

The Good Neighbour Scheme

The Wiltshire Good Neighbour (WGN) Scheme now has 18 co-ordinators based locally throughout the county. At the Area Board meeting in January, Nicola Wilson spoke about the expansion of the scheme to cover most of the Southern Wiltshire Community Area. In the last six months, useful contacts have been established, particularly in Alderbury and Redlynch, and new clients have been assisted in Homington, Whiteparish, Winterslow and West Dean. However the majority of calls have come from the Downton/Woodfalls parishes and further promotion of the service will be carried out in the other areas during the autumn.

Unfortunately, stretched WGN resources means that Laverstock and Ford still cannot be included for home visits by local co-ordinators, but calls to the helpline will be answered and suggestions may be made for referrals – for instance to Age UK, Salisbury (who are partners in the scheme).

Although communities in the Southern Wiltshire area appear to be generally good at looking after their elderly residents, figures for the number of clients seeking assistance from Wiltshire Good Neighbours suggest that the scheme is providing a valuable service. In the last six months (Jan- June) the Southern Wiltshire co-ordinator (who works only part-time) has dealt with the following:

48 new clients; plus ongoing assistance or referral advice to over 50 people

Main categories for referrals (approx. percentages) : social isolation (27%); health related (20%); social/ domestic care 19%); transport (12%); finance/benefits (12%); other (10%)

Nicola Wilson can be contacted on: 07557-110415 or e-mail at southernwiltshiregnc@communityfirst.org.uk