

Update

Newsletter of Wales' Oldest Organisation for Retired People Issue No. 35 June 2019

Thoughts from the Chair

Our AGM and Conference was very successful this year. This is a list of the Motions agreed by Delegates. Some, like the Free TV Licence and Public Toilets, are already in the news.

Please send in your comments on any of the motions and we will try to print them in the next Newsletter



Seven Sisters OAP

That mobility scooter users be encouraged to wear yellow fluorescent coats when on the roads

Penygroes OAP

That motorbike users and cyclists be required to wear visibility jackets

Penygroes OAP

That state retirement pension should provide more than subsistence income

Tonypandy and District OAP Association

That the free TV licence scheme for over 75s be retained

Tonypandy and District OAP Association

To raise awareness and protest that some retail outlets and venues will no longer accept cash payments

Darran Valley Over 55 Club

That local councils be encouraged to produce public toilet strategies as soon as possible

Darran Valley Over 55 Club

That more dog waste bins to be provided on dog walk areas to cut down on mess

Darran Valley Over 55 Club

To encourage more notices and education regarding street cleaning and litter collection

Cwmdare Branch

That bus passes be extended to rail travel for older people and disabled people

Cwmdare Branch

That the pavement parking ban is enforced in the interests of vulnerable groups

Hirwaun OAP

That services such as the Probation Service, the Prison Service, domestic staff in hospitals and in particular the assessment services for PIP and Universal Credit all to be taken back in-house by the Government

We are trying to improve our Active Wales newsletter. You will see articles written by people with some influence on older people's lives. This month we have something from our President Baroness Gale and from the Assembly Member for Torfaen Lynne Neagle.

Look out for a contribution from your own AM in future newsletters.

Please make sure that all Branch members get a chance to read this newsletter.

Afterwards, feel free to pass it on to non-members who might be interested.

Life in the Lords

Our President Baroness Anita Gale: There is never a dull moment in the



House of Lords Looking at activities for the past month it started with a debate to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the D DAY landing. What a huge debt we owe to these brave people. Something we can all be proud especially during these turbulent days we are having since the Brexit referendum. Whichever side of the fence we are on most people will be glad when it is all settled.

Most of the business in the Chamber currently is holding debates on some very interesting topics. This is because the government is dealing with Brexit so very little legislation is coming through.

I have been speaking in two, dealing with topics I have a special interest in. One, on what the government is doing to improve matters for victims of domestic abuse and violence. In this area the issues around elder abuse is one that is often hidden away and not spoken about. Perhaps as an organisation for older people it's something we should be in the forefront of, at least looking at it and showing through publicity where help and support can be given.

The other was an issue arising from a conference in Canada called Women Deliver where 4,000 women attended. I wasn't there but listening to those who were, gave such a good account of how we can all go forward in terms of getting the best deal for all women. TV licences is a hot topic as I sure you are all aware. Already there is much debate and reaction to the idea of the free licence being withdrawn for people over the age of 75. The idea that the BBC must now bear the responsibility for it is rather strange as up until now it's been the government. There is already much campaigning to get the decision reversed. It's good to know that Active Wales is in the forefront on this. There will be a Private Member's Bill introduced by Lord Foulkes on amending Digital Economy Act 2017 which brought this legislation in to force. Unless the government gives Parliamentary time it's unlikely it will become an Act.

Another great debate was introduced by Lord John Bird who founded Big Issue. He is such an inspiring speaker its always a pleasure to hear him speak. The debate was called Policy Making, Future Generations Interests. I felt very proud that he mentioned the work of the Future Generations Commissioner in Wales. Many countries in the world are looking at how its all working out and considering copying Wales. The United Nations said of our Future Generations Commission "What Wales does today the world will do tomorrow" Praise indeed.

One of my interests in Parliament is Parkinson's

I formed the All-Party Parliamentary Group in Parkinson's 10 years ago which I co-chair. The aim of the group is to keep Parkinson's on the Parliamentary agenda. We do so in several ways by asking questions, holding debates and meeting Ministers.

I recently attended a conference in Cardiff in my role as Co-Chair of the group organised by Rubicon Dance a charity based in Cardiff. It was all about how to help people with Parkinson's through dance and movement which helps with mobility and balance and much more. I learned so much, it was a great day and pleased I could be there to speak about my work in Parliament and hope that we go some way to help people.

I wonder what next month will bring, one thing is certain, we will have a new Prime Minister.

What's got your Goat?

Lynne Neagle AM for Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney has her say

Inquiry launched into hospital dementia care

Lynne Neagle AM for Torfaen has her say. *She is chair of the Assembly's Children, Young People and Education Committee – one of the Assembly's key committees and a member of the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee.*



When a person living with dementia is admitted to hospital they are often at their most vulnerable and their health can deteriorate rapidly on admission. That is why the National Assembly's Cross Party Group on Dementia recently launched an inquiry into hospital care for people living with dementia.

There are 45,000 people with dementia in Wales and the latest figures from the Alzheimer's Society show that at least a quarter of hospital beds are occupied by people with dementia. On average, people with dementia stay more than twice as long in hospital as other patients aged over 65. It is widely acknowledged that an unnecessarily lengthy stay in hospital can increase the risk of a person losing their independent living skills. A lack of understanding about dementia among medical staff can have a significantly adverse effect on the experience of the patient.

The inquiry, which was launched towards the end of last year and runs to the end of this summer, is designed to examine if Welsh Government's Dementia Action Plan, launched last year with pledges to take action to improve hospital care for people living with dementia, is making a difference. The inquiry is gathering evidence from people affected by dementia, their carers' and professional organisations to understand the current state of hospital care for people living with dementia and assess the effectiveness of Welsh Government's recommendations.

In my role as an Assembly Member, I have long been committed to improving the quality of life for people living with dementia. It is an issue that is particularly close to my heart and one that I have really enjoyed working in partnership with Torfaen Council to support its work to make Torfaen Dementia Friendly. The aim of the hospital inquiry is to shine a light on the challenges across Wales and to make recommendations to the Welsh Government for improvements. I have heard too many stories of people with dementia becoming distressed and receiving poor care while in hospital not to do something. That is why I am really pleased the cross party group is holding this inquiry.

So far we have heard from more than 200 individuals through the online survey, held roundtable discussions in Wrexham, Newport and Anglesey as well as Pontypool in my own constituency. In our evidence sessions we have heard from academics and professional organisations including the Royal College of Psychiatrists, the Royal College of Nursing and Macmillan.

Issues raised have included a lack of knowledge and understanding of dementia by medical staff, an over use of antipsychotics, malnourishment because of inappropriate food and mealtime practices, missed medication and a loss of dignity around toileting and continence. We want to hear from people all over Wales so that we can understand the scale of the challenge and work with Welsh Government in the implementation of its Dementia Action Plan to make sure hospital care for people living with dementia is appropriate and compassionate.

If you are living with dementia and have experienced hospital care, then we want to hear from you. We are particularly keen to hear from people affected by dementia, third sector organisations including those representing carers, healthcare professionals and professional bodies and healthcare and service providers. Share your experiences by completing the online survey at smartsurvey.co.uk/s/CPGIquiry/. Alternatively, you can submit written evidence. Written submissions should be no more than 1,000 words and state clearly who the submission is from. Please include a brief description of yourself/your organisation.

Submit your evidence by email to walescpg@alzheimers.org.uk or by post
FAO Sophie
Douglas, Alzheimer's Society Cymru, David Street Bridgend Industrial Estate, Bridgend, Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr, United Kingdom, CF31 3TP

Down and Dirty with the Branches

Darran Valley 55 Club

As usual we hit the ground running at the start of 2019 with a 3 course lunch at the end of January provided by outside caterers at our community centre.

From March to November each year we usually enjoy a monthly day trip or sometimes a theatre trip to Cardiff Millennium Centre. In March of this

year we all enjoyed a performance of The Full Monty, this was preceded by an enjoyable lunch.

Our day trips are always welcomed and enjoyed by all members providing an excuse to dress up (a bit), enjoy good company and coach ride through the country to our destination. On these trips we often enjoy shopping, a pub lunch, afternoon tea, boat trips or whatever takes your fancy on the day really.

We have also been part of a project called **Memories in a Box** with members providing photographs and memorabilia from World War 1 which was included in the exhibition.

We are also sponsoring the daughter of one of our fellow members who will be walking 25km over the Thames bridges to raise money for the Multiple Sclerosis Society.

Our club in Deri has gone from strength to strength and our fortnightly meetings and monthly trips are welcomed and appreciated by the older people of Deri and the surrounding areas.

Long may it flourish and grow.

As before, Branches are encouraged to send in news of their activities to share with others. Photographs are especially welcome. You will find contributions from Darran Valley 55 Club, Cwmdare Branch, Llanharan Branch and Penygroes Branch in this newsletter.

Individual members can also send in their comments on articles in the newsletter or even their own views on topics of interest to older people. This will help us to make the newsletter a success.

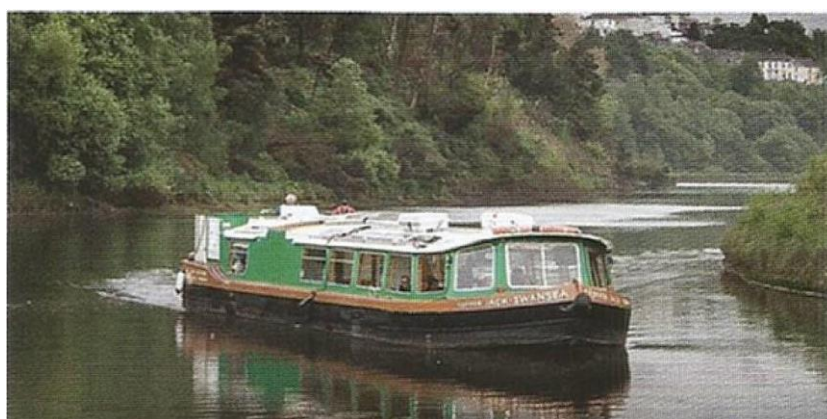
Suggestions are always welcome

Cwmdare Branch



After our disastrous end of last year, we are now back on track. The photo shows our May Spring Buffet which everyone enjoyed. Committee members shown Catherine Mann (in green) Marion Williams, Delma Hill (retired Sec), Ray Woodford, Olive Kerwickie (Retired Treasurer)

Llanharan Branch



Members recently visited Swansea and spent a pleasant afternoon cruising up the river Tawe. They were on the Swansea Community Boat Trust "Copper Jack" They took in Swansea's historic industrial heritage, the passing scenery and riverbank wildlife.

In July we will be paying a visit to Clevedon with a carvery lunch served in a railway carriage.

We recently had a talk from Mr Ben Ashenden from the Co-op Estate Planning Department. The talk was entitled "Tax, Care and Toy boys. Members found it very interesting and constructive. We would recommend other branches to take advantage of this free talk.

Penygroes Branch

On March 7th, at our St David's Day celebration, we were entertained by Penygroes School Choir. All the songs were sung in Welsh.

In our May meeting we were visited by the Ysgol Meithrin. They entertained us with a variety of Welsh nursery rhymes.

Help Wanted

As we have said in the past, we are always happy to welcome members to our Executive Meetings in Aberdare. We would particularly appreciate members who could offer help in carrying out the work of the Executive. Travel and other expenses are paid in these circumstances. Please get in touch if you are interested:

Chair John Davies: 01685 812130 activewales@gmail.com

Secretary Ann Vincent: 01443 820601 activewalessec@gmail.com

More information about Active Wales

Facebook search for **Active Wales**

Twitter @activewales1

Website activewales.org.uk

Active Wales is supported by a grant from the Welsh Government

.Our Annual Conference and Rally are sponsored by Community Pharmacy Wales



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Thanks to both for their continuing support