



*From the Staff &
Trustees of
Age Concern Sir Gâr*

**Happy
New
Year**

Cold Weather Payments

On the 11th September 2008, the government announced an increase in the cold weather payment, from £8.50 to £25 per week. You are entitled to this payment for each qualifying week if:

- the average temperature in your area has been, or is expected to be, 0 degrees Celsius or below for seven consecutive days; and
- you have been awarded Income Support or income based Jobseeker's Allowance for at least one day during the period of cold weather and you are getting disability premium or you are responsible for a child under 5; or
- you have been awarded Pension Credit (Guarantee Credit) for at least one of those days and you are not in a care home.

Payment will be made automatically so you do not need to make a claim. Cold Weather Payments will not affect other benefits you may be getting.

www.direct.gov.uk

Crabby Old Man

What do you see nurse? What do you see?
What are you thinking - when you're looking at me
A crabby old man – not very wise
Uncertain of habit – with faraway eyes.

Who dribbles his food – and makes no reply
When you say in a loud voice – 'I do wish you'd try'
Who seems not to notice – the things that you do
And forever is losing – a sock or a shoe.

Who, resisting or not – lets you do as you will
With bathing and feeding – the long day to fill
Is that what you're thinking? – is that what you see?
Then open your eyes nurse – you're not seeing me.

I'll tell you who I am – as I sit here so still
As I do at your bidding – as I eat at your will
I'm a small child of ten – with a father and mother
Brothers and sisters – who love one another.

The a young boy of sixteen – with wings on his feet
Dreaming that soon now – a lover he'll meet
A groom soon at twenty – my heart gives a leap
Remembering the vows – that I promised to keep.

At twenty five now – I have young of my own
Who need me to guide them – and a secure happy home
A man of thirty – my young now grow fast
Bound to each other – with ties that should last.

At forty my young sons – have grown and are gone
But my woman's beside me – to see I don't mourn
At fifty, once more – babies play 'round my knee
Again, we know children – my loved one and me.

Dark days are upon me – my wife is now dead
I look at the future – I shudder with dread
For my young are all rearing – young of their own
And I think of the years – and the love that I've known.

I'm now an old man – and nature is cruel
'Tis jest to make old age – look like a fool
The body it crumbles – grace and vigour depart
There is now a stone – where I once had a heart

But inside this old carcass – a young man still dwells
And now and again – my battered heart swells
As I remember the joys – and I remember the pain
And I'm loving and living – life over again

I think of the years, all too few – gone! Too fast
And accept the stark fact – that nothing can last
Open your eyes, people – open and see
Not a crabby old man – look closer, see, ME!!!

£4 Billion Boost for Pensioners

Pensioners are set for a £4 billion boost in 2009 as the government has confirmed the biggest rise in the Basic State Pension since 2001, on top of £900 million in Christmas Bonuses and a £575 million increase in Winter Fuel Payments.

From April, the State Pension will go up by 5 per cent, ensuring someone on a full pension will see their weekly income go up from £90.70 to £95.25. Ministers also confirmed that Pension Credit will increase by the highest amount ever, up from £124.05 to £130 per week.

The government confirmed that most National Insurance benefits will rise by 5 per cent, and most income-related benefits will be uprated by 6.3 per cent, providing real support to people in the current economic climate.

Minister for Pensions and the Ageing Society, Rt Hon Rosie Winterton MP said: "In these tough times, the government will continue to give real help to pensioners."

"I want to do all we can to help those pensioners on the lowest incomes, and the increase in Pension Credit will mean that we can lift even more people out of poverty."

"We have also made it easier and quicker for those eligible for Council Tax Benefit and Housing Benefit to get what they are entitled to. I hope this will help convince people who have not yet claimed their entitlement to phone" –

0800 99 1234

The increases follow additional help announced in the Pre-Budget Report where eligible pensioners will have their Christmas Bonus increased for this winter from the traditional £10 to £70. Anyone who wants further information should call: -

0800 141 2591

This will be on top of the increased Winter Fuel Payments which pensioners have been receiving in recent weeks where households with someone aged between 60 and 79 will get £250 and £400 for households with someone 80 and over.

www.direct.gov.uk

Volunteer Training

Carmarthenshire Social Care, Health and Housing Department are providing training in subjects affecting service user's health, safety and well being as well as that of the volunteers themselves on the following dates:

29 January 2009 9.45 am – 2.30 pm
26 February 2009 9.45 am – 2.30 pm
26 March 2009 9.45 am – 2.30 pm

The venue is Crosshands Day Centre, Crosshands, Llanelli, and if anyone wishes to attend these courses they should telephone Ann at Age Concern Sir Gâr on 01554 784080

Lone Workers Safety

Yet another training course that you may be interested in. This is dealing with violence and aggression and is on 18 February 2009 or 19 February 2009 at Cross Hands Day Centre between 9.15 am and 4.00 pm.

Quilts & Blankets for the Elderly

Friends to Seniors are creating lap quilts, blankets and cushions, to be donated to residential homes or individuals who live alone. They are made from cross stitch squares and are donated absolutely free of charge and you can see samples of these items at:

www.friends2seniors.com

If you know of anyone who would benefit from this gift, please contact Age Concern Sir Gâr and we will make the application on your behalf.



"Hold these, I have to go back for my Wife"

Grant From British Telecom

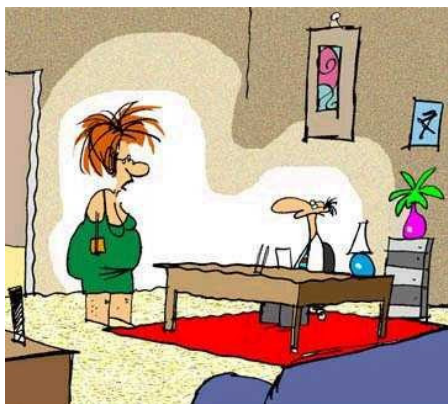
As a follow on from a BT Grant that was awarded in 2008, Age Concern Sir Gâr has successfully secured a further one year grant that will run from January 2009 to December 2009.

The funding will cover up to three one-to-one sessions for older people wanting to learn about the Internet and specifically shopping on line. The project will also help older people understand how to use their mobile phones.



If you would like to become a volunteer showing people how easy this is, telephone Ann on 01554 784080. We are particularly looking for volunteers in the Llanelli area and welcome anyone of any age over 18.

When asked to what she attributed her longevity at age 113, the world's oldest woman replied, "Lack of peer pressure..."



"All the other women in the office are suing you for sexual harassment. Since you haven't sexually harassed me, I'm suing you for discrimination."

A man calls 999 and tells the operator his friend has just been run over in a hit and run. The operator says he'll send an ambulance straight away and asks the man where the accident has occurred. The man tells him it was outside No. 27 Eucalyptus Avenue and the operator asks him if he could spell it. All of a sudden the operator hears a lot of moaning and scraping and cannot get the man to talk to him. Then after a few minutes the man comes back on and tells the operator "Sorry about that, we're at No. 3 Oak Street".

Volunteering

Age Concern Sir Gâr requires volunteers for various tasks in their organisation which improves the quality of life of people in the Carmarthenshire area.

We are particularly interested in volunteers who can spend a few hours helping with the Handyperson Scheme, Internet Shopping which helps older people to understand the Internet, and Office Administration for the Gardening Scheme

Travelling expenses are paid and if you are interested in any of these projects, please telephone Ann on 01554 784080.

Designed to Care

Designed to Care is a company that has discretely adapted clothing for people with limited mobility and dexterity.

People who are struggling to dress or are assisted with dressing really appreciate the opportunity to wear 'easy dress' clothes

The clothes preserve people's independence by extending the time they can easily dress themselves and preserve dignity by making assisted dressing less intrusive and quicker. Clothes are accessible through both side and back openings that make it easier to dress from a seated position and reducing the need to lift, bend or raise ones arms.

We are unable to endorse products with this newsletter but if you know anyone who would like a brochure, please call on:

0845 224 9687

www.designedtocare.co.uk

Researchers have discovered that chocolate produces some of the same reactions in the brain as marijuana... The researchers also discovered other similarities between the two, but can't remember what they are.

S4C Access Services

S4C is collecting information on the opinion of viewers of the Access Service that is offered with the programme service. They are specifically looking for feedback on the Welsh and English subtitling, audio description, signing and English soundtrack.

They would be grateful for feedback from all age groups and the survey can be filled in online in Welsh or English. The link to S4C website is:

http://www.s4c.co.uk/e_access.shtml

or telephone

029 2075 4444

Fundraising

Age Concern Sir Gâr would like to thank everyone who uses 'everyclick.com' as their initial search engine on computers.

We have just received our first payment from them (via the charities trust) of approximately £26.00. This funding was raised purely by using this as an initial search engine. If more people give our name when they use everyclick, the more money we will raise.

Many thanks to all that use everyclick.com and to those that will support us in the future by using everyclick.com for the benefit of Age Concern Sir Gâr. For more information got to:

www.everyclick.com

If you would like to include anything in our newsletter for future issues, please call Ann on 01554 784080. Maybe something is happening in your area or some other news or photos you would like to disclose to the readers.



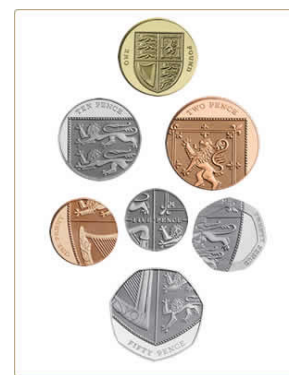
"I was close to a breakthrough when the grant money ran out."

Britain's New Coinage

If you have any new coins in your purse or pocket and you cannot make out what is on the back, The Royal Mint is delighted to reveal to you the new designs that will appear on our coins. Individually, the coins focus on details of the Shield of the Royal Arms and when placed together they reveal the complete shield.

The new designs will enter circulation gradually throughout the year. It is normal practice for banks to order coins from the Royal Mint to satisfy public demand, which fluctuates over the course of the year. The current coin designs will remain in circulation and as legal tender for the foreseeable future.

As you can see in the image to the right, the Shield of the Royal Arms has been given a contemporary treatment and its whole has been cleverly split among all six denominations from the 1p to the 50p, with the £1 coin displaying the heraldic element in its entirety. This is the first time that a single design has been used across a range of United Kingdom coins.



How do you get off a non-stop flight?