

Age Concern Heathfield and District Latest Updates

July 2020

Due to the current Covid-19 crisis we have been unable to print and distribute our normal version of the newsletter. Instead we have put together this sheet which we hope will update you on what we have been doing and the ways in which we can offer help

Update on Services:

We have recently been researching the latest guidelines surrounding the transport of clients for the minibuses and the medical car service, and how these impact on the transport services that Age Concern Heathfield and District normally provides.

Apart from the immediate issue of distancing, something which will be extremely difficult to achieve since the majority of our clients require assistance to get in and out of vehicles safely, there would also be a requirement for drivers and passengers to wear face coverings, for payments to be made electronically, or for us to invoice and obtain cheques for each journey as handling money presents particular risks for the transmission of bacteria and viruses, and there would be a need for vehicles to be thoroughly sanitised after every journey and if possible rested for 72 hours before further use to ensure all harmful germs have died.

We feel the safety of our volunteers and clients is the most important factor in resuming services and we have concluded therefore, that we cannot consider resuming either the minibus or medical car services for the foreseeable future.

We shall monitor the changes in the guidelines closely, and will continue to review the situation each month, but as a rough measure, I cannot realistically see anything restarting before October at the very earliest, and even then, only if we feel it is safe to do so.

I appreciate how disappointed a lot of clients will be to hear this news, but hope that everyone will understand that safety has to be the overriding factor in all the decisions we make.

We will of course keep you all posted as and when the situation changes.

In the meantime, please keep safe and well.

Best wishes

Dawn

Dawn Brock – Chairman
Tel:01435 863656 Email: dawn@ageconcernheathfield.org.uk



Activity Bags

Age Concern recently delivered activity bags to all our clients. We hope that you have all enjoyed the puzzles, quiz and colouring sheets. Our very grateful thanks must go to the Heathfield branches of the Co Op and Sainsburys for donating bars of chocolate and packets of biscuits for all our clients to enjoy whilst they are busy hard at work completing the activities.

Below are some examples of the wonderful artwork that you have all produced:



AGE
Concern

Heathfield and District
Reg. Charity No: 205665

A very special thank you!

We would like to thank all the individuals who have taken the time to write lovely letters of thanks to us and for their very kind and generous donations. The money will certainly be put to good use covering some of the extra expenses we have incurred running the new services we have set up to help with the Covid-19 situation.

It makes all our efforts so worthwhile to know that we have made a difference to people and that we may have helped in some small way to make things a little easier during these difficult times.

Thank you all so much – we really do appreciate it.

Jigsaw and Book Swap

This service is now up and running and clients have been enjoying a visit from the bus to enable them to swap books and jig saws.

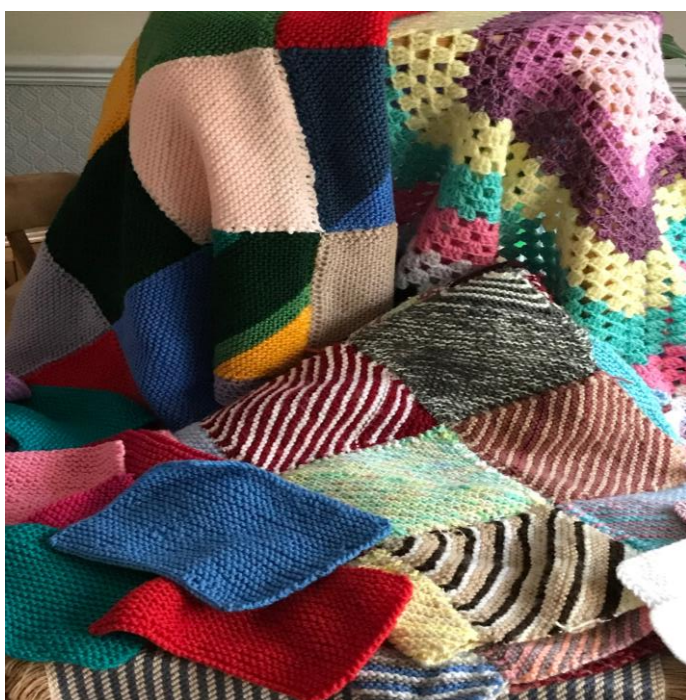
All items are quarantined for 72 hours before being available for loan, and our driver Ken, who operates the service will observe strict distancing measures when visiting you. Hand sanitiser is also available for everyone to use before and after handling any of the books or puzzles.

If you have any good condition, clean books or jig saws to donate, or you would like to book a visit from the bus, please telephone **01435 866960**



Calling all knitters!

There has been a wonderful response to our knitting challenge and we have received some lovely knitted squares which we can use to sew into blankets and bed runners for residents at Heffle Court. Some of you have completed whole blankets, whilst others have produced an array of brightly coloured squares which will be used as part of our team project and sewn together. Below are some examples of your wonderful handiwork:



If anyone would like to be part of the knitting team please telephone **01435 866960** and we will be happy to provide needles, wool and instructions.

Shopping and telephone Buddy Services

With the easing of some of the lockdown restrictions, some of our clients now feel ready and able to take on their own shopping again, whilst for others it remains a daunting prospect with queuing, one-way systems round shops, nowhere to sit and rest and no transport available. We want to reassure you that we intend to continue with our shopping service for as long as it is genuinely required. Our team of volunteer shoppers have been amazing throughout and have all gone the extra mile to ensure everybody gets whatever is on their list. One or two of our volunteers are now returning to work, whilst some of our younger volunteers will return to university in September, and others are taking much earned short breaks, but we will still endeavour to cover their slots, so that nobody need worry about going without.

Equally, until we can all get out and about and meet one another again, we will also be continuing to run our telephone buddy service for those clients who enjoy receiving a friendly call.

Exciting News.....

The foundations for the Heathfield Men's Shed have now been completed and construction of the workshop style building is well underway. Sadly, the Covid-19 restrictions have delayed things slightly, but nevertheless good progress has been made and we are hopeful that construction will be completed by the end of July.



If you would be interested in becoming a member or would like to find out more about the Men's Shed, please ring Nic Stenhouse, membership secretary on: 07850 992059