

'A Voice for Older People in Gloucestershire'

Newsletter

Welcome to GOPA's Winter 2007 newsletter which is being distributed to older people and older people's groups throughout Gloucestershire.



From the Chair — Another year closes and another looms ahead! Hopefully, 2008 will not bring the floods which caused such distress to older people in parts of Gloucestershire.

Looking back over the year, we have seen many developments that involve GOPA, most particularly the POPP project and the Dignity in Care campaign (see more inside). We were disappointed with our efforts to secure funding from local councils in Gloucestershire, except Stroud (£5000) and Gloucester City (£500). The local councils need to engage older people in their decision making, and GOPA can enable this to happen but we cannot do this effectively without funding to support our activities.

This was the message at our Annual General Meeting in October and we were heartened that more volunteers have come forward to join our committee and help us to plan for our long term future.

We have exciting plans for 2008 - new volunteers are being recruited for special roles in the POPP project; we are going to develop the GOPA forums in different localities, and our POPP Advocacy Project will be starting in the New Year (see inside the Newsletter for more information). We hope that YOU will want to join with us in making all this happen.

Judith Ellis



*Seasons Greetings to all the older people of Gloucestershire
and a healthy, wealthy and happy 2008.*

*Please note that the GOPA Office will be closed on 21 December 2007 from 2pm
and will re-open on 2 January 2008 at 9am.*

Keep Warm - Keep Well!

Wearing the right kind of clothes can make all the difference during the winter months, wear several thin layers - this traps body heat better than one thick layer. Outside, wear a hat or headscarf, stay active - moderate exercise, like walking can be very beneficial. Don't forget to check that you've received your winter payment if you are

over 60. Do remember that keeping warm is not just a "winter thing".





Village Agent Awards 2007

A celebration of older people in Gloucestershire was held to coincide with the United Nations International Day of Older People on October 1st 2007.

Village Agents wanted to celebrate the contribution older people make to life in Gloucestershire and highlight the achievements of many of our older citizens.

Ninety nominations from all over the county were made and several winners were presented with Awards. There were five categories:

Community – a volunteer or charity worker who is really making a difference to other people’s lives.

Employment – someone who is earning a living, or starting a new career or enterprise, well past normal retirement age.

Sport and Physical Activity – a regular sports player, dancer or coach for example.

Caring – someone who looks after a partner, friend or a group of people – the county’s unsung heroes.

Challenge – someone who has gone that extra mile, overcome illness, shown remarkable bravery or risen to a challenge beyond expectations.

As there were so many nominations some of the categories were subdivided as it was impossible to find just a few winners out of so many worthy nominations. The Award winners were proud to be recognised for their achievements which so frequently go un-noticed by the wider community.

And the Winners Were.....

<u>Award</u>	<u>Name</u>
Special Award on Behalf of Mindsong	Shirley Owen
Community - Lunch Club	Dora Matthews
Community - Husband & Wife	Paddy & Peggy Thompson
Community - Individual	Nanette Bevan
Community - Volunteer	Pamela Tawse (pictured)
Community - Group	Stow Disability Association
Challenge - Winner	David Jones
Carer	Aileen Calvert
Employment	Eileen Tyndall
Sport - Oldest Sports Player	Martin Kelly
Sport - Male Winner	Syd Wheeler
Sport - Female Winner	Barbara Gregson



BE AWARE !!!!!!!

Christmas is coming and you need to be aware of the following scam, which has been confirmed by Royal Mail and the Trading Standards Office.



A card is posted through your door from a company called PDS (Parcel Delivery Service) suggesting that they were unable to deliver a parcel and that you need to contact them on 0906 6611911 (Premium rate number) DO NOT call this number, as this is a mail scam originating in Belize. If you call this number and you start to hear a recorded message YOU WILL ALREADY HAVE BEEN BILLED £15 FOR THE PHONE CALL. If you do get a card through your door with these details, please contact Royal Mail Fraud on 0207 239 6655 or ICSTIS (the premium rate service regulator) at www.icstis.org.uk

Please circulate this message to your friends and family.

Get Involved with GOPA and POPP



Back Row: Mick Churchward (GOPA Facilitator), Joyce Kelsey, Jim Rollinson, Mollie Edwards, Ron Kelsey, Colette O'Neill (J & C Training)
Front Row: Rosemary Seaton, Chris Donald, Pauline Hicks

This month GOPA recruited the first group of Facilitators whose role will be to visit older people in Care Homes and local communities in order to listen to their views. Following an initial introduction to GOPA and the POPP Project earlier this month the Facilitators have received two training sessions provided by J & C Training.

These sessions focused on enabling older people to speak up about their needs and how they want to be helped to stay independent. The views of older people will contribute to the development of services and they will also be kept informed by the Facilitators, developing a two-way channel of communication and involvement as the POPP project develops.

Opportunities for Older People to carry out research. A team of researchers from the University of the West of England, Bristol (UWE) is carrying out a local evaluation of the Gloucestershire Partnerships for Older People Project (POPP) in Gloucestershire. UWE are keen to offer older people the opportunity to take part in this evaluation as researchers. The two main opportunities are for older people to be involved by:

- Helping care home residents to complete a quality of life questionnaire; and
- Carrying out in-depth interviews with older people about their quality of life.

Could you be an Advocate for Older People? Have you ever been in a position when you wished that you'd said something, but didn't have the courage or confidence to speak up for yourself or the person you care for? GOPA Advocacy Project offers volunteer advocates who help people to resolve difficulties with a variety of situations. A new advocacy project in Care Homes and Hospitals is being set up to assist the elderly. Join in with this worthwhile and rewarding opportunity.

In the future.....



The POPP project will be seeking Older People to train as lay assessors of services in Care Homes, as part of CSCI Inspections. If you have some experience of Care Home services and would be interested in this role please get in touch with GOPA.

Training and support will be provided for all these roles and expenses will be paid.

Contact GOPA now for the volunteering opportunities pack; see back page.



CHELTENHAM SHOPMOBILITY

This is a service provided by Cheltenham Borough Council for anyone of any age who has mobility difficulties.

This year Cheltenham Shopmobility celebrates its 15th birthday having been in existence since 1992. We provide battery operated scooters wheelchairs for a small charge and manual wheelchairs for daily use within the Cheltenham town centre. We can also arrange to meet visitors to Cheltenham at the bus station by prior arrangement.

We are constantly trying to improve our service and have therefore recently added a Portable scooter to our fleet. This scooter is intended for holiday and weekend use. It can be easily taken apart thereby enabling it to be transported in the boot of a car. We, of course, also provide manual wheelchairs for weekly hire.

Our opening times are Monday to Saturday 9:30 am to 4:30 pm with the latest issuing time being 3:30 pm. For registration details etc. please phone our friendly staff at Cheltenham Mobility on 01242 255 333.

If you have a mobility difficulty whether short or long term and would like to visit Cheltenham then please talk to us we will do our best to help.

Come and celebrate Christmas early at Marina Court

Trafalgar Road, off Bredon Road, Tewkesbury, GL20 5AY

We are having a number of open days, on

Tuesday 11 December	10am to 3pm
Friday 14 December	10am to 3pm
Monday 17 December	10am to 3pm
Thursday 20 December	10am to 3pm

**Come and meet the staff and see the
facilities Marina Court has to offer
Refreshments will be available**

Marina Court is a new ExtraCare retirement estate consisting of flats and bungalows to buy and rent for people over 55.

For rental enquiries please telephone: **01249 707000**
For sales enquiries contact our Sales Advisor
on **01684 273983** Thursday – Saturday
or **0870 600 3074** at all other times.

If you or your organisation would like to be involved in the development of the Gloucestershire Older Persons' Assembly and you haven't yet registered your interest, OR feel that you could become a trained advocate, or are in need of advocacy, then please contact: Mick Churchward, or Sharon Swift at : GOPA, 14b Norbury Avenue, Matson, Gloucester, GL4 6AH.

Tel: 01452 313999

Advocacy: 01452 332830

Fax: 01452 312800

email: -info@gopa.org.uk

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Website: www.gopa.org.uk

