

Area North Committee – 27<sup>th</sup> June 2007

## 8. Area North Development - Supporting Older People

*Portfolio Holder:* Councillor Patrick Palmer, Rural Perspective  
*Head of Service:* Charlotte Jones, Head of Area Development (North)  
*Lead Officers:* Shelley Shepherd, Assistant Community Development Worker  
*Contact Details:* Shelley.shepherd@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01458) 257435

### Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on key projects supporting older people during 2006/7, within the work programme of the Area North Community Development Assistant.

### Recommendation

It is **recommended** that Members note and comment on this report

### Background

In February 2006 funding was approved by the Area North Committee to appoint a Community Development Support Worker, to focus on playschemes in Area North and to engage with parishes and communities who are seeking assistance with initiatives involving the elderly and infirm. A report on work with children and young people is included elsewhere in this agenda.

### Report

#### Afternoon Tea – with a difference!

During March this year, four afternoon tea sessions were held with a difference. South Somerset Links Community Transport received a grant from the Area North Community Safety Action Panel to host the events to promote personal health, safety and well being of the elderly.

The main aim was to reach the 'hard to reach' within the local community, to provide a free, informal, and secure afternoon where information and advice could be sought. Providing free transport (with wheelchair and disabled facilities) was key to the afternoons' success, ensuring that even the most isolated elderly members of the community could attend.

Information and advice was available from key partners and local organisations, as well as healthy living initiatives such as neck and shoulder massage.

The locations chosen were within the Somerton and Langport Links Service area.

Please see table below.

Location	No. attended	Information/Facilities available on the day
Ladysmith Somerton Hall,	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FREE Transport</li> <li>• Advice from local Police Community Support Officers, Crime Prevention Officer and Fire Service on: bogus callers, free home fire safety checks &amp; distraction burglaries.</li> <li>• Upper body or hand massage provided by the POPP scheme</li> <li>• Health MOT (SSDC)</li> <li>• Flexercise</li> <li>• Careline Demonstrations</li> <li>• Information on the Handyman Scheme and Well Warm Initiative</li> <li>• FREE afternoon tea, coffee and home baked cakes!</li> </ul>
Ladysmith Somerton Hall,	29	
All Saints Lunch Club, Langport (hot lunch provided)	41	
Robert Sewers Hall, Curry Rivel	34	
<b>Total</b>	<b>129</b>	

The afternoons were a huge success the judging by excellent feedback from those who attended. The Police, Fire Service, Handyman Scheme and the Well Warm Initiative received a large number of referrals and enquiries that would not normally have been received at their main office.

The Community Development Assistant has compiled an audit of 50+ activities and groups in Area North. This is available by parish or collectively. The database is being used by the 'Partnership for Older People' – a partnership (led by Somerset County Council) that aims to establish 50 Active Living Centres by 2008, including within Area North.

The Community Development Assistant will continue to develop strong links with local parishes and communities, and supporting agencies who are seeking assistance with initiatives involving the elderly.

### Implications for Corporate Priorities

**Objective 9:** Identify and address the particular issues affecting rural areas

**Objective 16:** Maintain above 80% the people satisfied with their neighbours as a place to live

### Other implications

Providing support to groups and agencies seeking to support greater activity and inclusion for older people can also contribute to priorities within:

- The Area North Development Plan
- The Somerset Local Area Agreement
- Town and Parish community plans
- Area North Community Safety Action Plan

## **Financial Implications**

None from this report, the provision for a further 12 months of funding for the employment of the Community Development Assistant can be met from within existing Area Development budgets.

***Background Papers:*** *Play and Youth Support report ANC February 2006*

## Active Living Centres in Area North

**Officers representing the Partnership for Older People Project will attend Area North to make a presentation on the Active Living Centre programme. Below is a short briefing paper, provided by the partnership.**

### Background

Age Concern Somerset is working in partnership with Somerset County Council (SCC) and the local Primary Care Trust (PCT) on one of nineteen projects currently running throughout the UK. The Somerset-based project is to set up fifty **Active Living Centres**. The Somerset project has been running for a year, and is scheduled to end in Spring 2008, by which time it is hoped that all or some of the Active Living Centres will be self-sustaining.

Age Concern Somerset has five POPP Teams in place in the county. Each team consists of a POPP Officer (full-time) and a POPP Support Worker (part –time). The South Somerset Team is responsible for a territory, which is co-terminus with the South Somerset District Council (SSDC) area.

### Active Living Centres

Active Living Centres (ALC) are facilities which are set up to promote the physical, mental and social well-being of those in the fifty years and over age group. Elsewhere Active Living Centres have been set up successfully in a number of venues: day centres, village halls, church halls, commercially run cafes, bowling clubs.

The ALC enables the delivery and promotion of a range of activities to the target group, based on their stated interests, which are elicited by discussion and by offering an 'activities questionnaire'.

The ALC provides an opportunity to the partner organisations, e.g., the PCT, to deliver specific health-related advice, information and activities to this important 50+ age group.

### Process for setting up an ALC

The first requirement is to engage with a group, organisation or individual who has access to a suitable venue and a viable number of would-be users.

The establishment of the ALC and an initial session has to be arranged and advertised. This usually involves the provision of an interesting 'taster' activity, likely to appeal to the target audience, so that enthusiasm for the venture can be assessed and initial takers can be asked about other activities they would be interested in.

Given the success of this first session an extended programme of about six months, is designed and publicised, with the ALC opening initially, once a month. This may become more frequent if demand is sufficient. Opening hours are normally 10.30am – 12.30pm.

The POPP team will be involved in the setting up and have a good network of contacts for arranging activity providers; around twenty ALC's already operate in the SSDC area, so the local POPP team have significant experience in this process.

The POPP team will subsequently have a support role and there will be a requirement for a local volunteer co-ordinator to ensure the smooth running of the programme, arranging and confirming activities, organising refreshments, etc.

## **Funding**

The POPP team will fund the initial setting up costs, including hall hire, refreshments and fees for activity providers.

The POPP team also hold funds, which may be available for capital improvements, provision or renewal of equipment, etc., for the venue, which would make it more effective as an ALC. A grant claim form and guidance notes are available on request.