

The Warminster Area Health and Wellbeing Forum comprises 65 organisations and individuals operating in the Warminster Community Area and aims to join together those needing help and support to those best able to meet that need, in an efficient and cost-effective way.

Since the success of the **Health and Wellbeing Fair** held on Saturday 22 April and the hugely-popular **40-page A5 Health and Wellbeing booklet**, the Forum has not been idle in taking other issues forward.

Related to the booklet, we have been exploring with Wessex Community Action, the possibility of **placing the contact information for local health and wellbeing help onto their Wiltshire Together platform**. This was inspired by the impressive Health Connections Mendip site which is an invaluable online resource for individuals, health professionals and organisations alike, and involves the creation of a Warminster Area Health and Wellbeing hub page and then encouraging those 140 plus contacts within the booklet to add their details free of charge to Wiltshire Together. This will be a “slow burn” requiring us to demonstrate the value of such a site and to persuade organisations to promote their activities and event as well as to attract volunteers. The developing site can be seen here: <https://wiltshiretogether.org.uk/warminster-health-wellbeing>

Since the Health Fair, we have been able to turn our attention to the **issue of digital exclusion** placed on us by the Area Board. The first stage has been to identify – and liaise with – organisations who already offer support within the Warminster area on digital issues, in particular tackling unaffordability, skills shortfalls and online safety. In partnership with Wiltshire Libraries, we are running a two-venue one-day event on Monday 16 October at Warminster and Mere libraries where people can **pick up signposting information on these issues, talk to organisational representatives and even recycle their old digital equipment**.

Looking at events in 2024, we have already met with the Army about their **Garrison Health event planned for July 2024** and, as well as retaining the very welcome focus on veterans, they are keen to attract more civilian organisations focussing in on the ten Army health priorities. We will be attending their Initial Planning Conference in November and will liaise with our contacts to play our part in helping them repeat the success of the 2022 event. As we move towards the end of the calendar year, we will begin to plan for **Warminster’s own Volunteer Event, planned for 1 June 2024**, funded by the Town Council. Our experience – and success – of a similar event pre-Covid should prove invaluable as we continue to contribute to the health and wellbeing of the people of Warminster and the surrounding area.

As always, Chair Deborah Gogarty and I stand ready to brief Area Board members as required.

David Reeves

Secretary – Warminster Area Health and Wellbeing Forum

1 October 2023