



## *WRSO Newsletter*

WOLVERHAMPTON RHEUMATOLOGY SUPPORT GROUP

Charity No 1041181

CARING IS SHARING

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### **Coffee Morning**

**Monday May 12<sup>th</sup> 2014**

10 30am-12 30pm

(Doors Open 10 20am)

Linden House  
211, Tettenhall Road, Wolverhampton.  
WV6 0DD

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### **Dates for your Diary**

**Please note that due to bank holiday and availability of Linden House the dates for the May and June 2014 coffee mornings have been altered from the usual first Monday in the month**

**(Age UK Travel Insurance)**

**Please reply to Joyce Knibbs by post, or telephone**

**Mobile: 07539949723 (Mon –Friday)**

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

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

**Invitations are enclosed with this Newsletter**

## **Coffee Morning**

**Monday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2014**

10 30am-12 30pm (Doors Open 10 20am)

Linden House  
211, Tettenhall Road, Wolverhampton.  
WV6 0DD

**(Talk on Spondylitis)**

**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**

## **Forthcoming Coffee Mornings**

**(2014)**

July 7<sup>th</sup> 2014 Gentle exercise

August 2014 No Coffee Morning

Sept 1<sup>st</sup> 2014 Wolverhampton Fire  
Service

Sept 15<sup>th</sup> 2014 Annual General Meeting

Oct 6<sup>th</sup> 2014 Workshop Fibromyalgia

Nov 3<sup>rd</sup> 2014 Christmas gift stalls

Dec 8<sup>th</sup> 2014 Christmas Party

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## **OUTINGS**



**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.

Coach leaving Faulklands Street Car Park at 9 30am. 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 Hot and cold meals available in the restaurant.

Cost £10 for the coach. Places still available

Contact Mary Allen 01902 354369 or  
Mobile: 0177948181593

**Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2014**

**Afternoon Cream Tea with Pat Jones at  
Gunstone Hall 2-4pm**

Pat Jones has very kindly invited the WRSG members to afternoon tea at her home Gunstone Hall Codsall, Equestrian Centre.

Places are fully booked for this outing and we are travelling by car. There are 5 places available for lifts in cars for members who have

already booked. We are also asking members to take a folded chair with them if this is possible. Don't worry if you can't.

The WRSG are treating members to this event (strawberries and cakes)

Any further queries please ring Mary Allen 01902 354369 or Mobile 017948181593

**Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> August 2014**  
**Sunday Buffet lunch Cruise**

Sunday buffet lunch experience on board the Sherborne Wharf Luxury Passenger boat in Birmingham.

Mary Allen is collecting lunch costs now please contact Mary for further information.

01902 354369 or 017948181593

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**News Round Up & Features**



**BLUE BADGE  
HOLDERS**

Please be aware that it takes 6 -8 weeks for your blue badge to be renewed, and it will cost you £10 00.

No reminders are sent to you. It is your responsibility to renew on time. So check your expiry date and apply early.

You could be fined if you use a badge that is out of date; even if you are waiting for the new badge to come through. You can request a form from:

**Wolverhampton City council by ringing  
01902 551155**

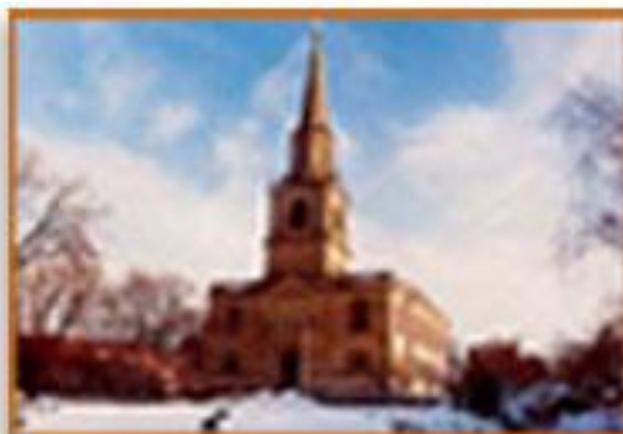
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**Coffee Morning in aid of the WRSG**

**St Johns in the Square Church**

**Friday 26 September 2014**

**11am - 1pm**



The WRSG have been nominated again by the friends of St Johns Church in the Square Wolverhampton as their charity to hold a coffee morning on Friday 26 September 2014 11am till 1pm.

Entry fee £2 we hope as many members as possible will be able to attend. Coffee, tea and home cakes will be served. Proceeds will be donated to the WRSG.

Disabled access is at the rear of the church through the rear chapel. Parking shouldn't be a problem.

St. John's is a magnificent 18th century building. There is a notable and very fine Rhenish organ, which was recently restored. The church has an excellent acoustic and has been recognised as one of the best places in the city for concerts both choral and orchestral. There is a Friends of St. John's Charity, which has been supported mainly through individual bequests and legacies. It has enabled much needed restoration and refurbishment work to be done on the church.

We look forward to seeing you at this event.  
**Thank you to Ann Evans for her hard work.**

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**Doctor Paul Newton came along to our March 2014 Coffee morning and gave an excellent talk to our members on Osteoarthritis and Rheumatoid Arthritis. He has kindly written the following article for our members.**

### **Osteoarthritis**

A joint is simply a connection between two bones that allows movement. At its simplest the two bones are separated by cartilage, which is a gristly substance that you often find in pieces of meat. Many of the joints in the spine are of this simple nature. They do not, however, allow a great deal of movement. For greater movement one needs two specific layers of cartilage at each bone end, separated by a very thin space which is filled with fluid. This is the type of joint seen in the limbs. The whole joint is then bound together with ligaments to make it stable. On the inside of the surrounding ligaments there is a thin layer of cells called the synovium

which secrete a small amount of fluid to lubricate the joint.

Joints are therefore in essence very simple structures, though the chemistry of the substance that makes up the joint tissues are very complicated resulting from hundreds of millions of years of evolution.

Although in medicine we like to use precise terms for illness, sometimes diagnoses have been around for such a long time that the names stick even if they are not terribly accurate or helpful. Osteoarthritis is a case in point. It doesn't really describe what is happening to the joint, but it is a term used for such a long time that it is unlikely ever to be changed. The essential problem with osteoarthritis is not in the bone or in the ligaments or in the synovium lining the joint, but in the cartilage. The primary abnormality is a degeneration of the cartilage which can in severe cases completely disappear leading to bones rubbing on each other.

In many ways one should not think of osteoarthritis as a disease which causes cartilage damage, but rather as a result of a large range of other diseases which cause cartilage damage. The end result of these many different conditions is the same; that is loss of cartilage.

As mentioned, the list of conditions that can cause cartilage damage is very long. In the past when physical injuries were more common, direct trauma to the joint or fracture of a bone near to a joint was a common cause of cartilage damage and particularly affected younger people. Today we associate loss of cartilage with ageing, though this does affect different individuals to a very different extent. Most people over the age of sixty will have some loss of cartilage in at least one joint and usually several joints.

In other people these degenerative changes start in the forties and affect many different joints. We know that there is a very large hereditary element to cartilage wear but there are a lot of

other factors as well, many of which we do not know about. Other diseases that can damage cartilage include rheumatoid arthritis, gout and infection.

On the other hand, normal use of a joint even with regular and vigorous physical activity does not cause cartilage damage and may even help to prevent against it, only excessive and abnormal loading of the joint over a long period of time will cause damage. Furthermore, to some extent a joint is protected by the muscles and ligaments around it and these are strengthened and improved by exercise.

Structural damage to the cartilage in a joint is not amenable to any form of drug therapy, injections or physiotherapy. Although these treatments might help with pain associated with damage, they do not in any way reverse or prevent further damage occurring. Surgical replacement of a joint which has been exceptionally successful in many cases in the past fifty years, remains the only 'curative' treatment available. Experiments have been done with growing cartilage in tissue culture and then transplanting into a damaged joint and this is sometimes used in younger people such as sportsmen. However the procedure is very experimental and also expensive. In the long term this type of approach may well be the approach taken by Doctors in the future, but this is likely to benefit our children rather than ourselves.

Another approach is the new development of painkillers targeting specific nerves and nerve growth. This is a very active area of research, though still experimental. We are unfortunately at the moment just left with simple painkillers such as paracetamol and a whole host of other opiate related medication some stronger than others.

Anti- Inflammatory drugs are helpful for a proportion of patients, but for most are no better in their effectiveness than paracetamol. They also have quite a high rate of side effects and

these are most troublesome in the elderly, who are exactly the type of patient who would want to use them. Adverse effects on the stomach and the heart as well as the kidneys and the blood pressure can cause problems which make the treatment worse than the disease for many people.

Progress in the treatment of other types of arthritis has been very rapid in the last ten to twenty years, but with osteoarthritis it has been rather disappointing. I would be much more optimistic however, about developments in osteoarthritis treatment in the next twenty years.

**Doctor Paul Newton**  
(Consultant Rheumatologist)

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### **Staffordshire Spring Saunter**

A wonderful day out on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2014, with over 40 WRSG members enjoying Penkridge market in the morning and a fabulous carvery lunch at Tumbledown Farm.

After lunch we headed out to Lichfield via the beautiful Cannock Chase. The weather was really in our favour with rain and snow storms whilst we were either dining or on the coach. Sunshine the rest of the time which absolutely added to the pleasure of strolling through the city of Lichfield either taking in the sites or shopping.

Our thanks to Mary Allen for organising the outings we are all looking forward to the next one.

## **Keep Able Aids and Adaptations**

### **Keeping Able in or out of your home;**

At the Coffee Morning 07 April 14, Mark from 'Keep Able' came along to tell us all about services and items available at the shop, 98 Cleveland Street, Wolverhampton. Mark told us that the shop is known as Keep Able, however it was taken over by Hearing and Mobility about 4 years ago. They offer free hearing test, either at the store or in your own home. They have qualified people to measure you for the use of walking aids, wheelchairs, walkers etc, as it is important to have the correct height even for walking sticks. There are a variety of cushions for chairs and wheelchairs. Mark advised that even if you do not propel yourself in a wheelchair, larger wheels are easier to push and to get up and down kerbs, so should not be discounted them when choosing a wheelchair. Keep Able also have a wide variety of electric wheelchairs and scooters. Both electric wheelchairs and scooters are available on Motability if you receive the higher rate. It would be a 3 year contract, free services and insurance. Stair Lifts, Electric armchairs, beds, bath lifts are also available as well as the smaller items; Cosyfeet shoes and slippers; perching stools, easy grip utensils, variety of hand rails; arm, legs, back supports, nail clippers, long shoe horns, bathing & shower aids; Personal Care; comfort aids. Kitchen & dining aids; The list is endless. If you require more information we have a stock of magazines for you to take at the coffee mornings, or you can contact the shop on 01902 711811. Mark says all members of the staff will be pleased to help and advise you. You can call into the shop to look around or ring to request a home visit.

**For further information for assistance or to order by phone please call.**

**Tele: 01902 711881**

**[www.hearingandmobility.co.uk](http://www.hearingandmobility.co.uk)**

**9B Cleveland Street, Wulfrun Centre,  
Wolverhampton WV1 3HH**

## **Handy Man Update**

**(Lisa Morgan Wolverhampton City Council)**

**Hello All,**

I have felt it necessary following the article in the Express and Star on 21.02.14 to issue the following statement.

There will also be follow up press releases early next week (23.02.14) for the wider public but I felt it important that you were assured of our current status as soon as possible.

“Wolverhampton City Council has confirmed that the Handy Person service in Wolverhampton will not be ending due to cuts but will continue to operate as part of the Councils Housing Assistance Programme. The service is part of the Wolverhampton Home Improvement Service (WHIS) operated by the Council’s Housing Service and currently partners with the Council’s Arm’s Length Housing Company Wolverhampton Homes to enable vulnerable households in the private sector to get essential small repairs carried out. Enquires can be made by telephoning 01902 551155 email at [whis@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:whis@wolverhampton.gov.uk) and details of the service can be found on the Council’s website at <http://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/article/3248/Handyperson-Service>”

An initial pilot scheme was opened and due to end in March, but funding has been identified in the authority’s Housing Revenue Account, which is separate from the council’s general fund that pays for services, to ensure the programme continues on a rolling basis. Councillor Peter Billson, Wolverhampton City Council’s Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration and Prosperity, said: “We are delighted that the Handy Person scheme has proved to be very popular.

**Lisa Morgan (Wolverhampton City Council)  
Housing Improvement Officer, Education &  
Enterprise**

**Tel. Office: 01902 554746**

**E-mail:**

**[Lisa.Morgan@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:Lisa.Morgan@wolverhampton.gov.uk)**

## Walking for Health



Free health walks – summer timetable (1 April-30 September 2014) is available. We will have copies at our next coffee morning or you can ring me (Liz 01902 563751) and I would be happy to forward one to you.

Walking for Health (**The perfect activity for health**) walking is one of the safest and easiest forms of physical activity. You don't need any special equipment to start walking and it can be easy to build into your daily routine.

### **Health Walks are safe, fun, friendly and can:**

- Increase your energy levels
- Keep your heart strong and reduce blood pressure
- Help you manage your weight
- Relieve stress and help you to sleep better
- Reduce cholesterol
- Help prevent and control diabetes

- Lift your mood and self esteem

### **How much walking should I do?**

You need to walk for at least 30 minutes on five or more days a week to meet the current recommendations for physical activity. To really help your heart it is recommended that you walk at a pace that makes you breathe a little faster, feel warmer and gives you a slightly faster heart beat – but remember, build up gradually.

**To find out more call Walking for Health on: Freephone 0800 073 4242 or Tel: 01902 444246**

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## Changes to the Ring and Ride Service

As from Monday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2014 there will be changes to the ring and ride services.

- You now must book the day before your required journey
- Times of booking are from 10 30am till 2 30pm only.
- Monday bookings need to be booked on Saturday
- Fare is £1 each way
- There is no longer a Sunday service

**Thanks to Reg Jones for this update.**

## Life Direct

Life direct is a world of information for later life.

This new service opened On the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 and we thought you might like to hear about it.

There is free information and advice for the over 55's **Open Monday- Friday 10am – 4pm**

Invitations are extended for you to pop in and meet the team to find out how they can help.

**68 Victoria Street, Wolverhampton WV1 3NX**

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## Wolverhampton Under 17yrs Rugby Union Team

**It is with immense pride that I share this young Rugby under 17yrs teams success. Wolverhampton should be so proud to have such talent.**

**My grandson Robert has played with the same team since the age of 7yrs and they have grown in stature, personality, discipline and team spirit that is totally overwhelming. The following is an account of their success in the under 17yrs National Cup.**

At the start of the season Wolverhampton under 17's rugby union were entered into the Staffordshire county cup which after months of league games and finals they won which then meant Wolverhampton was entered into the national cup. Wolverhampton's first game was the divisional quarter finals against the winner of Shropshire league Malvern which they won 55-0

therefore Wolverhampton proceeded to the next round which was the Divisional semi-finals against South Leicester Lions which they again won 31-15. Wolverhampton seem to be unstoppable as a week ago they played in the Midlands divisional final against Kesteven which they won 19-12 therefore Wolverhampton now proceed to the last four teams in the country which is the National semi-finals representing the midlands region of the country. The national semi-final will be against the winners of the northern region Hull Ionians which we wish them all the best in.



**Robert Chapman**

**Liz's Grandson 'man of the match'**

**Best Wishes to all our members, I look forward to seeing you at the next coffee morning.**

**Liz Walker (Chairperson WRSG)**

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