



## *WRSB Newsletter*

**WOLVERHAMPTON RHEUMATOLOGY SUPPORT GROUP**  
Charity No 1041181

**CARING IS SHARING**

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### **Dates for your Diary**

#### **Coffee Morning**

Monday 3 March 2014

10 30am-12 30pm

(Doors Open 10 20am)

Linden House

211, Tettenhall Road, Wolverhampton.

WV6 0DD

**Dr Paul Newton**

**(Consultant Rheumatologist)**

**Rheumatoid Arthritis/Osteoarthritis**

**Please reply by E mail**

**[jansimpson03@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jansimpson03@yahoo.co.uk)**

**Or Joyce Knibbs (07539949723)**

**623 Cannock Rd, Fallings Park**

**Wolverhampton WV10 8PH**

**(Invitations enclosed with this Newsletter)**

## **Coffee Morning**

Monday 7 April 2014

10 30am-12 30pm (Doors Open 10 20am)  
Linden House  
211, Tettenhall Road, Wolverhampton.  
WV6 0DD

## **Keep Able (Aids and Adaptations)**

**Please reply to Joyce Knibbs post or  
telephone.**

Joyce Knibbs 623 Cannock Road, Fallings  
Park, Wolverhampton WV10 8PH

**Mobile: 07539949723 (Mon – Fri)**

**E mail jansimpson03@yahoo.co.uk**

**(Invitations enclosed with this Newsletter)**

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## **OUTINGS**

**Mary Allen has organised a number of  
very tempting outings for our group if  
you are interested in any of the  
following trips please contact Mary  
direct on 01902 354369 or Mob  
07948181593**

### **Wednesday 26 March 2014 (Staffordshire Spring Saunter) £15**

Meeting at Faulklands Street car park  
(time to be confirmed) our coach will  
take us to Penkridge Market with ample  
time for browsing and shopping.  
We will then carry on to Tumbledown  
Farm for a Carvery Lunch (included in  
the price)

After lunch we will continue for our last  
leg of the outing through picturesque  
Cannock chase to the City of Lichfield to  
browse the quaint shops or visit Lichfield  
Cathedral.

A great value day out costing only £15  
which includes all of the above.

### **Thursday 15 May 2014 National Arboretum Alrewas (A day of remembrance)**

The National Arboretum is situated in the  
National Park, Alrewas, Staffordshire.  
This site is a lasting remembrance for  
people from all walks of life military and  
civilians included. Free admission but  
donations are welcomed.

We are leaving Faulklands Street Car  
Park at approx. 9 30am (To be  
confirmed) There is a service of  
remembrance at  
10 30am.

There are two optional guided tours the  
first one on foot £3 and a second one by  
covered train £4 50.

There is a restaurant serving hot and cold  
drinks plus meals and snacks.

Cost of the trip to be advised coach fare  
only approx. £10 depending on numbers.

### **Thursday 17 July 2014 Afternoon Cream Tea with Pat Jones Gunstone Hall)**

Pat Jones has very kindly invited the group to an afternoon cream tea at her home Gunston Hall, Equestrian Codsall.

Transport to be discussed, details to follow in later editions of the Newsletter and coffee mornings.

### **Sunday 10 August 2014**

#### **Something Different – Sunday Buffet Lunch Cruise – approx. £24.50**

Would you like to join us on a Sunday buffet lunch cruise on board the Sherborne Wharf luxury passenger boat in Birmingham? The price above includes the coach fare, a buffet lunch and a free bottle of wine for every 2 passengers, which sounds good to me.

**If you would like to join us on any of these excursions, please contact; Mary Allen – 01902 354369; or mobile 017948181593**

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### **Turkey and Tinsel Holiday**

**Departing Monday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2014 (5 days £269)**

**Sinah Warren Coastal Hotel  
Hayling Island**

Sinah Warren, looking out across Langstone Harbour Sinah Warren sits on the western tip of Hayling Island and

benefits from its mild climate and above average sunshine count. The grounds that run down to the water's edge are a mix of pines and flowers popular with butterflies and birds. A tranquil backdrop that is perfect for a gentle stroll.

Included in the holiday is:

- Return Executive Coach Travel
- Excursions
- 4 nights Half Board
- Entertainment Programme
- Upgrades upon request

To book contact Joyce Knibbs  
01902 862198 mob 07539949723

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**Our members enjoying Turkey and Tinsel Holiday December 2013 at Cricket St Thomas**



## Cookery Competition

Our members have been invited by Carrie Jahns of Sunrise Senior Living, Tettenhall to enter a cookery competition (**the way your mum used to make it**) and the chance to win a Kenwood K Mixer worth over £200.

All you need to do is e mail a photograph of your dish and its name and your details to:

[compition@sunriseseniorliving.com](mailto:compition@sunriseseniorliving.com)

Or contact 01902 774100

Closing date 16 March 2014

Carrie will be attending our next Coffee morning on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March to explain more



## Wolverhampton Home Improvement Scheme (WHIS)

At our last coffee morning held on the 3 February 2014 we received a very interesting presentations from representatives of the Wolverhampton Home Improvement Scheme (WHIS) we hope that this information may be of interest to you. Contact details for the scheme are listed below.

### **Private Sector Housing**

#### **History**

Since the 1980's Wolverhampton have procured external delivery of the majority of its housing assistance programmes (with the exception of the Disabled facilities Grants which are delivered separately by Independent Living).

Following the last comprehensive spending review cabinet approved mainline capital programme funding for a reduced but strategic housing intervention programme based on priority issues.

To offer a responsive cost effective solution it was agreed by cabinet in Dec 2012 to offer assistance within the city.

#### **Priorities**

Assistance and support to owner occupiers, who are:

- **Elderly**
- **Vulnerable**
- **Disabled**
- **On income related benefits.**

## **Remit**

To develop a Home Improvement Service within Wolverhampton City Council which will provide a coordinated approach to improve the lives of Wolverhampton's residents.

The Home Improvement Service (WHIS) will be delivering work and initiatives to owner occupiers; primarily to support the elderly, disabled and vulnerable to maintain their independence and to stay in their own homes, where appropriate for as long as possible.

This is alongside sourcing funding opportunities and coordinated approaches with providers to target specific vulnerable groups. The aim is to not only support individual cases but also to deliver targeted intervention work, to reduce the impact on Health and Social Services.

Home Improvement Service internally, to develop and promote housing assistance programmes and respond to requests for services from vulnerable owner occupiers WHIS will engage with service providers across sectors to identify support that is available to be

able to identify a more holistic approach to the assistance and support the Home Improvement Service can offer.

## **Current Schemes**

Handyperson Service – a service offered to home owners who are over 60 and on income related benefits and home owners who are registered disabled and on income related benefits.

Including a visit to establish if there are other housing needs.

Grants and Loans – If you meet the criteria we may be able to offer you grants or repayable grants to improve the fabric of your building.

Safe Homes Scheme – a service delivered to those suffering domestic violence to make their homes safer (private sector only)

## **CONTACT**

**Wolverhampton Home Improvement Service (WHIS)**

[WHIS@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:WHIS@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

**01902 551155**

**Lisa Morgan - Housing Improvement Officer**

[lisa.morgan@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:lisa.morgan@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

**Amy Hawkes– Customer Services Officer**

[amy.hawkes@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:amy.hawkes@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

## **Independence Payments on Disability Living Allowance**

Disability benefits have undergone some significant changes recently. Since June 2013, no new claims can be made for Disability Living Allowance (DLA).

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is the new benefit for people aged 16 to 64 with a long-term health condition or disability. A long-term condition means one which is expected to last 12 months or longer. Whilst similar to DLA there are also differences (such as a medical examination) and it may be harder to qualify.

Getting PIP depends on an assessment of how your disability or health condition affects your ability to live independently. A health professional will look at your ability to carry out certain key activities of daily living and mobility, such as preparing food, washing yourself, communicating and moving around.

PIP is based on how your condition affects you, not on what condition you have, but special rules apply if you're terminally ill. Key points to note are that:

- PIP is not means-tested (this means it isn't affected by any other income/savings that you have)
- It is non-contributory (this means your entitlement doesn't depend on the national insurance contributions you've paid)

- PIP can be paid whether you're in work or out of work
- PIP can be paid alongside other benefits
- PIP is not taxable
- The benefit is administered by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
- It is intended to help with the extra costs of having a long-term condition. However, if you get PIP, you can spend it in any way you choose.

### **If you're getting Disability Living Allowance**

We then turn to what happens to people who are already getting DLA and how they will be affected by PIP.

If you're getting DLA and are aged 16 to 64 on 8 April 2013, the DWP will eventually ask you to make a new claim for PIP instead. This applies to you even if you have an indefinite or lifetime award of DLA. You don't have to do anything until the DWP get in touch with you.

At some point between October 2013 and 2018 the DWP will contact you and invite you to make a claim for PIP. If you do not claim within 28 days, or if your claim is unsuccessful, your DLA award will end.

You won't get PIP automatically just because you qualify for DLA. You'll

have to make a claim for it. If you don't claim when the DWP asks

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You won't get PIP automatically just because you qualify for DLA. You'll have to make a claim for it. If you don't claim when the DWP asks you to, your DLA payments will stop.

The DWP expects that most people who are getting DLA should qualify for PIP. However, because it's a new benefit with different conditions of entitlement, it's possible you won't get it. Or you may be entitled to a different rate of payment, which could be lower or higher.

If you decide to claim PIP, the DWP will continue to pay DLA until four weeks after they make a decision on whether you can get it. There should be no break in payment if you move on to PIP.

From 7 October 2013, if you're getting DLA, the DWP will write to you inviting you to make a claim for PIP if:

- your existing DLA award is due to end after 24 February 2014 and you haven't received a DLA renewal letter, or
- you report a change in how your disability or health condition affects you, or

If your DLA award ends before 24 February 2014, the DWP will ask you to re-claim DLA for the time being and you'll be invited to claim PIP at a later date.

If you're getting DLA but you're not in one of these groups, you won't be invited to make a claim for PIP until October 2015 or later. The DWP will then start to contact everyone else getting DLA inviting them to make a claim for PIP. You do not need to contact them. They expect to have contacted all DLA claimants by September 2017 and to finish re-assessing all DLA claims by May 2018.

However, it remains to be seen whether they will be able to keep to this timetable. Past experience has shown significant delays in transferring people on to new benefits.

### **If you're aged 65 or over and getting DLA**

If you were aged 65 or over on 8 April 2013 and you're getting DLA, you can

continue to get it for as long as you're eligible. The DWP won't contact you about claiming PIP and you can't choose to make a claim for PIP.

If you're aged 65 or over and not getting DLA, you may be able to get Attendance Allowance instead.

If you're getting Attendance Allowance, you won't be affected by the introduction of PIP.

### **What happens to other benefits that depend on getting DLA?**

When you're getting DLA, you or your carer may be entitled to other benefits or concessions that depend on you getting DLA. These are called **passported benefits**. For example, they include Carer's Allowance for your carer, the Blue Badge scheme, which allows you to park in restricted areas, and other travel concessions.

If you're entitled to PIP when your DLA ends, you may get the same passported benefits as before. This will depend on what rate of PIP you get and if it's enough to qualify you for the passported benefit.

If you're not entitled to PIP when your DLA ends, you won't be able to carry on getting your passported benefits and concessions.

PIP is a new benefit to us all (including the DWP) and the transition from DLA to PIP may be confusing. Therefore it is recommended that you seek advice if you get any letters telling you to apply for PIP or if your DLA award is coming to the end of a fixed period.

Age UK Wolverhampton has a team of trained advisers, experienced in helping residents of Wolverhampton who are aged 50 and over (and their Carers). We can help you to understand your rights and access benefits and services that may be available to you. We can be contacted on 01902 572 060.

**Sukie Binning**

**Team Leader**

**Age UK Wolverhampton**

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The views expressed in this Newsletter are taken in good faith and are not necessarily endorsed by the editor or the WRSG. The use of a product name does not constitute an endorsement by the WRSG

**Many Thanks to our contributors which makes for essential reading. I look forward to seeing everyone at our next coffee morning on 3 March 2014**

**Liz Walker (Chairperson WRSG)**