



Age Action Alliance

Monthly Highlights January 2014

Hello from the Secretariat Team

New year, new start – we hope you like our new style monthly news from the Alliance.

This will provide an overview of what's taken place this month, which you may not be aware of, turning the invisible actions of the Alliance into visible achievements we can share.

So tell us what you think! Is this useful? Have we missed something you've been doing? Who have you been in touch with through the Alliance and what's happening as a result? Tell us more at: info@ageactionalliance.org

Best wishes, **Emily, Helen, Ken, Russell & Simon**

Latest Members

- ✓ 19 new Members have joined us this month
- ✓ 100 new followers on Twitter
- ✓ 14 active Themes

Latest Activity

Themed Working Groups

- The **Transport Group** met at UCL on 22 January to discuss its ongoing work on 'Overcoming the barriers to access for Older People'; The Mobility Scooter survey on behalf of DfT; and a guide to what makes a good Bus Shelter for older people. It is hoped that all these pieces of work will be available on the website by the late spring/early summer. We also hope to start a piece of work looking at community transport.
- This month the **Loneliness & Isolation Group** members heard the good news that Boots HQ has given their approval to the pilot project in Hampshire, to be called "Making Connections". It will use their Romsey and Winchester pharmacies (i.e. rural and urban), to hand out questionnaires in each location to people over 65 picking up prescriptions - 50 will be those with long term conditions and 50 undertaking medicine reviews. Hampshire County Council will follow up work in collaboration with Hampshire Age Concern whose well trained volunteers will phone or visit those people who have shown an

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interest in taking part, to establish what they can do to help them connect. LinkAge Bristol and Castlehaven Community Association also shared details of their extensive programmes of partnership work to address loneliness within their older populations at the meeting.

- The **Healthy Workplaces Group** heard a presentation on the new Health and Work Service and update on progress on the EWL Framework for action. They discussed how to make the most of the group going forward, with a suggestion that the core group should invite guest speakers to discuss specific topics. Meeting themes suggested included the Framework for Action (when published); self employment; sector activities; mental health; the Mid Life Career Review, generational issues (e.g. impact on technology on younger generation and early preventative action).

Seminars

- Dave Martin and Hannah McDowall from UnLtd and Co-Chair of the AAA's Contribution of Older People's group, held a seminar at Age UK's Tavis House asking "Isn't it time to be optimistic about living longer?" [Read Dave's blog about the event on our website here.](#)
- My Ageing Parent's Deborah Stone and Alex Ingram led a discussion on the challenges of long distance caring with Alliance members, including Royal Voluntary Service, LGA, Age UK, Future North West, Timefinders and Canary Care. Watch out for the new information leaflet coming on this soon.

Events

- Members of the Public Health & Active Lifestyles group attended the launch of **Public Health England's (PHE) Physical activity event** at the Oval on 24 January. The day was hosted by Professor Kevin Fenton, Director of Health and Wellbeing at PHE. This showcased evidence of the unsustainable health, economic and social impacts of low levels of physical activity on individuals, families, communities and local services. It is a primary cause of poor health and wellbeing, including contributing to one in ten early deaths (equal to smoking).

Addressing physical inactivity is a priority for PHE, as well as other national bodies and most local areas, and a strategic, cross-sector approach is required to address this increasing and previously



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intractable problem. The event brought together leaders from across sectors at national, regional and local levels to gain consensus on how they can address this issue. This lays the foundations for a cross-sector implementation framework for physical activity by late 2014. The Public Health and Active Lifestyle group will follow up some of the recommendations when they meet in early spring.

- The Alliance Secretariat attended the **Foundations Independent Living Trust (FILT) Warm Homes Service evaluation** on 21 January. The service, which was designed to protect vulnerable people from the dangers of cold homes, has proved highly effective in delivering targeted support quickly and efficiently. The findings could be used to shape the way fuel poverty is tackled in the future and provide important lessons on improving health through prevention and early intervention in poorly heated homes. The Safe Warm Homes group will have the opportunity to discuss the Report further at its next meeting on 19 February.

Latest Thinking

- **Creative Arts** - The Alliance Secretariat is currently exploring member interest in setting up a Creative Arts theme. If you would be interested in getting involved, or could recruit someone who would be, please get in touch at info@ageactionalliance.org
- **Network Meetings** - The first Alliance Network Meeting took place last October, bringing members together and resulting in a number of new collaborations. Following this successful event, a number of members around the country have offered to host further Network Meetings. These are designed to enable Alliance members to better understand the benefits and opportunities of membership and to explore areas of shared interest, with a view to collaborative working. If you would like to host a Network Meeting in your area, get in touch at info@ageactionalliance.org.

- **Member Blogs** – Thank you to all our members who have shared their stories and latest thinking through the Alliance blog. We are particularly keen to hear about your good practice and achievements, especially where those have been in partnership and perhaps as a result of your involvement with the Alliance network. If got a story like this to share, send us 350-500 words and a photo for the website to info@ageactionalliance.org.

Latest Mentions

- Over the past few years, the Alliance has grown considerably and the network now includes over 500 cross sector organisations and older people. It has received mentions in Hansard, in social media and in meetings beyond those involving Alliance members. If you mention the Alliance, or you hear of or read about the Alliance somewhere, we'd love to hear about it! Email us at info@ageactionalliance.org.