

Blackwood Penmaen Newbridge  
 Pontllanfraith Celligaer Mar  
 Cwmfelinfach Wattsville Fo  
 Waterloo Rudry Rhymney  
 Brithdir Caerphilly Machen  
 Tir-y-Berth Pengam Cefn  
 Hengoed Penybryn Deri Wyl  
 Abercarn Senghenydd Crumlin Yn  
 Abertridwr Trethomas Machen Ri  
 Fochriw Abertysswg Tirphill T

# Natter that Matters

Summer 2018

**OVER 50**  
 CAERPHILLY

NATTER THAT MATTERS



[www.caerphillyover50.co.uk/](http://www.caerphillyover50.co.uk/)



Caerphilly Over 50

1



# A note from our Chairman

**The Caerphilly 50 Plus Forum held its Annual General Meeting and Social Event in the impressive surroundings of the Great Hall in Caerphilly Castle last November.**

It was a very successful event with over 80 people attending including new members, carers, residents of local care homes and representatives of a number of organisations who help older people. Our new Older Peoples Champion Councillor Barbara Jones opened the event. We were also welcomed by the Mayor of Caerphilly Town Council, Simon Morgan.



We had a talk on how to grow Monster Marrows and other giant vegetables from the internationally renowned Kevin Fortey and a variety of modern and classic songs from brilliant young local singer Rio Scibona.

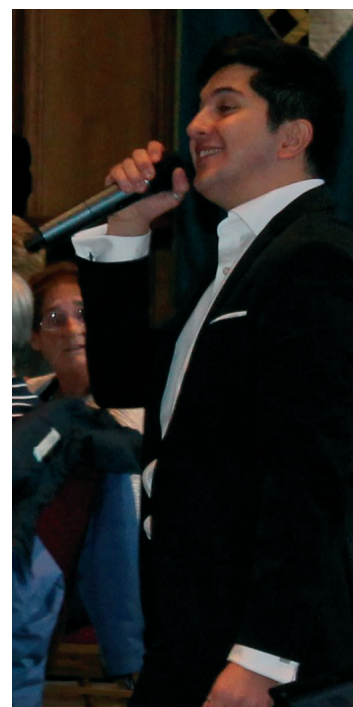


## The Forum have:

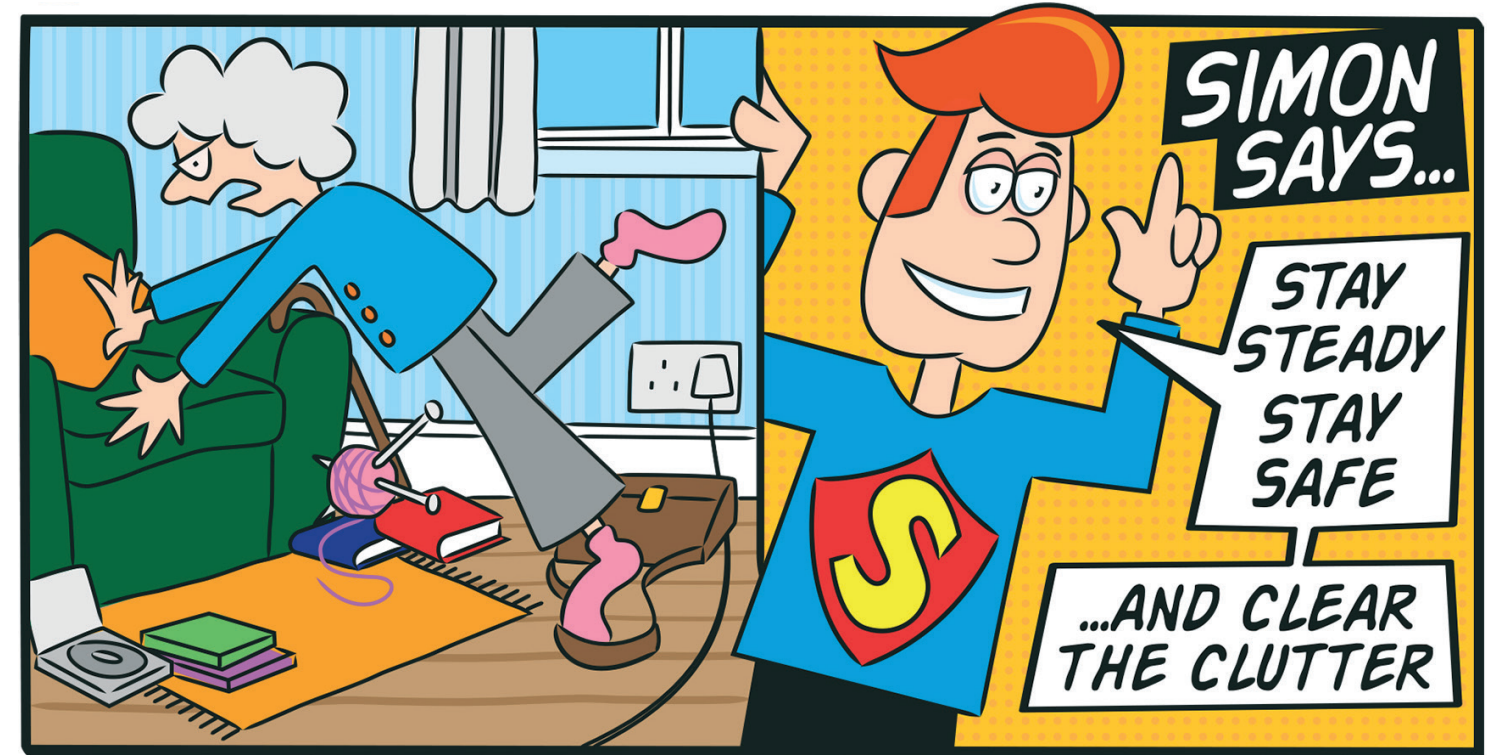
- Agreed a new Business Plan.
- Revamped our Website.
- Become the first forum in Wales to have adopted the World Health Organisation Age Friendly Communities model as our central objective.
- Made strong links with the Carers network in Caerphilly.
- Targeted action on Isolation and Loneliness of older people.

Our Annual Report was presented. Key items were responding to significant national consultations on issues affecting older people e.g. social care, the NHS, dementia and Bus passes and development of a close working relationship to the Carers Group.

The membership of the Forum Steering Group was also ratified including a number of new recruits. We have now begun the planning for the 2018 AGM and Social Event next in the Autumn which we hope will be just as good. Further information will be sent out later in the summer.



# A THIRD OF PEOPLE AGED OVER 65 FALL EACH YEAR



**FALLS ARE NOT a normal part of ageing or something that 'just happens' as you get older!**

**Here is simple check list that will help keep you stay steady and safe:**

- 1. Are your floors clear of trailing flexes, wrinkled or fraying carpets?**
- 2. Are your stairs and steps clutter free?**
- 3. Wear slippers that have a good grip and that fasten and stay on properly – make sure they aren't loose or worn out.**
- 4. Take your time getting up, and stand still for a moment to steady yourself before walking.**
- 5. Get your eyes checked and your glasses prescription reviewed as often as your optician advises, and at least every two years.**
- 6. If you feel dizzy from time to time check your tablets with your local chemist or doctor.**

**For more information on Keeping Safe and a range of other topics visit our website [www.caerphillyover50.co.uk](http://www.caerphillyover50.co.uk)**





# How do you stay active?

## Ffrind i mi- Friend of mine: 'A Prescription for Loneliness'

**Loneliness and social isolation can affect anyone at any age. Age UK reports loneliness as harmful to health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day.**

Ffrind i mi/Friend of mine is a partnership approach to combatting loneliness and social isolation across our community. It is supporting communities to come together to help reconnect and support lonely and isolated people within their local communities. Ffrind i mi also aims to recruit as many volunteers as possible to support more people.

**People with a high degree of loneliness are twice as likely to develop Alzheimer's disease and loneliness increases the chances of an early death by 45%.**

Ffrind i Mi was started 2 years ago after discussions with people personal experience of those affected by loneliness and isolation, doctors, service providers, and the Soldiers, Sailors Army and Family Association. They told us that they wanted to be able to refer themselves or their relatives. A dedicated website phone number and email address means that people affected by loneliness

can now contact Ffrind i mi direct.



### A number of initiatives are now already established:

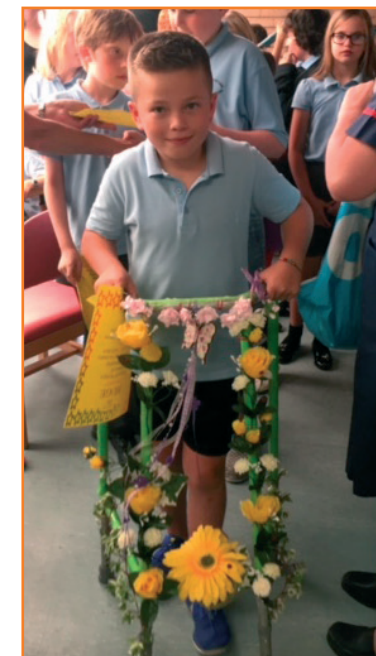
- A bi-lingual scrabble club in Abergavenny where lonely English/Welsh speakers now meet every week. We would like to establish more across Gwent, if you speak or want to learn Welsh and are interested in setting one up, please contact us!

### Many nursing homes across the sector now have:

- Nursery and primary school children who are visiting older people in care homes and on hospital wards, supporting intergenerational befriending.
- Skype is being used to reconnect older people with families living abroad.

- A 'pen friends' initiative has started where residents in different homes are writing to each other, and some older people and school children are also pen friends.
- We are also working with Digital Communities Wales to train more 'Digital Heroes' who will teach isolated people how to re-connect through the use of social media.
- We have rolled out the 'Pimp My Zimmer' Campaign across all nursing and residential homes. We are now working with Citizens Cymru to lobby manufacturers to paint Zimmer's in brighter colours.

As people with dementia do not easily see the colour grey but the majority of Zimmer frames are grey.



**Would you like to volunteer to support someone who is lonely or socially isolated?**

**For more information about volunteering with us check out the website**

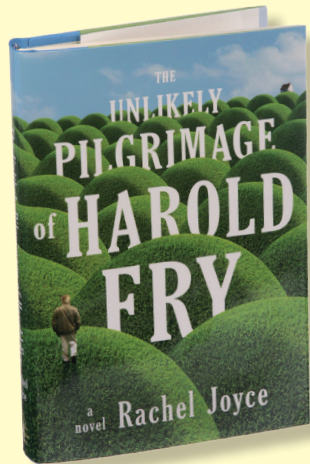
**[www.ffrindimi.co.uk](http://www.ffrindimi.co.uk) or contact the Ffrind i mi/Friend of Mine team on 01495 241257 or email: [Ffrindimi.abb@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:Ffrindimi.abb@wales.nhs.uk)**

## Nothing on TV? A Novel Idea....

Strictly all over for another year; we lost to England in the Six Nations (we were robbed); and when is the next Line of Duty series??? What you need is to settle down with a nice cup of tea/glass of beer or wine/stiff whisky or gin and tonic and curl up with a good book. If you can't decide what to read, why not try one of our recommendations?

### Rachel Joyce – The Unlikely Pilgrimage Of Harold Fry

Harold Fry pops out of the house to post a letter while his wife is Hoovering upstairs. So far, so normal But then his short walk to the post box becomes something more, much more. His stroll turns into a walk from one end of the country to the other – no hiking boots, map, compass, waterproofs or mobile phone. All he knows is he must keep walking to save someone else's life.



This book is magic, funny, unbearably moving, uplifting and inspiring. You'll laugh, you'll cry, you'll love it and you won't be able to put it down. Follow it up with The Love Song Of Miss Queenie Hennessey or any of Rachel Joyce's other novels. Unforgettable.

All books are available to borrow for **FREE** from your local library or to buy in paperback. Check **[www.caerphilly.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/libraries)** for a list of libraries and their opening times, ring **01443 864068** or download the library app from the App Store, Google Play or the Windows Phone Store – search for Iguana Library, chose Caerphilly Library Service and go to your local library website.



# We think you should know about....

## Cymru Older People's Alliance (COPA)

is a new registered charity run by older people for older people in Wales. The first new charity for older people in many a year! It was formed to forge a more coherent and impactful voice at the national level in Wales for older people's fora and groups in every local authority area.

### COPAs objectives include:

- Being an effective and informed advocate for older people's views.
- Working in partnership with older people's organisations across.
- Influencing policy and practice concerning current and future older people at a local, national & regional level, including lobbying.

- Wales to create a collective voice.
- Working in partnership with Government, statutory, voluntary and public organisations to achieve shared aspirations.
- Challenging age discrimination and promoting the rights of older people as defined in the UN Principles for Older People.

COPA to make a difference on a range of issues impacting on older people. COPA has secured funding from Welsh Government who regard it as "the national democratic independent voice of older people across Wales". They are also working closely with the Commissioner for Older People in Wales. Further updates on the work of COPA will be provided.

## Didn't they do well! The secrets of Growing Giant Vegetables

### Every family has its traditions and ours is to grow Giant vegetables.

It all started with my dad and his mates chatting in the pub and deciding to run a Giant Onion competition. This was so successful that it led to the British National Pumpkin championship where pumpkins are now weighing over 14 stone!

Before he died, my dad passed on his considerable horticultural knowledge to my brother and I and we continue to follow in his footsteps growing bigger and better vegetables and winning wards. We have a Guinness world record for our 88 inch Radish and my son Jamie is the holder of record for the UK widest sunflower head measuring 26.2 inches across!

"What is our secret?" I hear you ask... We use the traditional art of seed production combined



with hydroponic growing (which is a method of growing that replaces soil with mineral nutrients in water instead.) Last year we even tried using coconut fibre and a self-watering pot system that regulated the flow of nutrients to the vegetables. In 2016 my family were invited to the House of Lords where we spoke on the benefits both mental and physical of gardening. So whether you are a seasoned gardener or someone thinking of taking it up as a hobby we suggest you pop along to your local allotment and put your name down for your own plot and start digging with your kids and grandkids!

## Is Your Home Safe from Electrical Dangers?



### Each year over half of all fire casualties have been caused by electrical faults or misuse of electrical appliances.

People over 80 are at least 4 times as likely as any other age group to be casualties of electrical fires. So we should all take the possibility of suffering an electrical fire very seriously. It is important that older people and their carers make sure that their homes are as "electricity-safe" as possible and that they install smoke alarms that are kept in working order.

### Here are some of the checks that should be carried out:

- ▲ Electrical wiring should be checked by a qualified electrician every 10 years.
- ▲ Plugs and sockets should be checked for burn marks, buzzing or crackling, fuses blowing, circuit-breakers tripping or overheating.
- ▲ Sockets and adapters should not be overloaded.
- ▲ Flexible cables should not be damaged. If they are do not use the appliance until the cable has been replaced.
- ▲ Electric blankets should be checked regularly for signs of wear or damage – and stored flat or loosely folded or rolled in a towel or plastic bag in a cool, dry place.
- ▲ Electrical appliances should be bought from reputable suppliers. If they are second-hand make sure they have been checked by a qualified electrician.

### Kitchens are particularly hazardous so we all need to remind our older friends and relatives (and ourselves!) of the kitchen DON'TS:

- ▲ **DO** have smoke alarms fitted remember South Wales Fire and Rescue Service will fit smoke alarms for **FREE: 0800 169 1234**
- ▲ **DON'T** use electrical equipment or switches with wet hands.
- ▲ **DON'T** fill a kettle or steam iron when it's plugged in.
- ▲ **DON'T** try to clean or repair an appliance when it is still plugged in.
- ▲ **DON'T** try to get toast that is stuck out of a toaster while it is plugged.



# Getting to know you Older People's Champion



**As your Older Peoples Champion I am ready to meet more of you in person...**

so if you would like me or a member of the Caerphilly County Borough 50+ forum come and talk to your 50+ organisation, society club or group please get in touch [jonesb12@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:jonesb12@caerphilly.gov.uk) or call **01443 864400**.

I can tell you about the Forum, the things we have been doing and what we might do in the future but more importantly we can have a discussion about what you would like to the forum to do and how you and your group can work with to reduce issues impacting on older – people in the borough like loneliness and isolation.

## Getting to Know Us

**Do you belong to an organisation, society, club or group?**

If so, would you like us to come along and give a talk about the 50+ Forum in Caerphilly Borough and how it could be relevant to your organisation or your individual members?

As well as telling you about the Forum, the things we have been doing and what we might do in the future, we would love to have a discussion about what you would like us to do.

Hopefully, this would enable us to forge links that would continue in the future and enable you to provide us with feedback and concerns that develop in the future.

**We would like to thank Caerphilly 50+ Positive Action for their help and support in producing this newsletter and funding the cost of the printing as part of their Well-being engagement work supporting Strategy for Older People in Wales.**



**If you would like to advertise to thousands of over 50s in Caerphilly County Borough you can do so by sponsoring the next edition of this Newsletter or any of the forums events. Please contact us via the website 'get in touch' section or email: [keenam@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:keenam@caerphilly.gov.uk) or call Mandy Keenan on **01443 864277****