

Senior Citizens Forum Newsletter June 2018

Message from the Chairperson, Celia Steventon

Hello again, what a brilliant success our April forum on SCAMS was. We had more people than usual attending and we all received excellent advice and information about scams and how to deal with them.

Funnily enough my husband recently received an email saying he had a tax rebate due, but since the forum we now know this is false and just a scammer trying to get his bank details.

Our Telford 50 event is being finalised, so don't forget we need your help with information about Telford. So keep looking out for old photos and items and I look forward to seeing you on the 4th July for a really enjoyable day.

Please join us for our Future Fit Consultation meeting on the 26th July, at the Whitehouse Hotel, Wellington. Future Fit have asked for the opportunity to speak to you about the hospital proposals, so come along and hear what they have to say and maybe ask a question or two.

We have a busy year coming up, thank you for your support and I look forward to seeing you at our events.

50 Years of Pastime in Telford

Wednesday July 4th, 10am-2pm, at The Place, Oakengates

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

Don't miss our special reminiscence event which will be a wonderful opportunity to explore and share our memories of life in Telford over the last 50 years. Whether you were born and bred in the area, moved here when you were young or only in the last 20 - 30 years, everyone is welcome.

We'll be focusing on social activities, clubs and pastimes you've enjoyed over the years and the places you've frequented.

Please join us and help make it a very special day.

Talks, videos, photo exhibition and quiz, music, refreshments, light buffet lunch.

Free event, open to everyone -you don't have to be a member.

Forum Future Fit Consultation Event

Your opportunity to take part in the consultation about our local hospital services.

Thursday 26th July 2018

10.30am, doors open 10am, The Whitehouse Hotel, Watling Street, Wellington, TF1 2NJ

Free entry, everyone welcome, open to members and non-members. Hot drinks available (small charge applies).

Scams Awareness Month June 2018

Older people are often targeted by scammers. Research has found that 75 is the average age of reported victims and those over 70 have the highest detriment from a number of different scams.

Anyone can fall victim to a scam, but older people tend to fall victim to phone and mail scams. Figures from National Trading Standards show that older people are deliberately targeted and at greater risk of becoming recurring victims of scams because they may live alone, be at home during the day and have savings or valuables.

Some older people might be suffering from dementia, which could affect their decision-making process, or they might also feel lonely, which might make them more likely to talk to people they do not know.

Over 90 people joined us at our open forum event on Monday 23rd April at The Wakes, Oakengates. Valerie Graham, Citizens Advice Telford, gave valuable information about how we can all protect ourselves and our money from scammers and fraudsters. Scams can happen by post, telephone, online and on the doorstep.

Phantom Goods - People are lured-in with cut-price deals and fake recommendations to buy goods online that are never delivered.

Investment Scams - Sophisticated enough to tempt even the experienced investors, they use high pressure sales to create a sense of urgency.

Computer Scams - Victims are told by phone that there is a problem with their computer and are talked through procedures that give the fraudster access to your computer, and their personal information.

Courier Scams - These start with a call or text advising that a bank fraud has been detected. The caller or a courier attends the victim's home to collect their bank card.

Advance Fee Scams - People are asked to send money in the post for a range of non-existent services or to collect bogus lottery winnings.

Pension Scams - Someone contacts you about an investment or business opportunity, or about taking your pension money before you're 55, encouraging you to take out a large lump sum or your whole pension pot and letting them invest it for you.

Top Tips to Avoid Scams

- If you haven't bought a ticket – you can't win it and you shouldn't have to pay anything to get a prize.
- Your bank will never phone you or email you to ask for your PIN or online banking password.
- No bank, or the police, will send a courier to collect your bank card.
- Genuine computer firms do not make unsolicited phone calls to help you fix your computer.
- Check the ID of someone calling at your door. Phone the company using numbers you look up yourself, not those on the ID card. Keep the person waiting outside with the door closed while you check. Genuine callers will not mind waiting.
- Display a 'No Cold Callers Sign', it is harassment to ignore such a notice.
- If you're contacted out of the blue, be suspicious.
- Say no to cold-call investments and pensions reviews.

- Never reveal your bank financial details, passwords or pin numbers to anyone.
- Be aware of bogus emails that ask you to act now to verify your financial details, claim a prize or tax refund.
- Never ever make a rush decision, stop and think and get advice from someone you trust.
- Report suspected scams (see next page) and tell your friends and family.

Some companies, such as British Gas, organise for their staff to use a password when they visit your home, which you agree to beforehand when you call to report the problem. You then only let them in if they use the correct password.

Watch out for Loan Sharks

A loan shark is a person who offers loans at extremely high interest rates, typically under illegal conditions and without relevant authorization from the financial regulator. They don't use paperwork or receipts, and often use violence, intimidation and blackmail if repayments are missed. Repayments are at least twice the original amount, often with high charges for defaulting.

If you need a loan, speak to your bank or local credit union, (FAIRshare, tel 01952 200200)

Report Loan Sharks by calling 0300 555 2222

Suspect a Scam?

If debit cards, online banking or cheques are involved, contact the bank or credit card company.

If you've been unexpectedly contacted by someone about your pension, speak to the Pensions Advisory Service tel: 0800 011 3797, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

You can check with the Financial Conduct Authority on 0800 111 6768, www.fca.org.uk to check the company is registered. If you call the person or company back, use the phone number listed on the Financial Services Register, www.register.fca.org.uk

GET ADVICE from Citizens Advice consumer service 03454 040506. If it is a scam this will automatically be reported to Trading Standards.

REPORT scams and suspected scams to Action Fraud, tel 0300 123 2040, or use their online reporting tool at www.actionfraud.police.uk

TELL family, friends, neighbours so that they can avoid scams.

Local Police Teams

PC Rob Hughes (Safer Neighbourhood Team) and PCSO Michelle Williams (Police Community Support Officer) warned us about doorstep callers offering to repair your drive (after intentionally damaging it), people claiming to be from the 'water board' and people posing as police officers to gain access to your home. If they are not prepared to show you a warrant card, they are not genuine police officers. Ring 101 to establish the police officer's identity.

PC Hughes encouraged everyone to report all instances of low level crime, by calling 101. Details for local police teams can be found on www.westmercia.police.uk (by typing your postcode in 'My Area'), along with telephone numbers, addresses and opening hours of local stations. PCSO's are available between the hours of 8am and 10pm.

What is a crash-for-cash scam?

Crash-for-cash scamming is a type of motor insurance fraud carried out by criminals who intentionally cause an accident and put the blame on the other driver. Scammers' favourite technique is to pull away in front of their intended victim then jam on their brakes or they disable their own brake lights and force the driver behind into a collision. Another dangerous tactic is to indicate that they're about to turn left, then when the driver who's waiting to exit the junction pulls out, the scammer will drive straight on and slam into the emerging vehicle. However, the scammers cause the crash, they always make out that the other driver is at fault.

If you're involved in an accident and you suspect it may have been staged, it's advisable not to accuse or challenge the other driver, but don't admit liability either. Calmly collect their insurance details, and if it's safe to do so, use your mobile phone to take photos of the accident scene, and if possible, any damage to the other vehicle too. Once you've returned home, write down the details of the incident while they're still clear in your mind. Contact your insurance company as soon as you can, and make sure you tell them of your suspicions. You should also notify the police and report the incident to the Insurance Fraud Bureau by calling their Cheatline on 0800 422 0421.

Installing a dashboard camera will enable you to capture the moments preceding the accident on video as evidence for your insurer and the police.

Based on an article by Churchill Insurance

Environment & Transport Action Group by Dave Wright, Chair of ETAG

Since the last edition we have been looking at the lack of toilets at the new Telford bus station which was highlighted as a concern by several of our members. Speed bumps and potholes came up in a few conversations at our last forum and litter dropping and fly tipping have been highlighted to us. These are subjects which we will be looking at over the coming year.

A member of the group also attended and took part in the Future Fit Travel and Advisory Group which was held recently at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital. This group is looking at the concerns of the public over the options offered in the Future Fit consultation. It was a group of about 30 personnel covering Telford & Wrekin, Shropshire and North Wales. As well as the agencies involved there is a consultant group looking at travel to hospitals and a mapping exercise will include the full life cycle of an incident/patient journey.

Issues around travel to and from hospitals include bus, ambulance, private car (parking), greener transport, discharge from transport, average travel time plus the requirement to factor in the growing housing estates around Telford and Shrewsbury and the impact these could have in future years. The most important factors will be how the changes impact on the travel time and travel experience of the patients and their visitors.

If you can think of any particular issue which might impact on travel or transport for either the patient or their visitors, please let us know.

Telford Community Independence Hub

The Hub showcases the variety of support services available for older people across the region to help them stay healthy, safe and independent at home.

Attendees are able to find out more about mobility aids and home adaptations, WATCH personal alarms and assistive technology, and about help available for unpaid carers and much more.

It takes place every second week, venues and days vary. Contact the number below for details.

Tel My Choice 01952 459252

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

The Hub on the Hill, Southgate, Sutton Hill, TF7 4HG, Mon, 2pm - 4pm

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.

Shropshire Wildlife Trust

Shropshire Wildlife Trust works across Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire to protect and enhance the region's important plant and animal species and habitats.

Through our conservation work we also support health and wellbeing within our local communities and currently run 12-week programmes to introduce individuals to the many benefits of nature-based activities.

This can include personal health improvement, developing friendships as well as delivering on our charitable objective to promote understanding, support of and involvement in our natural world. The 12-week programmes called 'Live well with nature' introduce participants to conservation tasks and green spaces across the borough and beyond. Running from around 9:30 to 4:00 on Tuesdays we supply tea, coffee and biscuits, all tools required, training on how to use them and guaranteed sunshine! OK, I cannot promise that, but most Tuesdays are sunny. All we ask is that you enjoy the experience, bring a packed lunch and wear clothing suitable for outdoor tasks. We can even lend you a pair of wellies for the day if you need them!

Enrolment is open to all adults in Telford & Wrekin so please contact Craig for more information on 01743 284276 or email craigb@shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk or see our website for more details www.shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/live-well-nature

Robbed on holiday by Bob Groom, Forum Trustee

Like you, I have read all the material and listened to advice about taking safety precautions when travelling and vowed I would never be a victim. But for the first time I didn't do enough, and this is my experience of being robbed on the first day of a two-week holiday.

An "expert" undid 3 zips and searched through a bag I was carrying without me feeling or seeing anything. Only a wallet was taken, but it contained my credit and debit cards and cash.

This action, although over in seconds, had a long lasting emotional impact:

Anger was the first reaction, followed by acute anxiety at the thought of a bank account being drained and a credit card bill going through the roof.

Frustration when security calls from my mobile failed, logged in numbers had not been updated, and then my phone ran out of credit.

Stress due to numerous telephone calls on a borrowed phone with added language barriers.

Irritation when I had to answer questions to prove my identity. How many of these could you answer right now? 'What's your 12 digit online banking number, your account number, the last payments made, the name your direct debits, and recent items paid in?'. Now imagine doing that on the phone in a crowded hotel reception area in a foreign country.

Relief after an agonizing wait a series of texts from the banks assured me that fraudulent attempts to use my cards, totalling hundreds of pounds, had been prevented and the cards cancelled.

Worry, with my cards and cash had gone, how would we get through the next two weeks?

This was the most stressful experience I've ever had in my life, For the first time after countless trips, security hadn't come first.

I was lucky because the theft was discovered in minutes. What the stress levels must be when a theft is only discovered after a few hours is unimaginable.

Bob's Advice

So what lessons did I learn? The overall message is to treat security preparation as part of the holiday and try to think like a thief. Sit down and go through all risks and precautions and make a check list.

Mobiles - 'Pay as you go' ones should have plenty of credit remaining and be fully charged. If you have two phones log emergency numbers into both, make sure they're up to date and keep a separate paper record in case phones are stolen.

Proving your identity to banks - Take two separate copies of your passport and insurance documents. Note your bank account direct debits and the last payment and income transactions and memorise important numbers e.g. your account number and sort code.

When you discover you've been robbed - don't panic, get on your phone and cancel your cards immediately, don't waste time looking for the thieves, they vanish in seconds. For the thief it's all in a

day's work. Then call the local police to get a crime report and contact your travel insurance company and report everything to them.

Some extra tips....

- Ensure you have access to funds to cover emergencies and delays.
- Take more than one means of payment but split your money into different bags and wallets to travel.
- Use a money belt or internal pocket and only carry around what you need for that day.
- Put your handbag across your shoulder and under your arm or at the front and kept closed.
- Don't have a wallet, phone or passport in your back pocket or in a rucksack on your back.
- Include copies of your driving licence if you're taking it with you.
- Before you travel check out travel advice for the country you are visiting and find out how to contact the emergency services and British Embassy.
- Tell family and friends where you're going and staying and leave contact details.

What is GDPR?

How do the new data protection regulations affect us as individuals?

The organisations you deal with and buy goods from, collect information and data about you, including your name, address, phone number, email address, and maybe more.

On 25 May 2018 a huge change in the way companies must handle our data, and the rights that we have as consumers, came into force. This new EU regulation is called the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Under GDPR, companies must offer you the chance to make a positive choice to agree to further direct marketing communications, such as ticking a box or agreeing over the phone. All requests for consent must be written in plain language that's easy to understand and cannot be buried under pages of terms.

You can request a copy of any personal information held, and you can ask a company to delete all the data they hold about you. All companies will also have to provide you with the option to opt out in all future communications.

Companies have to tell you specifically what you're opting in to. What they use your data for and who it will be shared with must also be made clear to you at the point you make the choice.

Importantly, your positive opt-in shouldn't later be misused to contact you for anything you didn't sign up to. Companies that, for example, hold your details because you once bought something from them are having to do a big data clean up.

Although you may have felt bombarded recently with emails and letters from all the companies that hold your details, this gives you the opportunity to 'audit' where you wish to receive communication from and what you agree your data can be used for, so it's worth taking the time to look carefully at each one of them.

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.

Free Courses for Registered Carers & Former Carers

Are you, or is someone you know, bereft, lost, stuck?

No matter what the cause, grief is the normal and natural reaction to loss of any kind. Society these days expects us to 'get on with it' without any idea of how to do that. Whilst talking about how we feel can be helpful, often it isn't enough. This unique programme teaches you the simple steps to let go of the pain and move forwards.

This 8-week course is suitable for people experiencing loss and change in their life. The two-hour sessions are delivered in a group setting and delivered by Phyl Edmonds, Certified Grief Recovery Specialist®. Drawing upon her professional skills, as well as her personal experience of significant loss and recovery, Phyl will guide you in taking the small and correct action choices to help you complete your relationship to the pain, isolation and loneliness caused by significant emotional loss.

Life Planning for a Sense of Purpose

Following a significant life change, we often experience conflicting emotions and can lose our sense of self and purpose. This course is suitable for people experiencing significant loss and change in their life, for example: a new caring role, or one that has ended, bereavement, relationship breakdown, loss of health - either of self, or a loved one.

The 5 x 2 hour sessions are delivered in a small group setting and supported with mentoring and coaching to help participants gain confidence and receive support as they face the future. You will be guided in taking the actions that lead to a sense of self and purpose, whilst improving wellbeing and life opportunities.

All sessions should be attended. Both courses take place at The Glebe Centre, Glebe Street, Wellington, TF1 1JP, 10.15am - 12.30pm

These courses run throughout the year, to register your interest and ask about dates please contact phyl.edmonds@severnwd.co.uk or call 01952 255952 or mobile 07817 910552.

Art Exhibition at Wellington Methodist Church

The Art Group at Wellington Methodist Church are busy preparing for an Art Exhibition of their work and as previous years it's also open for local artists to exhibit. The exhibition will be held at the Church on Friday 6th and Saturday 7th July, 10am till 4pm each day.

If you're interested in exhibiting work please call Barbara Murray for an entry form on 07592 881108 (15th June is the last date for entry forms to be submitted, artwork to be delivered to the Church 3rd/4th July). Refreshments will be served at the exhibition on both days. Do come along to see the display, entrance is free.

Happy Harold Thanks PSA Testing

12 months ago, Harold Taylor was blissfully unaware of a cancer raging within his prostate! Being fit and well with no symptoms at all Harold had no reason to believe he was at risk from this silent killer. However, his wife Jackie's brother had recently been diagnosed with prostate cancer and persuaded him to attend a free screening session put on by Ironbridge Lions & Ironbridge Rotary.

Harold had his blood sample taken by a professional phlebotomist and then went home to await the results. To his horror his result came back in the red showing that his PSA level was very high.

Then followed a series of hospital appointments, hormone treatment and finally a course of radiotherapy. Nearly a year went by then the news came that his cancer had been conquered with the consultant telling Harold that he just had to have his PSA level tested every 3 months to ensure he stays clear.

Jackie's Brother meanwhile had lost his fight with prostate cancer, so Jackie and Harold have been backing Ironbridge Lions second screening event at every opportunity. Several local radio appearances have featured Harold and Jackie urging all men over 50 to have their PSA level checked regularly.

The latest event at the Anstice in Madeley attracted over 700 men including BBC Shropshire's breakfast presenter Eric Smith and the results have shown that 11% of the men tested had an abnormal level of PSA. Our retired consultant estimates that Ironbridge Lions has probably saved the lives of 50 men by early diagnosis and intervention.

Short Mat Bowls for over 50's

Come and join us for a fun session of bowling
Randlay Community Centre, Mon and Tues, 1.45 - 3.30pm
Just turn up or for more information call June on 598704.
Everyone welcome.

Trading Standards Accredited

The TSA scheme operated by Telford & Wrekin Council's Trading Standards Service, which aims to give residents details of local businesses they can trust. It follows on from the highly successful Trader Register which operated for over 10 years. TSA is now open to all trade sectors which will offer greater choice and reassurance to customers trying to find a business they can rely on.

All businesses are checked by Trading Standards and must have relevant insurances. They also sign up to the TSA Code of Practice. In the unlikely event of a problem, the TSA team will work with the customer and member to agree a resolution.

The Scheme has an easy to use website www.tsaccredited.co.uk where you can search for a member by business category. There's also a handy A - Z. Simply complete your postcode, choose a trade area and your search results will be listed based on members that are nearest to you. If you don't have access to the internet, then please telephone our contact centre on 01952 381818 and we will carry out the search for you. You don't have to be a Telford & Wrekin resident, everyone is welcome to use the TSA scheme.

It was recently estimated that problems with goods and services cost UK consumers almost £23 billion each year. Don't be part of this statistic! Choose wisely, reduce the risk and use a business from Trading Standards Accredited.

Yoga with Anne-Marie

Tuesdays 5.15 - 6.15pm or 6.30 - 7.30pm at The Wakes, Oakengates, TF2 6EP
Booking essential, please call 07734 107383 or email yogawithannemarie@gmail.com
From beginners to advanced - at your own pace

Happiness is....Hugging an Elephant! By Anne-Marie Davies

When I retired from the Forum 18 months ago I had planned a trip volunteering overseas, and although delayed by the arrival of a new granddaughter, on 4th March this year I set off on my big journey.

I started off battling the snow to get to Birmingham airport for my flight to Doha and onwards to Singapore where some 13 hours later I arrived in the hot humid atmosphere.

I saw the gardens by the bay with the wonderful musical lit up trees and walked through amazing shopping malls - just for the air con! I managed to cram in Orchard Road, Chinatown and Little India, the old colonial buildings and the Long Bar for a delicious but very expensive Gin Sling - Raffles is closed presently for a refurb!

Two days later it was hello Australia as I flew up to Port Macquarie at the southernmost end of the great barrier reef. I stayed with my godmother, a lively 87-year-old who was pleased to show me around, although she drew the line at scuba diving with me! That was amazing, pretty coral, loads of amazing fish, huge manta rays, turtles and 3 types of shark, including the Port Jackson shark which the dive master picked up for us all to stroke!

All too soon it was on to spend a couple of nights at loud and colourful Bangkok to meet up with other volunteers. We visited temples, took a boat ride to the floating markets and of course visited the notorious Ho Sang Road night market where you could sample fried scorpion and tarantula - I wasn't that hungry!

Next it was off to Surin and the elephant village where we stayed in village houses with no hot water, (we did have western style loos, but they had to be flushed with a bucket). Nearly all the families had elephants living in their back yards and we had two at our house, Lily and her baby Wan Dee and it was amazing how quickly you got used to them being there.

We walked the elephants by lead to the river, bathed with them, cut endless supplies of elephant grass and cleared up after them. We also visited the elephant grave yard and made paper from their poo!!

After a week looking after the wonderful gentle giants we crossed the border into Cambodia. After a 4am start to see the sunrise at Angkor Wat, we split into 2 groups and I joined the group helping to teach English to the kindergarten at a locally run charitable school.

They attend state schools for half a day in Cambodia, morning or afternoon, but don't learn English which is necessary to obtain a good job. The children learn parrot fashion without any teaching aids and their class teacher, only 19, was desperate to ensure that they learned the correct pronunciation. Needless to say, I fell in love with each and every one of them as we played, sang songs and learned English words.

The rest of our group spent their time building a house for a family living in a small wooden shack. It cost 2000 US dollars to build and took about 5 days. The family were overjoyed when a whip round enabled us to furnish it with sleeping mats, blankets, mosquito nets, a cooking stove, pots and pans and even some toys for the children. They were so grateful that it made us all think of the things that we take for granted every day.

On the last day I visited Phnom Kulen National Park up in the Khmer mountains, full of beautiful trees, temples and the valley of the thousand Lingas as well as a lovely ice-cold waterfall that you could swim under.

Then it was off to the airport again and back to Birmingham where it was cold, grey and raining. However, I have such wonderful memories and have made some great friends from all over the world and all I have to do is close my eyes and remember that feeling of hugging an elephant to remind me what a magical experience it was.

Telford 50 mile Trail

Don't get us wrong, we're not expecting you all to don your boots and head off for a 50 mile stroll, but we are hoping you will enjoy some part of this new circular 50 mile route put together by a local group of enthusiasts as recognition of Telford's 50th anniversary.

The route is set out in seven stages: Town Park to Ironbridge; Ironbridge to Little Wenlock; Little Wenlock to Wellington; Wellington to Horsehay; Horsehay to Oakengates; Oakengates to Lilleshall; Lilleshall to Town Park. The stage lengths vary between 6 and 10 miles however being circular the Trail can be accessed and left at any point. There is good public transport to much of the route, the exception being the section between Coalbrookdale and Wellington.

The Trail has been devised using existing footpaths and local green spaces, hence the somewhat snakelike wriggle around Wellington. You will be surprised at some of the lovely areas which the Trail reaches, all within the bounds of the Borough of Telford.

The official launch, carried out by Kate Ashbrook, Chair of Ramblers, patron of the Walking for Health programme and a representative of Telford & Wrekin Council will take place at the Town Park Information Centre, 10am, Saturday, 16th June. Groups of walkers will ensure that the whole route is walked on the day, as well as a relay team running the whole Trail. There will be a chance to walk some of the route for 3 to 10 miles, so please come along and take part, reasonable trainers should be adequate.

The Trail is being signed with permanent waymarks, being possible through grants from the Council's 50th Anniversary Fund and from Veolia's EnviroGrant scheme. The work devising and waymarking the route has been carried out by volunteers from the five sponsoring organisations - Telford & East Shropshire Ramblers, Walking for Health Telford & Wrekin, Wellington Walkers are Welcome, the Long Distance Walkers Association and Ironbridge Walking Festival.

Please come and join us.

Dag Saunders, Telford 50 50 mile Trail Group.

History on Foot

A programme of guided local history walks organised by members of the Wrekin Local Studies Forum. For more information and booking, please contact the organiser of the individual walk.

July 1st Building the Iron Bridge. Start at Bedlam Furnaces, 10.30am, 2 hours. Contact 07966 311812.

July 8th Aqueduct Village. Start at Britannia Inn, 2.30pm, 2 hours. Contact johnwhite727@aol.com

July 10th The Anglo-Saxon Plesc Boundary of Newport. Start at St Nicholas Church, 10am, 2 hours. Contact mar.ant@btinternet.com

July 12th The Women of Shifnal. Start at St Andrew's Church Porch, 7.30pm, 1 hour, 30 minutes. Contact 07791 294821

July 16th Steeraway and Shortwood. Start at New Works Lane car park, 11am, 2 hours, 15 minutes. Contact 01952 630443

July 19th Little Wenlock Village and Environs. Start at Village Hall, 7pm, 1 hour, 30 minutes. Contact 01952 504135

Aug 11th Telford, Cadman and Cinderloo. Start at Dawley Baptist Church, 1pm, under 2 hrs. Contact lawleyoverdalehg@gmail.com

100 years on – The Great War June and July 1918 By Dave Wright

From the autumn of 1914 to the spring of 1918, 475 miles of parallel trenches were the scene of countless battles with very little progress on either side. From June 1918 onwards, this began to change with the arrival of the USA.

By this time the British army had changed from British Expeditionary Forces, a small force of riflemen sometimes backed by insubstantial artillery. It was now a very large fighting machine of 5 armies able to prove that attack was better than defence. Haig was listening to his commanders who in turn were listening to their subordinates and the British were a better equipped army with greater firepower than at any time since 1914.

During the last 100 days of the Great War the Allied forces took over 40% of the German guns and captured 49% of all Germany troops. Because of this on 9th June 1918 an Anglo-German conference took place in the Hague to discuss prisoners of war.

However, the Germans were still pressing forward in their offensive including Operation Gneisenau (Battle of Matz) which ended on the 14th June.

The huge efforts of the German army during their Spring Offence had taken its toll. Moving thousands of troops from the Russian front was time consuming and tiring and the number game was beginning to turn in favour of the allies with American troops landing by the thousand in Italy.

The number of American troops was damaging German morale. US troops recaptured German held positions during the Battles of Chateau Thierry and Belleau Wood. The Americans lost some 9777 troops, but they captured 1600 German troops and killed many more.

During July the Germans faltered in their attempt to divert allied forces away from Flanders in the second battle of Marne due to a very decisive counter-attack by the allies. This one battle resulted in France losing 95,000 fighting troops, Britain 13,000 and the US 12,000, however Germany lost over 164,000.

The war on the Western Front was a contest between the German military effectiveness and the greater Allied manpower. Both sides were fighting for enormous stakes, the Germans hoping to carve out new states on their eastern and western borders, whilst the Allies not only fought over territory but mainly to punish aggression and uphold Western law and order.

The look ahead to the next edition is when on the 8th of August 1918 the Australian and Canadian advanced 8 miles.

HSBC Building Launches into Orbit!

The Board of the Clifton Community Arts Centre Limited is more than delighted to announce that the lease on the former HSBC building in Wellington has been signed and work can begin on converting the building into an arts and community space, including a cinema and a café/bistro.

The building will be known as the Wellington Orbit and very soon you will be able to contact us through our new website, Facebook page and Twitter feed.

In November 2012 five people agreed to work with the community and local councils to bring arts, exhibition, training and cinema facilities to Wellington. The initial target venue of the former Clifton Cinema was unsuccessful; however the team wish everyone to know that the cinema will be known as "The Clifton Suite" thereby acknowledging the Clifton's contribution to the history of cinema in Wellington.

We are immensely grateful to everyone who has been on this six-year journey with us. We will shortly be announcing further investment, sponsorship and volunteering opportunities.

Want to know more? You can contact us at enquiries@theclifton.org or by visiting our stall in Wellington market on Saturdays between 9am and 12 midday.

Fiona Hunter

Join us today! Become a member of The Forum

To become a member of the Senior Citizens Forum, either phone 07932 828333/07552 975676 or email us at enquiries@twseniors.org.uk

Membership is free and open to people resident in the area, in middle and later life, or anybody with a particular interest in older people's issues.

As a member you will, unless you notify us otherwise, receive our newsletter every two months by post or email.

How we handle your data

The Senior Citizens Forum is committed to ensuring that your privacy is protected by using your data fairly, lawfully, securely and solely for the purposes for which it is required.

We collect data to allow us to register you as a member of the Forum so that you may receive our newsletter every two months. If you choose to receive it by post, we pass your name and address to a mailing company. We sometimes use the data for statistical purposes. We will not sell, distribute or lease your personal information to third parties unless we have your permission or are required by law to do so.

If you believe that any information we are holding on you is incorrect or incomplete, or you wish to have your details removed from our records, or wish to stop receiving any correspondence from us, please contact us at the address above, or by calling 07932 828333, email enquiries@twseniors.org.uk.

The Senior Citizens Forum is a registered charity and has no regular income. Don't forget that you can help – if you get the opportunity to nominate a charity for funds please do think of us; or if you would like to make a donation, it would be much appreciated. Cheques, made payable to the Senior Citizens Forum, can be sent to our freepost address above.

The newsletter is entirely independent and is not tied to any political party. Information is, to the best of our knowledge, correct at the time of going to press but no liability will be accepted for any errors or omissions. The inclusion of an article does not necessarily imply a recommendation of its aims, policies or methods.

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