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# Agewell Magazine



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Agewell's hospital befrienders (also known as Edna's Army) are familiar faces at City Hospital's D47 Reablement Unit.

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# Welcome

Welcome to our summer issue which is sponsored by Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust.



**Firstly a big thank you to the Trust for sponsoring our magazine. A number of Trust related stories are featured including the new Midland Met Hospital as well as the Trust's 2020 Vision and developments at Rowley Regis Community Hospital.**

Receiving good care whilst in hospital is very important to our members. Last year we launched a pilot hospital befriending service for older patients who have no one to visit them, as well as those whose friends and relatives require a much-needed break. It all started after a conversation between myself, Trust CEO Toby Lewis (pictured above) and our Chair, Edna Barker. Toby named the service 'Edna's Army' and remains a firm supporter.

At our AGM last October Toby said: "Hospitals are isolating places. Folk get cut off from their home and friends. However good the care is that we provide, often someone just wants a chat.

"Edna's Army offers that chat, and the chat carries on once someone goes home from hospital in those vital first few days and for a number of weeks afterwards. If we can tackle isolation together, we can help people to stay well at home for longer.

That is good health and great care."

Since February this year we've been regular visitors to the D47 Reablement Unit at City Hospital. Our volunteers pop in throughout the week, getting to know the patients and establishing what support they may need both prior to and after discharge. Read more about this on page 4.

Another Trust service we work in partnership with is the ICARES (Integrated Care Services) team and their work is explained in detail on page 3.

Also inside is a round-up of some of Agewell's latest news (pages 10 & 11). On the back cover, you'll see an advert for the LifeTrail at Portway Lifestyle Centre in Oldbury. This outdoor facility is specifically designed to make it easier for older, active adults to perform daily tasks and enjoy a better quality of life. It's open until dusk everyday - why not give it a try?

Before I finish I do want to share with you the very exciting news that Agewell has a new home! We have moved into Old Hill High Street from where we plan to open our first Community Hub for older people.

Plans include running a Carers' Cafe, activities and a drop-in advice service. Volunteers of all ages have been helping us with the move (see page 10) which has given us a real boost. If you're in the area, pop in and say hello.

**Deb Harrold, Agewell CEO**

# WORKING TOGETHER TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE



The ICARES integrated care service in Sandwell brings together a whole range of professionals including community matrons and therapists, to support adults with long term conditions, whatever their age or diagnosis.



**It operates in three areas - Rowley and Tipton; Wednesbury and West Bromwich; and Oldbury and Smethwick, and Occupational Therapist, Helen Bessant, Clinical Team Leader of Rowley Integrated Care Service based at Rowley Hospital, says she's proud of the team she heads.**

"We have a marvellous team of staff who are committed to working alongside patients and seeing their health and wellbeing improve," explains Helen, who's worked in the NHS in Sandwell for nearly 30 years.

"There are two aspects to the ICARES service. The team's fast response service aims to respond to people in medical crisis within three hours and patients must be referred by an appropriate professional, such as a nurse or GP.

"The second aspect of ICARES is its planned service. This can be accessed by anyone aged over 16 who's registered with a Sandwell GP, lives in a Sandwell Care Home or is receiving STAR, Sandwell's Short Term Assessment and Reablement Service.

"Our overall aim is to provide assessment, treatment and management for people whose everyday functioning has deteriorated because of a physical problem.

"The team includes occupational therapists, physiotherapists, speech and language therapists and community matrons, as well as a number of support workers. We also work in partnership with organisations like Agewell, so that together, we can help people to remain in their own homes by providing a broad package of therapy and support.

"It's particularly encouraging to see people from so many different backgrounds working so closely together for the benefit of patients.

"We have an excellent relationship with Agewell. Working with them is just fantastic. We come and go as people need us, but Agewell can pick up and follow through once the patient has left the health service. They are filling a gap and helping individuals to reintegrate back into their community.

"Here at ICARES, we're definitely 'Yes' people. We're here to help and we *want* to help. We get a lot of positive feedback about the ICARES service which we really appreciate.

"If we can help someone to manage their long term condition and improve and maintain their function and, therefore, their independence at home, then that is a job well done."

**There is open access to the ICARES service - anyone can refer at any time. For more information, ring 0121 507 2664 (Option 5) or email [sandwell.icares@nhs.net](mailto:sandwell.icares@nhs.net)**

# EDNA'S ARMY AT CITY HOSPITAL

Agewell Chair, Edna Barker, is passionate about reaching out to older people in hospital and, along with other Agewell hospital befrienders (known as Edna's Army), she is a familiar face at City Hospital's D47 Reablement Unit which she visits throughout the week.



**The aim is to provide some welcome company while the patients are in hospital, but also to establish how we can help with their transition back home, identifying the support they could benefit from both prior to and after discharge.**

In some cases this involves moving a bed downstairs and arranging any necessary minor home improvements to ensure their safety at home. For others it's arranging for the befriending service to continue at home for 6-12 weeks following discharge, plus a weekly telephone call for up to 3 months thereafter.

Agewell also provides a community navigation service to ensure the individual and their families are aware of the health, social care and community services available to them and, where necessary, supporting access to these services.

"Our work on this unit is funded by Sandwell & West Birmingham CCG as part of their pilot Intermediate



**Our aim is to try to prevent relapses and failed discharges from hospital.**

Care Flexi Bed project," explains Edna. "We started work in February and to date we've engaged with 27 patients, most of whom are aged 80 and over and living on their own.

"Patients can stay on the 20-bed reablement unit for up to 6 weeks. We're finding that the earlier we get to visit them, the longer we have to build trust and rapport which encourages them to take advantage of the help we can provide.

"We know from experience that older people can be very proud and may decline help even though they do need it and their family members and carers are crying out for support."

Building a good relationship with unit staff is vital. The Agewell volunteers discuss which patients have arrived and which are due for discharge, before visiting the patients.

Each patient has their own room which means the volunteers can talk about their needs in private and discuss the issues they are facing. This helps relatives to talk openly too.

Having a day room as part of the unit is a great help too. Here, the volunteers can chat informally with those patients who may not feel they need much



Having Agewell on board is enabling individuals to maintain their independence after discharge.

support and signpost them to other services.

Kim Roberts, Unit Manager (pictured above with Agewell Chair, Edna Barker), feels the service offered by Agewell is working well and making a difference to patients' overall care.

"Our aim is to try to prevent relapses and failed discharges from hospital," she says. "Having Agewell on board is enabling individuals to maintain their independence after discharge. Agewell has access to a wide range of services and support in the community which is helping to empower and re-enable individuals and help with their social inclusion.

"Agewell is a valuable part of the model of care we are trying to create, enabling individuals to return to their own homes from hospital with ongoing support so they can remain independent."

**Agewell is looking for more volunteers to help meet the growing demand. Volunteer befrienders are provided with a full induction, on-going training and support and reasonable out of pocket expenses. We're looking for both Sandwell-based and Birmingham-based volunteers. If you are interested, give us a call on 0121 796 9333 to find out more. ●**

## Partnership working

Since the start of the year, Agewell has also been providing valuable services as part of the Own Bed Instead (OBI) Sandwell Pilot Scheme.

23 patients have been referred to us so far, 70% of whom are aged 80 and over. The services we offer include hospital befriending, weekly befriending visits and telephone calls once individuals are back home, home-based exercise programmes, support for families and carers, and referrals for minor home improvements and to other health, social care and community services.

78-year-old Mrs M was referred to Agewell through the OBI scheme to help her regain her confidence and mobility following a fall. She's now accessing Agewell's home-based exercise programme and says: "The sessions have made a big difference. I couldn't get up from a chair before. Now I can move around my bungalow quite easily and can even go shopping on my own again."

90-year-old Mr S was medically fit to be discharged from hospital but needed some minor adaptations to be undertaken to his home first, including shortening the work surface in his small kitchen and removing the cupboard above to make room for a fridge freezer. Once Agewell were on the case, they arranged for the work to be done, purchased a fridge freezer, toaster and microwave on his behalf and waited in for delivery. Mr S was then able to come home.

Faye Holtum, Occupational Therapist on the OBI scheme says: "We would really struggle without Agewell. They are fabulous. It is so helpful to have one central point of contact who we can refer to. We go to the Agewell website, put in what we need and Agewell makes it happen every time." ●



## Welcome from Trust CEO Toby Lewis



**Thank you Agewell for all the work you are doing locally. It has a huge impact, and it inspires others to step up too. I hope that it is rewarding for you, and that you feel the statutory partners are doing their bit to help.**

Isolation remains the No 1 public health issue we face. It is a cause

of admission to hospital, attendance at a GP, and use of local mental health services. It can see people slip into excess drinking, or stop them eating well. What Agewell does helps to tackle isolation. I hope that increasingly at our Trust we are becoming more astute about tackling these risks too. By changing visiting

hours, by working with bus companies to get the right routes in place, by funding support workers for those with dementia, we are trying to take steps to reduce the risk of institutionalisation and isolation. And Edna's Army is part of that too!

There is a great deal more to do. I am not convinced that respite care services locally are where we need them to be. If we are going to mobilise friends and family to help, we need to offer them hope that their help would not need to be 24/7, 365 days a year. With a bit of extra help in place many neighbours, friends and family would no doubt be able to step up. In coming months as we examine again systems like intermediate care, I hope we can take a re-look too at how we provide periods of support to those people, including volunteers, working hard to help people live at home as long as they safely can and wish to do so.

7,000 local people work at our Trust. But we know we are very much the back-up service to GPs, to volunteers, and to organisations like yours who are providing daily input at home. We really do appreciate your work, your advice and your example.

Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals **NHS**  
NHS Trust

### Our 2020 vision

Draft for open consultation in July and August 2015

Where **EVERYONE** Matters

## We need your feedback...

**In July, the Trust published its 2020 vision – a plan for how healthcare will look in five years' time.**

The document sets out what services will stay the same and what will change. We want to hear your views about our vision, to help us shape it for the future.

You can order a hard copy of the 2020 vision by calling **0121 507 5303** or you can read it online at **[www.swbh.nhs.uk](http://www.swbh.nhs.uk)**

Please get in touch by 17th September 2015. Your views matter and we look forward to hearing from you.

## Milestone reached in journey towards Midland Met Hospital

**Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust submitted their Appointment Business Case to the Department of Health and HM Treasury in May, following approval by the Trust Board. This marks the latest step in the journey towards development of the new acute hospital on Grove Lane in Smethwick which is set to open in late 2018.**

Midland Met brings together emergency and acute healthcare onto a single site, with outpatient services and intermediate care facilities being further developed on the City Hospital and Sandwell General Hospital sites, as well as extended healthcare in community locations.

The proposals for developing a new hospital have been consulted on widely during and since 2007.

In support of the planning application that was submitted to Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council during the summer, the Trust's proposed development partner, Carillion, ran a series of public exhibitions as

well as writing out to local residents in the vicinity of the new hospital site.

Carillion unveiled their proposed designs and sought people's views during the consultation period.

The new hospital will not lead to the closure of all of the facilities at Sandwell, City and Rowley Regis hospital sites. Extensive healthcare services will still be situated at each site, providing a range of outpatient, day case and diagnostic services with a new Urgent Care Centre at Sandwell.

The hospital's design has been driven by a number of key factors:

- Integrated landscape design with a large, flexible community green to the south, with the bulk of the building to the north of the site
- A common sense approach to clinical design with an uncluttered, simple to navigate structure
- An active canal edge

**Sandwell & West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust are seeking to confirm their development partner over the summer and will look to start building on the site during 2016, with plans to open during 2018.**



A landmark building.



Many beds will be in single, en-suite rooms.

# A checklist for staying in hospital

**Sandwell & West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust Chief Nurse Colin Ovington talks about how to prepare for a stay in hospital and what to expect.**

Although more and more healthcare services are being provided in people's homes or in community clinics, staying in hospital is still necessary at times.

Coming to hospital for treatment can be a worrying time. At Sandwell & West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust we want you to feel at ease straight away. Our staff are here to help you every step of the way.

**We hope this short guide will help you be prepared for a hospital stay.**

- Bring with you any medication you take and any aids to daily living that you have at home such as special cutlery or walking aids.
- Each patient will have a lockable cupboard next to their bed but storage is limited so avoid bringing many valuables with you.
- Bring your own washing items and don't forget your toothbrush and toothpaste!
- We welcome visitors so do tell your friends and family to come and see you. We now have open visiting on our general wards between 11am and 9pm. Our cardiology wards welcome visitors between 2pm and 9pm and surgical wards between 11am and 12noon, and then between 3pm and 9pm. We ask that there are only two visitors at any one time and please check first with the senior nurse for your ward if children would like to visit.
- We want our hospital to be a healthy place, so please make sure you and your visitors wash their hands as they arrive on and leave the wards. If your visitors are unwell it is best that they do not visit until they are recovered.
- If you need help with your meals please let us know. We use red trays for people who need



assistance which helps staff to easily know who needs help with eating.

- Before you arrive we will start planning when you are going home – this may sound strange but it means all our teams can work together to get you home at the right time. Make sure you know how you are getting home and who will be collecting you when it is time for you to leave us.
- While you are staying in hospital you will have three meals a day. Hot food is provided in the evenings and you will have a choice from a wide menu. At lunchtimes we provide sandwiches, soup and jacket potatoes.
- You don't need to be in your nightclothes all day so please feel free to bring in your regular clothes if you would prefer.
- It is important to bring proper footwear, not just slippers, so that you can safely walk around the ward and hospital.
- Doctors will come and see you regularly. They will not be in white coats or wear ties but will all have their sleeves rolled up. This helps to make sure that we reduce the risk of passing on infections.
- Senior nursing staff all wear dark blue uniforms.
- All staff will wash their hands between seeing each patient. If they haven't done this it is ok to ask them to do so.
- Above all, if you have any questions or concerns please ask any member of staff who will be happy to help you.

# New developments at Rowley Regis Hospital

**Rowley Regis Hospital opened in 1994 and since then has provided a range of healthcare services for patients who live in the Rowley Regis area, as well as further afield.**

Early in 2015, Sandwell & West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust who manage Rowley Regis Hospital, asked local residents, patients, visitors and staff to tell us how we could develop services at Rowley Regis Hospital. 98% of people wanted to see more services on the hospital site.

## **A range of services are already provided including:**

- ✓ Outpatient clinics including cardiology, diabetes, rheumatology and Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT)
- ✓ Primary Care Assessment and Treatment service (run by clinicians including GPs, for patients who need monitoring but not admission to an acute hospital)
- ✓ Orthopaedic treatment
- ✓ Children's therapy service
- ✓ Musculoskeletal service including physiotherapy
- ✓ Podiatry (foot health clinics)
- ✓ Ophthalmology
- ✓ Diagnostics including X-ray and ultrasound services
- ✓ Phlebotomy (blood tests)
- ✓ Audiology
- ✓ Occupational therapy
- ✓ Speech and language service
- ✓ Gym facilities for patients who need physiotherapy and rehabilitation
- ✓ Intermediate care beds (bedded wards for people who need rehabilitation or help to get back home)

- ✓ Medically fit for discharge beds (bedded wards for people who no longer need to be in hospital but may be waiting for the right support to be put in place at home)

The hospital also has training facilities that are well-used by staff who work for Sandwell & West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust, and a popular canteen with food cooked and prepared on site.

Over the next year we have agreed to invest and further develop the services at Rowley Regis Hospital including adding health visiting clinics, refurbishing gym and therapy areas, making it easier to find your way round the hospital, better refreshment facilities, and accessible blood-testing services. We are also adding further car parking spaces to ease access.

Paul Scott has been working on the developments at Rowley Regis Hospital throughout the year. He said: "I'm really pleased to have had the opportunity to speak to local residents, patients and staff and get them involved in the plans for the hospital site. We have a great facility here and we want to see it as a vibrant, healthcare hub for people in the local community."

In July, volunteers from Lloyds Bank (pictured below) used their "day to make a difference" programme to come to Rowley Regis Hospital and renovate the garden areas making them pleasant places to be in for staff, visitors and patients.





## Community Offer News

In just one month alone, Agewell staff and volunteers spoke to more than 180 individuals at outreach events across Blackheath, Cradley Heath and Old Hill as part of the Community Offer we're heading up for Sandwell Council in this area.

During June, we spoke to 117 people at Blackheath market on two consecutive Saturdays and signed several up for the Agewell Healthy Passport. We chatted to 31 people at Blackheath Festival and to 30 people at a coffee morning hosted by us at Holy Trinity Church in Old Hill, where seven more signed up.

There are six Community Offers up and running across Sandwell, all of which are offering free services to improve older people's health and wellbeing.

**Don't miss out! Give us a call on 0121 796 9333 to see if you, or someone you know, could benefit.**

## Expert Research

Agewell has been commissioned to research what's available for older residents in the Stockland Green ward of Birmingham.

Stockland Green Ward Advisory Board brings together local councillors, churches, the Police, residents'

associations, Neighbourhood Watch groups and other voluntary groups with an interest in improving the area. The Board is dedicated to the best interests of the area and has asked Agewell to map the facilities, activities and services currently available for older people to see where gaps can be filled.

**An event is being planned to bring everyone together – keep an eye on our website for details.**

## Volunteer Support



Volunteers of all ages have been helping us to clean and decorate our new premises in Old Hill High Street, including 8 Vodafone staff and 13 young volunteers.

The young people wanted to do something to benefit older people as part of their 12 week, Prince's Trust project run by West Midlands Police in conjunction with the City of Wolverhampton College. The Vodafone staff used their paid volunteering leave to support Agewell. All the painting and decorating materials were paid for too which was an added bonus.

"We really appreciate the time and effort which all the volunteers have put in for us," said Agewell CEO Deb Harrold. "As a result, we have been able to move into our new premises much sooner than we expected and start to make the plans for our first Community Hub a reality."

**See back cover for our new address and contact details.**

## Come and enjoy yourself at an Agewell Local Forum

Free to attend, these popular monthly meetings for older people are held in each of the six towns in Sandwell.

Meet friends old and new over a cuppa and a chat, hear interesting speakers, and find out what's happening locally that may affect you and other older people. We're a friendly lot and are looking forward to meeting you!

If you feel uncertain about turning up on your own,

ask a family member or friend to come with you, or contact the Agewell office and we'll arrange for someone to accompany you.

Forthcoming speakers will be talking about how to keep your home warm and cheaper to run, the importance of heart screening for men aged 65+, and asking which local council services are most important to you. See **Diary Dates** on our website or call **0121 796 9333** for more details.

| Forum                      | Location  | Time & Date   |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Oldbury Forum</b>       | SCIPS Seminar Room, Christchurch Parish Church, Birmingham Street, Oldbury B69 4DY. | Meets the third Thursday of the month (except August and December) at 10.30am |
| <b>Rowley Regis Forum</b>  | Blackheath Methodist Centre, High Street, Blackheath B65 0EH.                       | Meets the first Wednesday of the month (except January) at 1pm                |
| <b>Smethwick Forum</b>     | Thimblemill Library, Thimblemill Road, Smethwick B67 5RJ.                           | Meets the last Thursday of the month (except August and December) at 10.30am  |
| <b>Tipton Forum</b>        | Tipton Christian Centre, Waterloo Street, Tipton DY4 8NR.                           | Meets the second Tuesday of the month (except August and January) at 10.30am  |
| <b>West Bromwich Forum</b> | Wesley Centre, High Street, West Bromwich (nr bus station) B70 8ND.                 | Meets the second Tuesday of the month (except August) at 10.30am              |
| <b>Wednesbury Forum</b>    | The Old Post Office, Holyhead Road, Wednesbury WS10 7DF.                            | Meets the last Wednesday of the month (except August and December) at 10.30am |

We are looking into the possibility of setting up new forums in Old Hill and Great Barr. Please get in touch if you'd be interested in attending either of these.

## Sadly Missed



Bob Cohen, a long serving Agewell member, sadly died in May.

Bob represented older people on the Sandwell Later Life Partnership and on the West Midlands Regional Group of Better Government for Older People.

He was very modest and brought to Agewell a wealth and breadth of experience from his voluntary and community work in the neighbourhood and town where he lived, Cape Hill and Smethwick, and in the social housing movement.

When public service managers were making presentations, Bob would always patiently but firmly focus discussion on to the impact for ordinary local people.

Agewell and many other community organisations will miss Bob's support, commitment and persistence.

# Portway Lifestyle Centre

Newbury Lane, Oldbury, B69 1HE

An exciting facility for the whole community and centre of excellence for people with disabilities.

## Life Trail

Enjoy the freedom of revitalising fitness with LifeTrail, the outdoor workout designed to make it easier for users to perform daily tasks and enjoy a better quality of life.



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- Increases strength
- Progressive exercises
- Boosts energy
- User friendly instructions
- Reduces fatigue
- Safety bars for beginners
- Plenty of parking on-site
- Safe environment
- Cafe
- Improves balance



[www.slt-leisure.co.uk](http://www.slt-leisure.co.uk)

0300 012 0121

[portwayinfo@slt-leisure.co.uk](mailto:portwayinfo@slt-leisure.co.uk)

Award winning services supporting Sandwell's scorecard

- Disabled parking and drop off points
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- Wayfinding audible navigation tool
- Colour contrast and braille signs
- Hoist facilities in changing areas
- Disabled toilets and changing areas
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Visit [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) to find out how easy it is. Don't forget to select Agewell as the good cause you wish to support.

You can also click the 'Fundraise for Us' button on [www.agewelluk.org.uk](http://www.agewelluk.org.uk) to find the easyfundraising link or call us on **0121 796 9333** to find out more.

## Contact Details

For more information about Agewell and our services, contact us as follows:-

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