



Cardiff Branch
Welfare Newsletter

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NARPO Cardiff Branch

Welfare Newsletter No.4

March 2026

A warm welcome to all our members to this, our fourth Newsletter.

Previous newsletters can be found on our website under the 'Health and Welfare' section.

I am delighted to announce that Gill Higgins has kindly agreed to support me in her role as deputy welfare officer. This will ensure that if I am unavailable (over a prolonged period), she will step in to offer support and assistance to our members.

This letter will focus on the issues of loneliness and isolation as well as men's health issues (both physical and mental).

The intention is to provide some general information that might be helpful in identifying a variety of support networks that may be able to offer practical support or advice.

Any physical activities should be considered in accordance with your abilities or upon medical advice where applicable.

If you are aware of support networks that have not been included in this newsletter, then please feel to let me know so that they may be included for future publications.

Loneliness and isolation.

Loneliness and isolation are driven by a combination of situational, psychological, social factors including major life changes (bereavement, divorce, retirement), physical isolation (living alone, lack of transportation), poor health, mental health issues e.g. depression, social anxiety etc. These feelings can also arise from systemic issues like discrimination, low income, or feeling disconnected despite being around others.

As a committee, we recognise the need to support our members especially when they are facing difficult times. We recognise we do not have all of the solutions but have a desire to help where we can.

You will be aware that we hold a series of social events during the year which includes quiz nights, Spring and Christmas lunches as well as the bi-annual lunches.



Each of these events require a great deal of planning and are grateful for our committee members (Frank Stockham, Alan Hill and their wives) for the time and effort they put into making these events happen and are consistently successful.

We also endeavour to keep you informed of any news, social events, bereavements that are related to our members. This is undertaken by our webmaster Paul Bryant who does an amazing job keeping us informed. This is a huge personal commitment, and it is great to hear that Father Jeffrey Williams has agreed to support Paul in this role, allowing us greater resilience.

As a branch, we are currently looking at the opportunity to hold coffee/tea mornings for our members. We will let you know how this progresses when we have more details.

Local libraries and Hubs

Your local Library and Hubs are an excellent resource for providing information on a wide variety of social groups/activities being held in your area. These are not always advertised externally so it is well worth checking to see what is available.

Age Connects Cardiff & Vale

Age Connects Cardiff is a local charity dedicated to providing support for older people. This includes face to face befriending where a volunteer visits for a cup of tea and a chat, for those who are housebound. Telephone befriending is available where a volunteer rings you to check you are okay and have a chat.

Confidence building support is available (only in the Vale of Glamorgan), where a volunteer will support you to leave the house or go out and join a club or activity.

Information Provision, Practical Support & Problem Solving

Age Connects have a great deal of knowledge and experience that may help you with a specific issue. Some services may be dependent upon volunteer availability.

Contact number is 029 2068 3600

<https://www.ageconnectscardiff.org.uk>



University of the 3rd Age (U3A)

The U3A are groups of people who get together regularly to share their knowledge in a wide variety of subjects such as history, singing, practising a language etc. etc.

For further information for Cardiff U3A and Cowbridge U3A, please click on their links below:

<https://cardiffu3a.org>

<https://cowbridge.u3asite.uk>

Dewis Cymru

Dewis Cymru is the place to go if you want information or advice about your well-being – or want to know how you can help somebody else.

When talking about your well-being, it can include concerns about where you live, how safe and secure you feel, getting out and about and keeping in touch with family and friends.

Dewis Cymru have information that can help you think about what matters to you and have information about people and services in your area.

Contact number: 0808 808 3555

<https://www.dewis.wales>

Sports Wales (Sport and activities for over 60's in Wales)

Over the last four years, more than 7,000 older people have been feeling happier and healthier from doing the Active 60+ activities in their local area.

Tai Chi is the gentle, flowing movements that supports balance, flexibility, and mindfulness. Classes are available in Cardiff & Vale of Glamorgan.

Nordic Walking is available in Cardiff and helps to take the weight off your walks while raising your pulse.

Exercise classes and low impact gym classes as well as Yoga and Pilates are available in Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan.

Swimming is a recognised activity that has many beneficial outcomes in your physical and mental health.

I am reliably informed that cold water swimming has many benefits (I think I will give that one a miss as I prefer to be warm when I go swimming).



It is often recommended that participants in new physical activities seek medical advice prior to starting.

Contact number: 0300 300 3111

<https://www.sport.wales>

Over 50's Forums

The 50+ Forum is made up of citizens of Cardiff aged 50 and over, who provide valuable support to the council when new developments are being considered by attending or sharing their views at consultation events.

If you would like to join the 50+ Forum or have any questions about it, please contact

(email) agefriendly@cardiff.gov.uk

<https://agefriendlycardiff.co.uk>

If you are interested in the well-being of those aged 50 and above, and passionate about ensuring that older people in the Vale of Glamorgan have a voice. You can consider joining, please contact the Council's Strategy and partnership team who help to support their work.

Email: OPF@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

Tel: 01446 709779

Men's Sheds

Men's Sheds are community spaces for men to chat, connect and create, focuses on reducing isolation and improving mental health through shared activities like woodworking and fixing - often termed "health by stealth".

Key locations include The Dusty Shed (Ely/Caerau), The Den (Cardiff East) and Lisvane Men's Shed.

For further information please visit the Men's Sheds website.

www.mensshedscymru.co.uk

Women's Institute (WI).

The Women's Institute (WI) offers community, education, and social opportunities. It is a longstanding successful, vibrant organization which meets the expectations of the modern woman. They offer a varied program for their members, with the chance to enjoy and learn new skills. Please visit their website to see what is available in your area.

[National Federation of Women's Institutes | National Federation of Women's Institutes](http://www.narpo.org)



Men's Health

Older men face a variety of health issues, including cardiovascular diseases, prostate problems, diabetes, and osteoporosis, which can significantly impact their quality of life.

Common Health Issues:

1. Cardiovascular Diseases:

Conditions such as heart disease, hypertension (raised blood pressure), and stroke are prevalent among older people. Risk factors include high blood pressure, high cholesterol, smoking, obesity, and a sedentary lifestyle.

Regular screenings and lifestyle modifications, such as a heart-healthy diet and exercise, are crucial for prevention and management.

2. Prostate Health:

Common prostate problems - enlarged prostate, prostatitis, prostate cancer. Symptoms may include urgency, frequent trips to the toilet particularly at night, difficulty in passing urine. Discuss any concerns with your GP.

3. Diabetes:

Often linked to obesity and inactivity in older people. It can lead to serious complications, including heart disease and kidney problems.

4. Osteoporosis:

While often associated with women, osteoporosis can be a significant concern for older men. Reduced bone density increases the risk of fractures. Weight-bearing exercises, adequate calcium and vitamin D intake can help maintain bone health.

5. Mental Health

Older men may face mental health issues such as depression and anxiety, often exacerbated by social isolation or chronic health conditions. Engaging in social activities and seeking professional help when needed can improve mental well-being.



Preventative Measures:

Regular Check-ups:

Older men should see their GP at least once a year for a check-up, even if they feel healthy. Early detection of health issues can lead to a better outcome. Regular screenings for blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes, and prostate health are recommended to catch potential issues early.

Maintaining a balanced diet, engaging in regular physical activity, and avoiding smoking and excessive alcohol consumption can significantly reduce health risks. By being proactive about their health, older men can manage these issues effectively and improve their overall quality of life.

Regular communication with your healthcare provider and adherence to recommended screenings and lifestyle changes are key components of maintaining health in later years.

I hope you have found this information helpful.
Stay safe and well.
Steve Bartley
Welfare Officer.