

'A Voice for Older People in Gloucestershire'

Annual Report

Annual General Meeting 30th September 2008

Civil Service Club Cheltenham

10.30am - 3.30pm



REPORT FROM THE CHAIR Judith Ellis

We hope that you like our new logo! We have a new look website and decided to rethink our publicity.

It also marked our registration as a charity, at last. The difficulty lay in ensuring that the Charity Commission did not see our role as campaigning but as supporting older people to have a voice. The objects were finally agreed and we are now in a stronger position to apply for much-needed funding from charitable trusts.

Our POPP partnership has been the significant activity of 2007-08 and we look forward to building on this progress in the second year. The two-year timescale imposed by the Department of Health carries so much pressure on local organisations to employ and induct new staff, to develop networks and promote new activities. We now have POPP funding to employ a Forum Co-ordinator who will develop local forums across the county. Working with older people is not a venture to be rushed – but we are seeing some changes and look forward to reporting real success at the end of the project in 2009.

The Advocacy Scheme has had a difficult time during the year; the grant from Gloucestershire County Council was cut by 40% pending their review of all the county advocacy services and we did not feel able to appoint a permanent Co-ordinator. Freddie Cook, one of our volunteers, ably took over on a short-term contract from Diana Simon, who also had helped maintain the service but at a limited level. Even so, GOPA was subsidising the service but with the hope that a new contract from the County Council would be negotiated. GOPA is involved in discussions about the new Advocacy Strategy and we hope that this much-needed service for older people in the community can be expanded. In the meantime we secured agreement with POPP to provide an advocacy service for older people in care homes and we were pleased to appoint Katey Nixon, who came with a good background in advocacy and the enthusiasm to develop this initiative. We are grateful to Diana Simon who gave interim support to the scheme and managed Katey's induction. The two advocacy schemes are now being managed by Katey and we hope that during the coming year new contracts will secure their future.

At the time of writing this Report we are saddened by the loss of Bob Stanbanks, who was a founder member of GOPA and recently our Treasurer. Many of our Committee are long-standing members of GOPA and are active in other organisations of older people: we welcome their time, experience and expertise for GOPA which is invaluable. Finally, I am very grateful to Mick Churchward and Sharon Swift for the immense effort that they have put in during this past year of GOPA's change and expansion.

We have challenging times ahead!

Advocacy Report Katey Nixon Advocacy Coordinator

In the early part of the year our coordinator Jeanette Bates left the organisation and we had two temporary coordinators, first Diana Simon and the Freddy Cook who GOPA thanks for managing the service.

In January 2008, I was appointed as Advocacy Coordinator. I first trained in advocacy in March 2003 with Jeanette Bates, and have previously worked as a Volunteer Advocate with CATG and then for two years as a Volunteer Coordinator and Social Care Support Worker with Gloucestershire Lifestyles. Before this I worked in computing.

This role has proved to be a very enjoyable and I am very enthusiastic to progress and grow the scheme within the county. I have also completed a Certificate in Health and Social Care with the Open University which has given me valuable knowledge that I draw upon in this role.



Team Photo: From left to right: Rachel Shelly, Margaret Breckell, Freddy Cook, Daphne Pearson and Katey Nixon.

As the new POPP Advocacy Coordinator I am bringing an enhanced advocacy service to care homes in the County as well as continuing the County Council funded advocacy scheme. As part of the POPP project, we are now establishing better links with care homes a number of which have advocates who visit on a regular basis to talk to staff and residents. In addition, we have established links with discharge teams in the hospitals across the county in order that cases are referred to us at an earlier stage in the advocacy process.

In 2007/8 we handled a total of 22 advocacy cases of which 9 were male and 13 female. The number of cases handled was disappointingly down on previous years, largely due to the decrease in our funding from the county council. However we managed to secure funding for advocacy for care homes from the POPP project which meant that this situation was addressed and numbers rose towards the end of the year.

We are looking forward to greatly increased numbers of cases during the next financial year. However, whilst

we interviewed two new volunteer advocates in March 2007 we are striving to increase the number of our volunteer advocates.

Gloucestershire Service Users Forum

After two and a half successful years of taking the SUF forward and achieving a considerable amount Sam Hoad decided it was time to move her career in a different direction. All the service user reps, the many people she supported, the staff at Mencap and GOPA, along with Management team of the Forum wish her every success. Nadia Novali was appointed early in April 2008 and will no doubt be as successful in developing the Service, but no doubt in a different way.

Older Persons' Advisory Group South West (OPAGSW) Pearl Harris-Clarke

Four meetings have been held this last year & one Planning Conference all in Taunton.

OPAGSW is part of Better Government for Older People (BGOP). This a partnership of older people working alongside local, regional, national, UK Government & public agencies. The purpose of which is to engage older people in the decision making processes that affect their lives. Representatives from Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Plymouth, Somerset, Torbay & Wiltshire have contributed to some lively discussions on a wide variety of topics, e.g. closures of Post offices, local Pharmacies, Day Centres, Transport problems, Change over to Digital TV, Direct Payments & Continuing Care.

The OPAGSW Action Plan for 2008-9 covers all those topics together with Changes in Care Homes, Volunteering, Pensions and Fuel Poverty.

Considerable value has been gained from exchange of ideas to help older people in both urban & rural areas such as Village Agents in the Cotswolds, Care Home Hub in Stroud, Complex Care Team developed in Tavistock and now spreading throughout Devon. Care Direct staffed by ex care workers is being established in Kingsbridge & it is hoped that 50% of patients will be dealt with over the phone, while Sure Health Care is signing up people unable to make contact on the phone. Dorset POPPS have developed some 13 Forums for Healthy Minds & Healthy Bodies.

The September meeting has been postponed until after the report of the BGOP Review.

The UN International Day for Older Persons is on 1st October & it is hoped that some local celebrations will take place up to 27/28 October based on Opportunity Age. This will give local areas a chance to feed back their successes with POPP's, Black History and BGOP's 10 years of existence.

April 2007 – March 2008

The year under review has been one of consolidation with the implementation of a number of activities which have long been in the planning stage.

Elizabeth Price-Jones became an area representative during the year, attending GOPA committee meetings and assisting with local activities and organisation.

GOPA members have attended the regional Arts in Health meeting, GAVCS's Trustees Taking the Lead conference, and Stroud District's Health and Wellbeing meetings. An interesting presentation at Stroud College "Comparing and Sharing" experiences of Older Persons Care in the UK and Scandinavia also provided practical insights into different care models.

The final publication of the national "Dignity in Care" consultation findings included evidence provided by Older People living in the Stroud area.

Most significantly was the great emotional stress caused to an older single lady undertaking Chemotherapy in a mixed sex ward in Cheltenham. It is hoped that this evidence will impact on future NHS policy. Counterbalancing this were positive reports from Patients and their families following post-stroke care on the specialised unit at Gloucester Royal Hospital, and convalescent and End of Life care at Stroud District Hospital.

Representatives of older people at the inaugural Forum meeting in March 2008 included U3A, Care Home and Day Care providers, older person's carers and long term NHS users. The Forum development is part of a Service Level Agreement between GOPA and SDC, whose financial input will be supporting the role of Forum Coordinator, a GOPA post due to be filled early in the next financial year.

Having representation on the local LSP and the Board of Modernising Day Care Services again strengthens GOPA's position in the consultative and decision making process. The Stroud group participate in the regional Older Person's Advisory Group (South West OPAG), which is part of Better Government for Older People. Stroud is now the hub for this organisation, as Dilys Warren – SDC Health and Wellbeing officer is now the Regional Coordinator for SWOPAG.

GOPA's full involvement with the POPP's programme has impacted on our area; Care Homes have participated in the additional specific training available with quantifiable results.

In Uplands, a suburb of Stroud, a care home

is developing outreach services to the community – such as hot meal provision, and care home day bathing facilities, as well as convalescent care. A Health and Wellbeing Hub is being developed round the Care Home, and it is planned to launch this initiative in June 2008 with community support.

From small beginnings in the Stroud area, GOPA's role is steadily evolving and playing an increasing part in the lives of Older People.

Gloucestershire Carers

Ann Attwood

On the GOPA Committee I am the Carer Representative. At its inception, Carers Gloucestershire were asked to send a representative. As I cared for my parents over a number of years I was happy to do this. I still am a carer for our son. He has Downs' Syndrome and lives at home.

I have found huge support from GOPA on Carers Issues for older people. Along with the P.C.T. older peoples' committee which I also sit on and GOPA, I have been involved with POPPs, particularly with food and nutrition.

I have been amazed how this has benefited older people not only in care homes but in hospital, this will surely benefit those at home too.



The members involved in advocacy and running Day Care situation are doing sterling work. Much of this I've been able to share with other family and unpaid carers, after all we want the best for the person we care for.

For many years I have been fortunate to work on night duty as a Midwife in Cheltenham General Hospital (this has meant that my husband and I can share the care of our son) I also did my general training at Cheltenham.

In April this year, I retired, as the ECHO put it "The oldest serving midwife at 69yrs" It was a sad time, leaving amazing supportive colleagues and a lovely job but retirement has to come to all of us.

Partnership for Older People's Project

In late 2006 GOPA sought the views of older people regarding their attitude on possible short stays in care homes and this, together with the pilot work of the forerunner of the Care Home Support Team in the Forest of Dean, formed the basis of the POPP bid.

Since then a great deal has happen right across the County with development of Hubs, Small Grants opportunities, Facilitators and Advocates.

Facilitators, and others have been speaking to older people, but most of all listening to them, seeking their views about the type of services that they would like to have in their locality. This information is being used in a number of ways.

Hubs are essentially the sharing of facilities and services that can be made available to older local people, collectively from care homes, day centres and sheltered accommodation.

The Small Grants, available to care homes meeting specific criteria, which includes being able to sustain the service after POPP and a strong indicating of the number of older people who will benefit from the newly provided service. Both of these innovative approaches to services will reflect the input from the

Care Home Support Team and the identified need of services as expressed by older people.

In encouraging the providers of these local services to open their "doors" to more local people we believe that the title of the POPP programme 'Gloucestershire Care Homes part of our community' is to be met.

Moreover, the very strong concerns put forward by older people in October 2006, with regard to their fears of entering a care home will be reduced.

Indeed the work carried out by the Care Home Support Team, together with many hours of training for care home staff has had a significantly positive impact within many of the care homes.

Now a short stay in a care home would be more likely to be viewed as a convalesce stay, not unlike the services enjoyed in the 60's and 70's.

When one considers that Gloucestershire has less than ten hospitals and over 170 care homes, then it just might just be an easier and much better option to have your rehabilitation in a care near your home.

GOPA will continue to involve as many older people as possible in the Project, so do please invite us to come and listen to your views.

GOPA would like to thank Gloucestershire County Council, Gloucester City Council, Stroud District Council, Cotswold District Council, Henry Smith Charity and Senseon respectively, for their financial and technical support

Gloucestershire Older Persons' Assembly (GOPA) 2008/09

Chair	Judith Ellis	Cotswolds
Deputy Chair	Pearl Harris-Clarke	Gloucester
Treasurer	Vacant	
Committee	Roy Ansley	Tewkesbury
	Jan Baynham	Forest of Dean
	Margaret Breckell	Forest of Dean
	Ruth Darbon	Cotswolds
	Paul Harries	Gloucester
	Grace Marshall	Cheltenham
	Jim Rollinson	Cheltenham
	Elizabeth Price-Jones	Stroud
	Pamela Tawse	Stroud
	Bernard Westcarr	Gloucester
	Jim Young	Gloucester
Non voting Representatives	Ann Attwood	Carers Gloucestershire
	Clare Davis	Corporate Consultation Manager Gloucestershire County Council
	Bill Wragge	Cotswold District Council
Staff (none voting)	Mick Churchward (P/T)	GOPA Manager
	Katey Nixon (P/T)	Advocacy Co-ordinator
	Merci Rebat. (F/T)	Forum Co-ordinator
	Sharon Swift (P/T)	Administrator
Volunteers	Margaret Breckell; Anne Collier; Freddie Cook; Judith Ellis; Ai Chin Foxen; Pearl Harris-Clarke; Pauline Hicks; Joyce Kelsey; Ron Kelsey Daphne Pearce; Jim Rollinson; Rosemary Seaton; Rachel Shelley; .	

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