

# Senior Citizens Forum Newsletter April 2018

## Message from the Chairperson, Celia Steventon

Hello again. I am writing this just before Easter, which seems very early this year and we are still having to brave snow, cold winds and dull days. Come on warmer weather, where are you?

I hope you will be able to make the April forum on the 23rd April, where we will be looking at security and protecting ourselves against the latest scams and fraud, something we all need to be aware of these days.

On the 4th July we are holding our Telford 50 event, called 'Pastimes in Telford' and we are hoping that tucked away in drawers and boxes you have photos of Telford, or of yourselves, in the 60's, which you would let us borrow or copy ( we will return them ) and then we can all have a good chance to reminisce and chat about the Good Ole Days!

Looking forward to seeing you at both events, keep well.

## Forum Events 2018

Open Forum taking place on Monday 23rd April 2018, 10.30am - 12.30pm, at The Wakes, Theatre Square, Oakengates, TF2 6EP (opposite the theatre)

There will be a presentation by Citizens Advice Telford & the Wrekin

Learn about how we can recognise and protect ourselves against the latest scams.

Millions of people of all ages are targeted every year by fraudsters, by post, telephone, online and even on their doorstep. Some people are particularly vulnerable, maybe because they are bereaved, lonely or lack the knowledge or understanding about what to look out for, what sets the alarm bells ringing. Often people feels pressurised and lack the confidence to say no. This can result in devastating consequences, financially and for health and wellbeing.

Information stands provided by local organisations.

Free entry, everyone welcome, open to members and non-members. Refreshments/light lunch provided.

## 50 Years of Pastime in Telford

The Forum's reminiscence event as part of the Telford 50 celebrations

On Wednesday July 4th 2018 we will be holding a reminiscence event inviting you to view an exhibition, chat with local history groups, and with one another about how life and the town has changed in the last 50 years in Telford.

We'll be reminiscing about social activities, clubs and pastimes you've enjoyed over the years and the places you've frequented. We also want to try and capture your memories, so have a look through your albums to see if you have any pictures of local landmarks or places you used to go. Perhaps pictures of yourself dressed up ready for a night out or enjoying Super Saturday, or time in the park with your children.

Bring your photos along on the day or maybe you would be willing to let us copy them to use at the event. If you are involved in a local history group and would like to take part or if you have an interest in local history and would like to help us organise the day, please contact Chris on 07932 828333, email: [chrisfox@twseniors.org.uk](mailto:chrisfox@twseniors.org.uk)

## Celebrating Age 2018

The Celebrating Age Festival will be once again taking place in October 2018 when there'll be a full programme of activities running through the week, 8th - 12th and a launch day event a week earlier, on Monday 1st October.

If you are a local community group, club or society, the festival offers you a great opportunity to promote what you do and recruit new members. Whether arts, crafts, hobbies & interests, education, exercise, sport, if you have spaces for new members and your activity is suitable for the over 50's, you can be part of the festival.

## Future Fit consultation to go ahead

On Wednesday 28th March it was announced that the government has approved £300 million funding to proceed with the Future Fit programme. The announcement clears the way for NHS England to provide its final, formal approval for the Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin CCGs to launch the Future Fit public consultation.

The consultation will ask for people's views on two options:

Option1: The Royal Shrewsbury Hospital as an emergency care site and the Princess Royal Hospital as a planned care site.

Option 2: The Princess Royal Hospital as an emergency care site and the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital as a planned care site.

Under either option, both hospitals would have an urgent care centre that is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

It has been stated that although there is a preferred option, (Option 1) no final decision will be made until they have considered the views of everyone who responds to forthcoming public consultation.

We'll be keeping you informed about the consultation process and letting you know how you can have your say.

## Looking for an adult day care facility for yourself, family member or friend?

Wellington Cottage Care is a nurse led day care centre that aims to address the mental, emotional and spiritual needs of their guests and their carers. Guests are encouraged to get involved in new activities and develop new skills and interests.

Trained nurses and care assistants help with personal care, including bathing or showering in the specially equipped bathroom.

If you would like to arrange a visit or book a free Trial Day, please contact:  
Tel: 01952 243796 or email: [admin@wellingtoncare.org.uk](mailto:admin@wellingtoncare.org.uk)  
Wellington Cottage Care, 79 Haygate Road, Wellington, Telford, TF1 2BJ

## Forum Computer drop in sessions (free)

Hartshorne Court, Burton Street, Dawley, TF4 2BY, Wed, 10am - 12noon  
Newport Cottage Care Centre, Upper Bar, TF10 7EH, Wed, 12noon - 1pm  
Oliver Court, Ladycroft, Wellington, TF1 3BU, Wed, 2pm - 4pm  
New drop in starting Monday 16th April, 2 - 4pm at the Hub on the Hill, Southgate, Sutton Hill, TF7 4HG

We offer help to absolute beginners through to experienced users, with one to one tuition using our computers or your own, whether a laptop, tablet or smartphone. We provide problem solving, online safety advice, computer clean up, and much more.

Call us on 07932 828333 for more details.

## What is the Cloud?

As well as being a white fluffy nebulous thing, the 'cloud' in computer speak is like one great big computer situated elsewhere. You can use a little bit of it to store and access your files from any device, wherever you have an Internet connection.

It enables you to back up your files, for instance all your photos can be held in the cloud but can be viewed on your device too, and if you accidentally delete them from your device, you still have them in cloud storage.

There are lots of cloud services which all allow you to use the cloud, Apple iCloud for iPhones and iPads, One Drive for Windows devices, Google Drive for Android phones and tablets, as well Dropbox and many others. Most of them offer so much storage for free, then you pay if you need some more.

## Assistive Technology

Independence AT Home drop in sessions

Every Wednesday from 10am to 2pm at Citizens Advice, Tan Bank, Wellington, TF1 1HW

You can come and browse a variety of gadgets and equipment to give you an idea of things that can help make life a little easier. Our volunteers will be available to assist you if you need any help. Between them they have personal experience of using the different gadgets. For further information visit [www.telford.gov.uk/AT](http://www.telford.gov.uk/AT) or tel 01952 459252

## Telford & Wrekin Sensory Impairment Services

Tel 01952 641222 ext 4402

A Rehabilitation Officer for Vision Impairment is available to speak to by phone on Wednesdays, 10am - 2pm. Tel 07976 426483

## Environment & Transport Action Group

In this issue we're reviewing what ETAG has been doing over the last year. We are a small action group with 8 - 10 members, all volunteers, meeting every two months. In 2017 we held 5 meetings (the December one cancelled due to the bad weather).

At most of our meetings we have a guest speaker to update us on environment or transport issues, and we do take questions from Forum members during the year and always try to answer these in this Forum entry.

The 5 main queries we have dealt with were around speed bumps, pollution, roundabouts, bus timetables and seating in the new bus station. All the actions we carry out are reported back to the Senior Citizens Forum management board.

At our first meeting of 2017 we welcomed the Project Manager of the new bus station and had many questions and suggestions from ourselves and Forum members. Some of these were considered whilst others were seen to be either too costly or not required.

At our March meeting we invited the T&W Cabinet Member for Transport and the Service Delivery Manager for Transport & Engineering Services. This was very informative covering subjects such as the new railway bridge, the new bus station, upgrade work on some of the town's roundabouts and town centre air pollution.

In June 2017 the guest speaker was the Assistant Director for Early Help Support & Adult Social Care, an unusual presenter for the ETAG, however a number of members had requested that we learn about the department's new structure.

September saw us looking at the complaints received about fumes from when bus drivers don't turn off their engines at the new bus station. We asked the council to update the leaflets round the town, having found 2016 bus timetables still on display in the libraries, and we are pleased to say, this happened the following week. We also heard about the rogue dealers who were operating around Telford and reported on this in the Forum magazine.

For the final meeting of 2017 we welcomed back the Service Delivery Manager for Transport and Engineering Services. Mr Proud gave an update on the Air Quality Management Programme which would look at issues at the bus stations in the town centre and in Wellington. We also heard about the new LED street lightning which we many have found an improvement and is also cheaper to run.

## Why Dancing is so Good for You

It turns out that dancing is not just a fun way to stay in shape, it may also be a great way to improve your mental and physical condition as you get older.

Research has found that because of the added mental challenge of remembering the steps and routines, dancing may be a better form of exercise than traditional fitness training when it comes to slowing the signs of ageing and can significantly improve muscle strength, endurance and balance.

A study reported that after six months, volunteers who participated in a weekly one-hour dance class had improved postural, sensorimotor and cognitive performance scores. Volunteers in the non-dance group showed either no changes or a decline in these scores.

It was found that out of 11 physical activities, dancing was most associated with a reduced risk of developing dementia, as it combines mental, physical, emotional and social aspects that together can be beneficial to your brain and overall health.

Classes can also reduce feelings of isolation and social stress and the music played not only motivates you to move more, but can provide an emotional mood boost if the songs connect you with a happy time from your past.

To look up local dance groups in the Forum's list of local clubs and classes, visit:

[www.twseniors.org.uk/clubs-classes](http://www.twseniors.org.uk/clubs-classes) or give us a call on 07932 828333 and we'll look it up for you.

## Telford Salsa

Mondays, Beginners £3, 7.15pm,  
Improved mixed ability 8.30pm  
Social dancing for all 9.30pm  
Drop in classes £7 for whole evening

Whitehouse Hotel, Watling St, Wellington, TF1 2NJ

## Kizomba

Kizomba is an African dance from Angola, and one of the fastest growing partner dances.

Wednesdays, all classes, £7, 8.15 - 9.30pm, Social dancing, free, 9.30 -11pm

All Saints Parish Hall, Lychgate Walk, Wellington, TF1 3HA

No partner, special shoes or sequins required, just turn up! Tel 07929 862462

[www.telfordsalsa.com](http://www.telfordsalsa.com)

## New - Falls Prevention Home Based Exercise Service

FIT4ALL currently delivers 36 community based falls prevention exercise classes across Telford and Wrekin, commissioned by Telford and Wrekin CCG. As a service they are mindful that there are many people at risk of falls living in the community, are socially isolated and are unable to attend a community based class.

FIT4ALL is offering a NEW service whereby a member of the consultancy team would offer a weekly home based exercise service. The session would last a hour and there would be a cost to the patient. (Costs are available on request)

They are hoping that the home based intervention will help break down some of the barriers that prevent and discourage people attending community based classes, to the point where they become more confident about leaving their homes and benefit from the social inclusion they desperately miss out on.

All the consultancy team have full Enhanced DBS, Public Liability insurance and all the necessary qualifications to deliver this service. (proof of professional documents available on request) Contact Jude Bailey FIT4ALL on 07456505553

## Volunteer for the Forum

by becoming a member of our management committee. Attendance at an informal meeting about every 6 weeks and at some of our events would be expected, plus ability to use email. If you would like to find out more please contact 01952 828333.

## A new volunteer scheme is coming to Wellington...

Do you have an interest in helping others? Are you good at talking and listening? Are you able to empower and motivate others?

Community Connectors offer short term buddy support to individuals enabling them to connect with activities, appointments, courses and volunteering opportunities, encouraging participation until they feel comfortable and confident to access their community independently.

If you would like to become a Community Connector please contact Janie or Kerry: 01952 388840/01952 385114 or email [communityparticipationteam@telford.gov.uk](mailto:communityparticipationteam@telford.gov.uk)

## Art Group

Drawing, painting, pastels... art for your enjoyment.

The Art Group meet at Wellington Methodist Church during term time on Tuesday mornings or afternoons, and now on Thursday afternoons as well.

Visiting artists join us for a day at least once each term and we organise sketching days and visits to art galleries. For the last seven years the Art Group has organised an exhibition for Art Group members and local artists to exhibit their work, this year it will be held on Friday 6th and Saturday 7th July.

We look forward to seeing you, whether you're new to art or have been drawing and painting for some time. All are welcome. Call Liz Doody, the course tutor for more information, or to book your place, on 07970 709116.

## Wrekin Housing Trust Lunch Club

Every Monday 12:30pm Starts April 16<sup>th</sup>, at Walton Court, Oakengates TF2 6TL. 2 course Meal for £5 followed by Bingo. EVERYONE WELCOME, a great way to make new friends. Book with Kathryn 07816 510233.

## Supporting Dementia

Activity groups give people affected by dementia the opportunity to take part in structured activities. Cosy Hall, Newport, TF10 7LD, Tuesday monthly, 2 - 3.30pm

Watling Community Centre, Arleston, TF1 2AB, Last Tues of month, 2 - 3.30pm

## Peer Support Group for carers

This session offers a chance to ask questions, get information and share experiences in a safe and supportive environment.

Cosy Hall, Newport TF10 7LD

Watling Community Centre, Arleston, TF1 2AB, both sessions on Tuesday, monthly, 2 - 3.30pm  
Tel 01952 250392

## Singing for the Brain

For people living with dementia & their carers. Booking is essential - runs 3 times a year for 10 sessions, at 2 Lion Street, Oakengates, TF2 6AQ. Based around the principles of music therapy, the stimulating session includes vocal warm-ups and singing a wide variety of familiar and new songs. For more information and to book places, tel 01952 250392.

## Forget-me-not teas

St Andrew's Church, Church Street, Shifnal, TF11 9AB, 3rd Thursday of each month, come any time between 2.30 and 3pm. Enjoy sharing a lovely tea, using the best china teacups, cake, songs and prayers. Accessible and open to everyone, irrespective of beliefs. Free, contact: Sarah Thorpe 0798 224 8949 sarah.thorpe121@gmail.com

## Forget-me-not films

St John's Church, Saltwells Drive, Muxton, TF2 8RJ, 4th Thursday of each month, 9.45am- 12.30pm. Come and join us to watch an old musical and enjoy tea and cake. Particularly suitable for those living with dementia and their friends and family. No charge. Contact: Jo Lefroy 01952 604281

Dementia support workers offer information and practical guidance to people who are worried about their memory and ongoing support to people affected by dementia, face to face, over the phone or in writing. Tel 01952 250392

## Age UK Diamond Drop-ins

Dementia-specific get together for people living with dementia and their family, friends or carers. The session charge is £3.50 per person, including refreshments and all activities. There are five local Diamond Drop-ins.

Friezes Leasowe sheltered housing scheme at Ketley Bank, fortnightly on Tuesdays, 10.30-12.30. There's an opportunity for carers to have some time to share experiences and talk together with support workers whilst trained volunteers look after their loved ones. Contact Neil Brookes on 01743 233123.

High Mount sheltered housing scheme in Donnington Fortnightly Wednesdays, 10.30-12.30. There's a breakout area for carers. Contact Neil Brookes on 01743 233123.

Horizons at Morton Court, Dawley, 2nd Wednesday and last Thursday of the month from 2 - 4pm. Guest speakers and activities. Contact Lyn Suddes 01952 201803.

Apley Court, Wellington Last Wednesday of every month, 2 - 4pm. Contact Lyn Suddes 01952 201803.  
Shifnal Fire Station Exhibition Centre, Shrewsbury Road, TF11 8AQ 1st Tues of month, 2 - 4pm.  
Contact Neil Brookes on 01743 233123.

## New Dementia Cafe launched in March

The Treasured Memories Café opened its doors for the first time on 14th March at Oakwood Retirement Living in Wellington.

The idea came about as a result of one of our Health Champions, Janet Loughlin, who has a friend living with dementia and wanted to do something to help. The aim of the café is to provide the opportunity for local people affected by dementia to meet up for a drink and some cake once a month whilst having some fun and laughter.

For more information please contact Janet on 07887 746997 or Kath on 01952 952142.

## Are you driving with an undisclosed medical condition?

Analysis by Direct Line Car Insurance revealed that in 2015 around 3.4 million drivers in England and Wales failed to disclose relevant medical conditions to the DVLA. A claim on your car insurance could be invalidated if you have an undisclosed notifiable medical condition or your eyesight doesn't meet the legal minimum requirement.

The research revealed that most people fail to do so because they believe it has no effect on their driving. However, some conditions do affect your ability to drive safely.

The most common types of medical conditions are heart conditions, strokes, diabetes, physical disability, brain conditions, head injuries, visual impairment and epilepsy. You can see whether your medical condition is notifiable by looking at the full list of health conditions on [www.gov.uk/health-conditions-and-driving](http://www.gov.uk/health-conditions-and-driving)

You must tell the DVLA if you develop a new medical condition or an existing one has got worse. Once you've notified them they might contact your doctor, arrange a medical examination or ask you to take a driving test. They'll decide if you need a new licence, a shorter licence to be reviewed in future years, an adaptation to your car, or if you have to stop driving altogether. It doesn't necessarily mean they'll take your licences away forever and they'll provide information about when you can start driving again.

Poor eyesight makes it harder to stay in the right lane, maintain the correct speed and leave a safe distance to the car in front. It also takes longer to react to unexpected hazards. If you can't read a number 20 metres away at the beginning of your test, it's an instant fail, and you will be required to have an eye test with the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA).

If you don't meet the minimum eyesight standard for driving without glasses or contacts, then it's illegal to get behind the wheel of a car without them. Regular eye checks will spot conditions like cataracts or glaucoma (both of which make it harder to see when driving in the dark), as well as general deterioration.

Check with the DVLA – hiding your condition isn't worth the risk. And if you're due an eyesight test, take a quick trip to the opticians. (Based on an article published by Direct Line Insurance.)

## Branches in the Park

A Mental Health Awareness Festival with activities & events for all the family. Bands, arts & crafts, food stalls, Mindfulness & Mental Health First Aid Tent. Telford Town Park Arena, Sunday May 6<sup>th</sup>, 11am - 6pm.

## Telford Centre Rotary Club Charity Fundraiser

A journey through the decades starring Maggie O'Hara. Dance the night away, fancy dress optional. Tickets £15 from Sue on 07909 263592, email [secretary@telfordcentrerotary.org](mailto:secretary@telfordcentrerotary.org)  
Taking place on 27<sup>th</sup> April, 7pm until late, with buffet and bar, at Dawley Town Hall, TF4 3JR

## New Age UK Lunch Club

The lunch club meets on the second Tuesday of every month at 12 noon at the Telford Whitehouse Hotel, with a two-course menu, including tea and coffee priced at just £8 per person.

Age UK STW is also looking for a volunteer organiser to welcome existing and new members and place food orders in advance with the venue. To book your place at the lunch club or volunteer please contact Diane Douglas on 01952 201803, email [diane.douglas@ageukstw.org.uk](mailto:diane.douglas@ageukstw.org.uk)

## Let's Go Quackers!

Twelve larger than life ducks will arrive in Ironbridge in the spring and will form a trail around Ironbridge for locals and visitors to follow and enjoy.

They are the idea of local resident Julie Ward who was inspired by a Norwich gorilla trail she heard about in 2013. The life-sized gorillas, which increased visitors to the city centre, became a social media sensation. The gorillas were then auctioned after their summer showing, raising thousands of pounds for charity.

Julie says, "The plan is to get business sponsorship for each duck and work with local artists, community groups, schools and others to decorate the ducks with designs that reflect Telford. The most important thing is that they bring fun to our community, more visitors to Ironbridge and smiles to everyone's faces."

Councillor John Minor, Telford & Wrekin Council cabinet member for leisure, green spaces and parks, said: "The High Street Fund was about bringing forward projects that give a boost to our high streets and attract visitors. Some of the projects have helped smarten up high streets such as the painted shutters in Dawley and false window murals in Wellington. Others are a little bit more unusual. The ducks are fun and I really hope that Julie's hard work pays off and that people love them."

The giant ducks will be on display on an easy walking trail through Ironbridge for approximately 6 weeks from late spring, coinciding with the Telford 50 celebrations. They will then be auctioned off with all proceeds split between the Severn Hospice and the Jayne Sargent Foundation.

To follow progress and keep updated on duck tales follow them on twitter @letsgoquackers. or Facebook at Lets Go Quackers or visit the website [www.letsgoquackers.co.uk](http://www.letsgoquackers.co.uk)

## Side by Side Ukes

The group plays private bookings, for groups, housing schemes and events. All money from fees is donated to a charity. Last year the group raised £595 for Macmillan Cancer Support. The picture above shows band members presenting Peter Harris of Macmillan with the cheque.

To book Side by Side Ukes contact Jack Pritchard on 07939 021162.

## Beware DVLA Scam

Please look out for a scam received via text, impersonating the DVLA.

The text message says: FINAL REQUEST: DVLA Swansea have been trying to contact you, Click below for more information.

Do not click on the link. The DVLA has said that they are aware of a text scam that asks for drivers to verify their driving license and vehicle tax details via an online link. The text wrongly claims to have been sent from DVLA and appears to be an attempt to trick drivers into providing personal details. DVLA have not sent out a text asking customers to update or verify their details.

## Shrewsbury Guide Dog Mobility Team are currently recruiting for My Guide Volunteers

The My Guide service trains volunteers to become sighted guides, allowing them to help people with sight loss to get out of their homes and back into the community.

What are My Guide volunteers?

They help support blind or partially sighted people to do the things they want to do.

What would I be expected to do?

It varies but activities include going for a coffee, regular walking, shopping, sport, music activities, helping people attend community groups, building confidence to learn routes to get to places.

Will the client have a guide dog?

Not necessarily as a lot of people who need and want the My Guide Service don't choose to have a guide dog for lots of reasons, but still need to get out and about.

How much time is involved?

On average after training, approximately 2 - 3 hours per week. Most My Guide Partnerships last between 6 - 9 months.

How is the volunteer supported?

You are regularly supported by the My Guide Ambassador, through regular review meetings and calls.

Once the partnership comes to an end you are offered a new person to support if you wish to continue.

Do I need training?

Yes you will receive Level 1 Community Sighted Guide Training, Level 2 My Guide and also Safeguarding training. This will add up to two full days training in total. We also require and arrange for our volunteers to be DBS checked.

Will I receive mileage expenses?

Yes we pay 40p per mile mileage expenses.

Dolores is a My Guide client, whose independence has greatly increased with the help and support of her trained sighted My Guide volunteer. We hope Dolores' story shows the difference a My Guide volunteer can make to someone's life.

Eighteen months ago, Dolores Henry barely had the confidence to leave her home. Now, thanks to support from Guide Dogs' innovative and established My Guide service, she has regained much more independence.

Dolores' mother came into contact with German Measles while pregnant and as a result, Dolores was born with problems with her vision. Despite these challenges, Dolores went on to full-time employment and was enjoying life working at an insurance firm.

Disaster struck out of the blue in 1989. "I was away for a weekend in London when I started to get floaters in front of my eyes," Dolores recalls.

"I came home and underwent a number of operations without success, then I went completely blind almost overnight which was very scary. It was a big change in my life – I couldn't go back to work and I had to rely on my other senses and other people to do everyday tasks."

After two years another operation gave Dolores back some hazy vision in her left eye. In the following years she worked with health professionals to learn how to use a long cane but still relied heavily on her parents. Sadly, her mother passed away, followed by her father and by the end of 2015 she was essentially housebound.

A rehabilitation worker referred Dolores to My Guide, to benefit from getting out and about with a trained volunteer to 'be her eyes'.

Dolores explained. "After waiting for a few months to find a match, I was introduced to my volunteer Susan. I didn't really know what to expect but very quickly and after a few outings there was no stopping us! We went clothes shopping, for lovely walks and tried out lots of cafes, I also learned to remember lots of new routes!"

She added: "It really changed my life. I now have the confidence to travel on my own and use my cane to explore parts of the city I didn't even know existed! I couldn't recommend the My Guide Service enough."

Guide Dogs Shrewsbury are looking for more My Guide volunteers and would like to assist more users across Shropshire, Staffordshire and The Black Country. The service is provided by the charity completely free of charge. For more information, please call 03451 430226 or email our My Guide Ambassador, [allison.richardson@guidedogs.org.uk](mailto:allison.richardson@guidedogs.org.uk)

Enjoy a Walk this Spring as well as the amazing landscape and fascinating history of our local area

## Ironbridge Gorge Walking Festival

Now in its 13th year, the annual Ironbridge Gorge Walking Festival, 5 - 13 May, is offering 53 free walks, making it probably the biggest in the West Midlands and one of the best in the country. The Festival

offers a number of 'themed' walks ranging from 2 to 21 miles covering the wonderful landscape and geology of the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site to the wildlife that inhabits the Gorge's ancient woodlands.

The Festival will include a number of brand-new walks, an 8 mile walk taking in the Telford Steam Railway, and a 4 mile walk that looks at Ironbridge through the eyes of tourists over the past 200 years. Also new are the Family Walks, 4.5 miles encompassing a photo trail around the local woodland. Food-lovers will enjoy a new 10 mile walk that takes in Little Wenlock and its renowned pub, The Huntsman, where lunch will be available to buy.

The Festival is kicked-off on 5 May with a 21 mile walk to the 'Thankful' village of Harley on the stunning Wenlock Edge. Harley is the only 'Thankful' village in Shropshire – known as such because all men sent to the First World War returned safely. A couple of walks will take in views of the impressive cooling towers of the former Ironbridge power station. The towers are marked for demolition in the near future so these walks are a wonderful chance to catch a glimpse of these four light-pink concrete monoliths. There are a number of routes for the more serious walker ranging in length from 12 to 21 miles. There is also an opportunity to complete the 50 or 100 mile challenge in the nine days.

Pre-booking is essential as all walks are limited to a maximum of 20. Well behaved dogs on a lead are welcome on some walks, but please check before booking.

To reserve a place or request a copy of the programme contact the Ironbridge Visitor Information Centre by email at [tic@ironbridge.org.uk](mailto:tic@ironbridge.org.uk) or call 01952 433 424. For more details about the walks visit [www.ironbridgewalking.co.uk](http://www.ironbridgewalking.co.uk) or email [info@ironbridgewalking.co.uk](mailto:info@ironbridgewalking.co.uk)

## History on Foot

A programme of guided local history walks organised by members of the Wrekin Local Studies Forum.

June 5<sup>th</sup>

A walk to the 13th century Talbot Chapel, Newport and remains of the medieval Longford church of St Marys. Start at Longford Road, Newport. 7pm. 2 hours approx. Parking on playing fields left of Longford Road, 400 yds from Lower Bar, or at Vauxhall House, just beyond playing fields. Contact 01952 812174 (Evening) 0776549035.

June 6<sup>th</sup>

A walk along the Silkin Way from Coalport to Madeley Court, return via St Michael's Church and the All Nations pub. Start at Coalport China Museum car park, 7pm, 3 miles, 2 hours approx. Contact 01952 504135.

June 12<sup>th</sup>

A gentle walk around Ketley discovering hidden gems of its industrial past from the incline plane, railway line and Parker's Pool. Start at Ketley Community Centre, 7pm, 1 hour 30 approx. Contact 01952 617029 252459.

June 16<sup>th</sup>

A walk around Lawley and the parish church of St John's, then onto the former settlement at Newdale, the Severn Junction Railway line and the Grade 2 listed tram bridge. Start at Morrisons, Lawley Square, 12 noon, 2 hours. Contact [lawleyoverdalelhg@gmail.com](mailto:lawleyoverdalelhg@gmail.com)

June 19<sup>th</sup>

The Anglo-Saxon Easton Boundary of Church Aston, Newport. Start at St Nicholas Church, 10am, 2 hours approx. Contact [mar.ant@btinternet.com](mailto:mar.ant@btinternet.com)

For more information and pre-booking to ensure your place, please contact the organiser of the individual walk. Groups may invite small donations to offset any costs. Look out in the next edition for walks taking place in July and August or visit [www.wlsf.org.uk](http://www.wlsf.org.uk)

## WEA Walks at the Stiperstones, Shropshire Hills

Mindfulness Walk on 23rd May, Ref C3125945,

Nature Walk on 6th June, Ref C3125944, 10am - 12noon, £10 per walk.

For more information or to enrol please ring 0300 303 3464.

Visit [www.wea.org](http://www.wea.org) using the reference numbers to enrol.

## Walking for Health

Supporting you to get active and stay active, running regular free walks every week.

Walking for Health Telford & Wrekin provides walks in most parts of Telford

[www.walkingforhealthtelfordandwrekin.org.uk](http://www.walkingforhealthtelfordandwrekin.org.uk)

Tel 07512 123995

Walking for Health South East Shropshire, also called the Severn Strollers, includes walks in Much Wenlock, Shifnal & Broseley.

[www.walkingforhealth.org.uk/walkfinder/west-midlands/severn-strollers-walks-south-east-shropshire](http://www.walkingforhealth.org.uk/walkfinder/west-midlands/severn-strollers-walks-south-east-shropshire)

Tel 01743 255059

## 100 years on – The Great War April and May 1918 by Dave Wright

In the last article we ended in March 1918 where the Germans had made a tactical mistake and the allied forces lived on to fight another day. The events on the Western Front at the start of 1918 would be the background which brought us to the climax of the Great War in November 1918. During April and May in all of the theatres of war the most decisive battles would be fought in France and Flanders.

Early in 1918 the French were still recovering from the battles of 1917, they were in a state of trauma and trying very hard to restore the fighting spirit within their army. The British morale was also very low and the failed battles of Third Ypres and Cambrai were still in the mind of the generals and the fighting troops.

The German forces were in a good state having achieved a victory on the Eastern Front against the Russians. They started moving substantial numbers of troops to the Western Front and they knew that they had to win before fresh American soldiers tipped the balance back in favour of the Allies.

The German forces began their Spring offensive on 21st March 1918 and over 6,000 guns deluged the British 5th Army positions astride the Somme, German Stormtroopers followed, and the British lines were very quickly overrun. The British were battered and bruised however their line never completely broke and the German advance was finally held in front of Amiens and Villers-Bretonneux. The area became a place of legend to the ANZAC's who managed against all odds to hold their positions.

The Germans then completed other offensives in front of Arras and the River Lys in April and the Aisne-Marne in May. These offensives ultimately failed, and no victory was awarded to the Germans during this period. They did however have huge and irreplaceable casualties.

In the next article we will be reporting on the French and American push in July 1918 quickly followed up with the Australian and Canadian advance of over 8 miles in one day. The Germans were on the run and during this period, had their blackest day of the war.

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