

Carers Rights Day

Report by Jean Huckfield

Friday 2nd December

We arrived at the Pavilion in Llandrindod Wells with a packed car and eventually managed to find a parking space. It was good to be greeted with a cup of tea and a brief guide to the day's proceedings. We wandered around the various tables and displays, collecting information about the help that is available for carers - lots of new information.

I was especially interested in the Wiltshire Farm Foods* (always thinking of my stomach!) As well as delivering frozen "ready meals" directly to your door, this company can also provide a small steamer just large enough to re-heat a couple of meals. They also sell fridges and freezers of varying sizes. They have just brought out a

new line - Puree meals for adults - a great idea and a good standby when time is limited and you are looking after anyone who has difficulty in swallowing "proper" meals. They also provide balanced meals for anyone suffering from diabetes or needing a gluten free diet. The approximate cost of each meal is £2.99 which works out about the same price as a supermarket ready meal but Wiltshire Farm Foods deliver to your door!

Also of special interest to me was the Crossroads stand. Although I had heard of them many years ago, I was not aware that they could provide a carer to come into your home for anything from two hours to a full day at no cost.

They will look after the person for whom you care as you would yourself, preparing meals, supervising medication etc. but do not undertake household cleaning.

Moving on to the therapies for carers, after chatting for a while we were invited to have an Indian Head Massage. This was very relaxing and a completely new experience for me. I can thoroughly recommend it.

Lunch was a hot meal - very welcome, considering the cold December day. I would have liked to stay for the afternoon presentations and the AGM but, unfortunately, had to leave as I had other commitments.

Jean Huckfield, Knighton

NOTE FROM FRAN

**If anyone requires information on Wiltshire Farm Foods, based in Builth Wells, you can ring them on 01982 552270. You can also phone me for a brochure and price list on 01874 754040.*

We would also be interested in hearing about how you might like to mark Carers Rights Day this year. It is on the 8th of December 2006 - please contact Gyles at the central office (contact details at the end)

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HELP WITH

One of the problems of living in a rural area like Powys is the difficulty presented by the lack of regular and frequent public transport services. However, as someone who only moved into the area three years ago I have been very impressed by the Community Transport and the Community Car Schemes.

I feel that both of these services could be used more by carers, for shopping trips, support group meetings and hospital appointments.

Here are the details of the services:

There are eleven Community Car Schemes in Powys, based in Llandrindod Wells, Builth Wells, Crickhowell, Llanidloes, Machynlleth, Hay-on-Wye, Rhayader, Knighton, Presteigne, Llanwrtyd Wells and North Montgomery. The WRVS also covers a large part of the county. The schemes are run through the local Community Support agencies or Volunteer Bureaux.

Volunteer drivers use their own cars to provide door-to-door transport. The schemes are open to people who do

not have reasonable access to other forms of transport. In Powys, priority is given to health appointments, but also include journeys that meet everyday needs.

The drivers are paid mileage expenses. If you use the scheme you are asked to cover a small proportion of the costs, but there is additional funding available to meet the full costs. Powys Carers Service can also be approached for help with costs - please ask your outreach worker.

Generally the WRVS scheme direct its service to relatives who wish to visit patients in hospital or other care establishments.

Please book any of these services through your local community support agency or volunteer bureau or ask Powys Carers Service staff for more information.

