DISCLAIMER

Material included in this section is for news and information from members only. Mention of any specific establishment or organisation does not imply that it is endorsed or recommended by the R&RA(Essex), Essex County Council or any other sponsor of the Association

Local groups

In late August, our Development Officer, Debbie Tanner, with Tom Cooper, who has been with us from the start and Jill Jimson, who has joined us to help develop our partnerships in north west Essex, gave a presentation about the Association and its work to a meeting of residents and their families at Grapecroft, whose first anniversary celebrations were mentioned in our last newsletter. This meeting raised a lot of interest and we understand that several people have contacted the Helpline since to ask about various issues and been well pleased with the help they have received.

Staff, residents and relatives at several care homes, including Grapecroft, have also expressed an interest in setting up their own local branches of the R&RA(Essex) and this, of course, is something we are happy to support in any way we can. At Grapecroft, a resident's family member has offered to Chair the new local branch and the first meeting is planned for January. If the people involved agree, we do, of course, hope to update our readers with any news they may wish to pass on about this development.

A Moving Ceremony at Manor Lodge

Husband remembers wife of 60 years by unveiling plaque at Manor Lodge Care Home

The husband of a lady who was a former resident at the Chelmsford nursing and residential home, Manor Lodge, has made a return visit to remember his wife by unveiling a plaque in her memory.

George Reincke was so impressed by the care his wife, Amy, received at the Care UK run Manor Lodge that he made a substantial donation to the home, which paid for raised flower beds in the gardens. The plaque is attached to one of the planters.

Amy and George Reincke were married for 60 years. Amy was born in Woking, Surrey, and the couple met when they were both 15 years old. The couple had four children and many grandchildren and great grandchildren. Amy was diagnosed with dementia four and a half years ago and was also a diabetic. She was only at Manor Lodge for three weeks before she was moved to hospital where she died in June of this year.



Mr George Reincke stands next to the Plaque commemorating his wife Amy and her love for gardens.

Amy loved gardening with a passion and was known to many as the 'fuschia lady' because of her beautiful display of fuscias. She also handmade her family's wedding & bridesmaids' dresses, as well as the wedding cakes. She was a particularly resourceful lady. She loved her caravan club, flowers, watching the birds, nicely presented meals and talking about the past.

(Continued overleaf)

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George, who has been twice decorated by the Queen and has chauffeured the royal family on several occasions, said: "I was delighted with the care my wife received at Manor Lodge. It was delivered with sincerity and affection and I would like to thank and congratulate all the nursing staff involved."

Sue Oates, Services Development Manager of Manor Lodge, said: "Amy was only with us for a short time but she made a great impression on everyone here at Manor Lodge. George's generous and substantial donation will mean Amy will live on in our thoughts for many years and we sincerely thank him for it."

At the placing of the plaque, Richard Pearman, a director at Care UK, spoke about Amy's life. The afternoon was attended by Amy and George's family and friends, many of the residents and their relatives, and staff and the executive team from Care UK Residential Care Services. Manor Lodge is a newly built, contemporary care home that was officially opened by celebrity gardener, Charlie Dimmock, in March this year. The raised flowerbeds allow keen gardeners to continue pursuing their hobby.

Partnership in Action

We are always pleased to hear from our members and looking to build up active dialogue with both those who support people considering or living in residential care and those who provide it.

It was good to hear, therefore, of some fruitful discussion between Helpline Manager, Chris Ardill, and Jean Dolmor, who manages St. Dominic's Care Home in Kelvedon. On this occasion it was Chris who needed information and Jean went to some trouble to provide it.

St. Dominic's is one of our most active Corporate members, with residents and relatives routinely informed about the Association and encouraged to make use of the Helpline. We understand that the feedback has been excellent.

Thank you, Jean!

Working together.....

Simon Morton, Chair of Southend OPA, writes:

Delighted that Southend's Older People's Assembly is now a corporate partner of this, the Relatives and Residents Association (Essex) This will create a significant milestone in how communication can develop between groups.



Nikki Donovan and Tom Cooper, from the Association, made a presentation at our recent public meeting, Tom presenting a charming monologue surrounding ageism which we will encapsulate in our own newsletter. (Also available on the Home Page of our website)

Now is the opportunity to embark on aspirations for improvements in the services we receive. The Assembly for Southend has a large remit of issues that are on the development calendar and aspiring to what the Government programme set out for local authorities, it's seen as not just a talking shop or ticking box exercise, but an arena for dedicated involvement. Southend West MP David Amess addressed our members and gave a substantive support to what the voices of assemblies in the community can achieve. We'll continue to press for reform in areas that affect our well being.

The importance of membership to this Association is a means to, not only establish, but sustain communication with a share of information. The service offered as part of our remit to Southend residents will be an asset to our members. As volunteers, we are all concerned about the well being of our neighbours.

As with the Thurrock conference, which we were delighted to be part of, this means another chapter has been turned for community cohesion and echo the sentiments displayed at this conference, making stronger voices in the communities. Clearly what we need now is the action for those in power to react accordingly on what the voters want. The ballot box is imminent and there are 11 million of us now!



News from “My Home Life”

In our last Newsletter we reported on this project, which is part of a national initiative headed by Help the Aged and the City University. It's objective is to promote, support and encourage improvements in the quality of life for older people living in care homes. In Essex, Project Manager Jan Lockyer is working with Tom Owen, the national Director of the My home Life project to promote this objective in the County.

A group of twelve Care Home managers are participating in a training and action learning programme designed to support them in identifying and putting into action various projects within their own homes. At the same time, they have supported each other and shared their ideas and experiences. Feedback from the managers involved has been very appreciative; so much so that further programmes are planned.

“Inclusion and Outreach”

The intention of this part of the programme is to promote the availability to care home residents of the kinds of facilities, services and opportunities that enhance the quality of life for all of us. We are also keen to encourage and support the integration of care home residents with their surrounding communities.



To this end, a group of managers from other services, including schools, libraries, the Youth Service etc. is meeting to develop a range of ideas about ways in which they can help to maintain and improve the quality of life for residents. This may mean collaborating as partners with care homes in new projects or simply finding ways to make sure residents have the best possible access to the kinds of services and facilities that exist to enhance the quality of life for all of us.

In these partnerships, the emphasis is always on “mutual benefit”. In our discussions and researches we have come across all kinds of innovative projects where people don't just “work with” residents, but **join** with them in activities that all can enjoy and from which all can benefit.

One project in Oxfordshire, for example, had primary school children teaching residents to use digital cameras so that they could record their activities and also set up their own portrait exhibition – older and younger people together. By all accounts, everyone had a great time. Of course, an album of photographs of the various other activities residents are involved in can provide an excellent talking point when families and friends visit, especially for those whose memories may not be as good as they were.



Especially popular was the use of Photoshop to give some of the portraits a background that represented some aspect of the older person's past life. This, of course, got everyone talking and reminiscing as children and residents learned about each other – their interests, concerns and the lives they had led or looked forward to leading



And this is at the heart of the project – the fact that older people have so much to offer the communities in which they live, if the opportunities are still there for them.

Would You Like to Know More?

Since we started work on this part of the Programme we have come across all kinds of excellent ideas and examples of creative and imaginative practice in Essex. (Unfortunately the project is not operating in Southend or Thurrock, although we are happy to hear about good practice wherever it is to be found) We have been very heartened, both by the enthusiasm of care home managers and also by the very positive responses we have encountered from people involved in providing other services and facilities. One of our key tasks is to help make the links between potential partners on both sides.

If you manage a Care Home and would be interested in knowing more about this project, or if you would be willing to share your own ideas and experiences, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please contact Janet Russell
E Mail: russell.jm@btinternet.com
Telephone: 01621 868984

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Care Services News

We have learned of several developments in the past few months that may be of interest to our members, partners and friends. For more information, please contact the relevant services directly.

Essex Guardians

The Essex Guardians provide a legal service to vulnerable people who are not able to manage their own funding because of dementia or similar mental health problems and have no family to help them do this. Under a 'Court of Protection Order' they look after the best financial interests of the individual. The Guardians can also help carers with the responsibility for managing the financial affairs of a friend or relative.

For more information:

E Mail: ess@essex.gov.uk
Telephone: 01245 434277

Rural communities in Mid -Essex welcome Village Agents

An exciting new pilot Project providing older people with easy access to services and information went live on Thursday 15th October, launching in 12 rural communities in Mid Essex. The new Village Agents have been working in villages in Braintree, Maldon and Chelmsford, introducing themselves to local residents to let them know how they can make full use of their knowledge, contacts and expertise and improve their access to health and wellbeing services in the County.



Recruited locally the Village Agents have an abundance of information at their fingertips and can arrange for Statutory, non-Statutory, Voluntary or Community Sector services to contact individuals or groups to provide help and support.

Providing trusted links makes it possible for the Village Agents to support healthier, happy and safer independent living whilst also enabling organisations to develop even more efficient and effective services.

Brian Goodwin, the Village Agents' Manager, says *"The Village Agents are providing a really important service, working in the heart of communities to connect isolated, older people to key services that they may not have otherwise known about, as well as providing them with a locally trusted friend who they can rely on. Information and advice is important to enable older people to remain independent in their home. Over the next few months we hope to achieve a lasting change in communities, as we arrange activity like practical checks to ensure home safety, pension advice and benefit checks and organise local events to bring people together."*

The pilot is being funded in partnership between Essex County Council, the Braintree Local Strategic Partnership and NHS Mid Essex, who commissioned the Rural Community Council of Essex to deliver and manage the scheme. The project will be monitored closely and evaluated over the next 18 months. If it is successful and attracts further funding, it is hoped that Village Agents may then be introduced in other parts of the County.



The first Village Agents pose for a group portrait

For further information or to arrange a meeting with an Agent anyone can call Village Agents free on: 0800 9775858 or visit: www.villageagentsessex.org.uk

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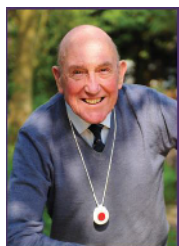
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The Essex Telecare Home Safety Service Pledge

The Essex Telecare Home Safety Service offers residents the opportunity to take advantage of a 24 hours a day, 365 day a year home safety and personal reassurance package.

Telecare helps people who are elderly or vulnerable to be independent by bringing health and social care services directly into their homes, enabling them to call for help or assistance when they need it.

The Service involves the provision of a range of unobtrusive Telecare sensors, which link to a 24 hour a day monitoring centre. All that is required is a telephone line and an electrical power point. Should a Telecare sensor be activated, an alert is sent to the monitoring centre where trained advisors take the most appropriate action, whether it be contacting a family member, neighbour, doctor, mobile warden or the emergency services.



Telecare provides a comprehensive way of managing the risks to a person's health and home environment and can give increased peace of mind to carers, who can be safe in the knowledge that if an incident, such as a fall, were to occur they could be alerted immediately.

As part of its commitment to provide a better quality of life, Essex County Council has pledged to offer free Telecare services to new users aged 85 and over. Until 31 March 2010, those residents who enjoy the freedom of living in their own home but want the peace of mind of knowing support is available at the touch of a button can register for free Telecare Home Safety Services. Telecare services are also being offered free for three months to all other residents.



Another Telecare service – a device to help avoid bogus callers

For more information about **Telecare**:

Call 0845 603 7630;

Visit www.essex.gov.uk/telecare

Or e-mail telecare@essex.gov.uk

“Deprivation of Liberty” - Need to Know More?

In our last newsletter we included an article by Best Interests Assessor Carol Sacker on her work with care homes on issues relating to deprivation of liberty.

Carol has let us know that she will be pleased to visit homes to give a brief talk to residents, relatives and staff on this topic.

If you would like to know more, please contact Carol on her mobile phone: 07813619669 or email her at bolyana@tiscali.co.uk

A man's age is something impressive, it sums up his life: maturity reached slowly and against many obstacles, illnesses cured, griefs and despairs overcome, and unconscious risks taken; maturity formed through so many desires, hopes, regrets, forgotten things, loves. A man's age represents a fine cargo of experiences and memories. ~ Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, *Wartime Writings 1939-1944*, translated from French by Norah Purcell

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Mini Feature 3 – Abuse of Older People



In our last newsletter we reported the establishment of the new helpline for vulnerable adults suffering abuse and for those who may suspect that someone is being abused. (AskSAL)

Now that the helpline is up and running, we have been asked to publish this “refresher” in order to help keep the issue at the forefront of our minds and make sure we know what to do if we come across it.

Ask SAL – The Safeguarding Adults Line – 0808 80 10 345

The helpline, launched in June, is operated by experienced and friendly helpline staff primarily as a source of information and advice in situations where callers have concerns that abuse may be occurring. Staff will however, when asked, and if necessary, follow the correct procedures to ensure that a safeguarding referral is made to statutory services. The 0808 number cannot be traced on electronic or paper telephone bills.

Given a moment or two most people can recall the names of children who have suffered as a result of abusive relationships, all of whom have their own tragic stories. Many have become household names because they have, rightly or wrongly, become the subject of wide scale and often national media campaigns.

But what if we switch the focus to adults? Though modern media rarely focuses upon the abuse of vulnerable adults it does happen, and we should not hide behind the smokescreen caused by a lack of media coverage. Everybody, regardless of age, possesses the right to live their lives without suffering at the hands of an abuser. Unfortunately this right isn't always realised; last year in Essex around 1500 referrals of adult abuse were made, and we'd be foolish to assume the abuse stopped there.

Can you help?

Save the number in your phone, This is vitally important if you have regular contact with an adult who may be at particular risk of suffering abuse of any kind. Start to think outside of the box; though you may not witness any form of abuse in person there is no harm in keeping an eye out for certain signs, especially if you are concerned. Changes in behaviour can often occur as a result of different types of abuse, signs that somebody is being neglected are often the most obvious. But there are more subtle indications that other types of abuse may be occurring; are valuable items starting to go missing without explanation? This is just one potential sign of financial abuse but there are many more.



For more information visit www.asksal.org.uk or become a fan of our Facebook page. To have the number sent to you in a text message, text ASKSAL to 60777.

Remember, ignoring abuse is not an option!

Contact Details

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