

## Melksham Older Peoples Champion Update

“Since the last Area Board Meeting I have been present at a Health and Wellbeing Group, ‘Age Friendly Community –Melksham’, NHS Community Forum meeting and my regular slot of Melksham Shed Group.

From this small list of meetings I think that the proposal to make Melksham ‘Age Friendly’ is one of the biggest challenges yet. This scheme is designed at making people aware of how we all interlock as a society or community. This is not just Older People or Young People, it is all of us working together – supporting each other and looking out for each other. My hope is that the formal bodies that act on the public’s behalf – namely THIS Area Board – will take the challenge on and will make, not just Melksham Age Friendly, but ALL of Wiltshire Age Friendly. It can be done – the Isle of Wight did it !!!

Being part of the Health and Wellbeing Group is a privilege and I hope that my contribution can perhaps give support to the small and active voluntary groups that may not know of the financial advantages being offered by Wiltshire Council’s funding.

As I write this short report I am in the throes of the final planning for the Melksham Shed Grand Opening. This will have been on 6<sup>th</sup> September and will be the culmination of almost three years of working, since the inaugural meeting in January 2014. Due to the support of many – including those members who were in the first talks about a Shed – we now have our own purpose built and autonomous Shed Group. Thanks to the North West Wiltshire Area Board we can boast three other active Sheds now in this area, plus three others in the birth pains of their own Shed. This is a very worthwhile movement as retired and older men often do not have groups organised for them, that cater for the type of activities, that the Shed offers.

Thank you for the post of Melksham’s Older Peoples Champion which I will endeavour to treat as a serious link between our elected political members in Wiltshire Council, Melksham Town Council and Melksham Without Council, and the people of Melksham.”

Chris Pickett