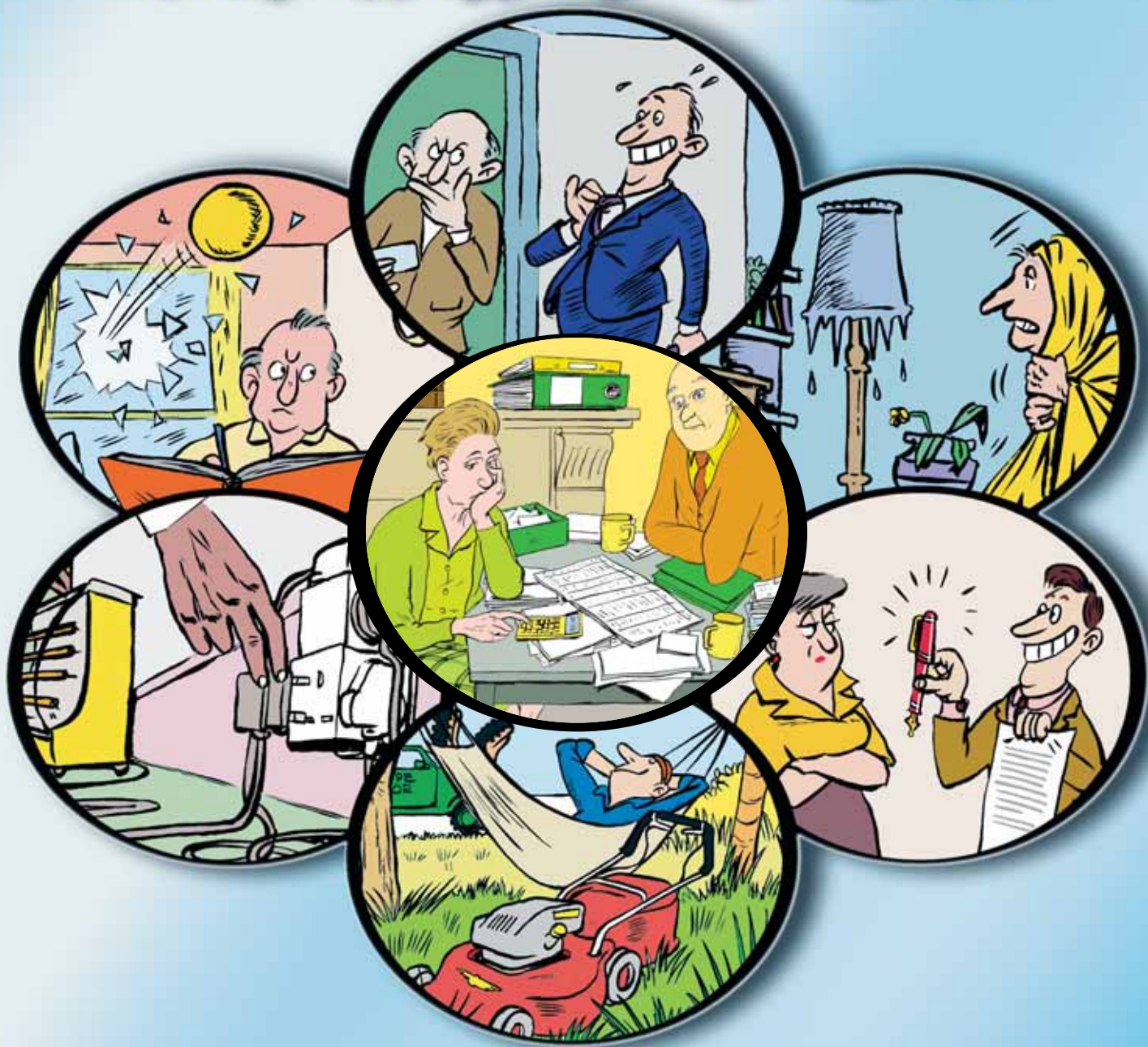


Living Well in Later Life

BE SMART BE SAFE HANDBOOK



Growing Older With Respect In Chelmsford

Chelmsford Be Smart Be Safe Handbook

This handbook has been designed to offer you practical information and advice to support you in your everyday life and make you feel safe, relaxed and comfortable at home and when you go out in your local community.

It serves as an excellent reference to a wide range of subjects related to health, safety and security and can put you in touch with local services that can give you advice, care and support.

The handbook provides information on seven areas that older people have identified as having the most impact on their lives, including:

- Housing and the home.
- Neighbourhoods.
- Social activities, social networks and keeping busy.
- Getting out and about.
- Income.
- Information.
- Health and healthy living.

Rather than reading through it all and putting it away, you may consider keeping it to hand - perhaps by the telephone. At the back of the handbook you will find a section with helpful countywide and local area contact details.

This handbook is one small part of a programme to improve health and wellbeing across Essex and is ultimately to help you feel more confident in your own home and local community so that you can enjoy your later life as much as possible.

Growing older with respect in Chelmsford

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YOU be the Judge

Read each of the following scenarios and choose a word (or words) from the box below to describe what you think of the person or their action.

If you are critical of the person, what would you say to them to advise them?



A person with almost no sight riding their bike on the road to the pub.	
A pregnant woman moving the bed to make space for the cot.	
A businessman with high blood pressure continues to work twelve hours a day even though his doctor has told him to "take it easy".	
A 90-year-old standing on a chair to clean the top of her cupboards.	
An older man who feels he wants to get fit going on a three mile 'run' after not exercising for 20 years.	
A three year old jumping off a wall twice their height.	
An older woman who recently lost her husband joining a Tai Chi class.	
A mother with post-natal depression refusing to take anti-depressants.	
A man in an electric scooter driving fast along the pavement to get to the doctor's on time.	
brave foolish reckless adventurous practical independent stubborn arrogant confident selfish committed (other words)	

Throughout our lives we take risks. We are capable of making decisions for ourselves and that should be respected. However, this handbook aims to remind us that no-one can know for certain that "It won't happen to me".

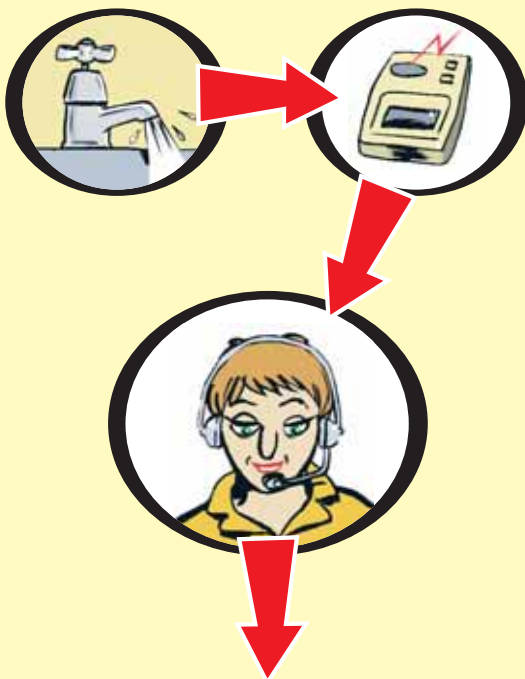
It also provides facts, which might help you to make the correct choice in your everyday decisions and give you more confidence in your surroundings both at home and when out and about. Most importantly it aims to enable you to enjoy life **AS YOU WANT TO!**



Are you worried about care?

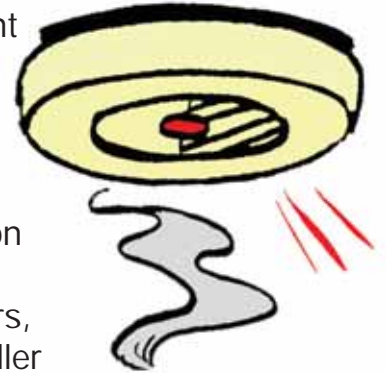
Telecare provides assistance at the touch of a button. Some of the new sensors will even call for help automatically without you having to do anything at all. The equipment is battery operated, wireless, unobtrusive and designed to support you. It can be set up to contact a local council Careline or alert your partner or a family member directly. It is your choice.

For example: A flood sensor alerts the base unit to a running tap. The base unit contacts the Careline who arrange an appropriate response on your behalf.



Required Response

The range of equipment includes smoke and carbon monoxide sensors, reminders that water or gas has been left on, medication dispensers and reminders, fall detectors, door alarms, bogus caller alerts and many others. These are all capable of calling for help automatically, but there are other simple pieces of equipment to help your independence, such as large face day – date clocks.



Sometimes it is difficult to remember telephone numbers, or it is hard to press the right number on the keypad. So there are phones with photograph buttons that act as speed dials, making calls easy.



Other telemonitoring solutions exist to allow family members, who live remotely to play a part in supporting people to live at home.

Telecare can make a real difference to your life. It is designed to help you stay safely in your home as long as possible and provide reassurance to your loved ones that you are safe and well.

If you would like more information on Telecare solutions to help you, contact your local Careline (see page 49 for contact details), ring: 0845 603 7630 or alternatively go to: www.essex.gov.uk/besmartbesafe

Bogus and Burglary



Unwelcome Visitors

Every day we find ourselves bombarded by leaflets advertising anything from cleaning services to pizza offers. Some days it can feel like your phone number is on everyone's list for '**telephone sales**'.

By registering with the '**Telephone Preference Service**' and the '**Mail Preference Service**' you can stop most unwanted calls and post.

Under Government legislation introduced on 1st May 1999 and replaced on 11th December 2003 by the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003, it is unlawful to make unsolicited direct marketing calls to individuals who have indicated that they do not want to receive such calls.



To register with the **MAIL Preference Service** call

0845 703 4599



To register with the **TELEPHONE Preference Service** call

0845 070 070 7

When you get through to either service, hold the line and you can speak to someone in person.

Most people who come to your door are genuine. As we get older we may worry about becoming a victim of crime. However, research has proven that this is less likely to happen.

This worry or fear can have an enormous impact on our lives, making us hesitant to engage with our neighbours or have a full and active life.

Hopefully the following information will enable you to feel more confident in your own home and more able to assert yourself.

Gas, water and electricity companies are all required to have special services for us, for example, you tell them a password that the person calling at your house will have to know (*call the company to arrange this*).

**When someone comes to your door...
ALWAYS follow the routine below:**

1. Stop...

- Are you expecting anyone?
- Do they have an appointment?

2. Chain...

- Put the door bar or chain on before you open the door.
(Please note: doorbar or chain should stay off at all other times.)

3. Check...

- Always ask for an identity (ID) card and check it carefully.
- Is it their photograph?
- Is the name the same as on the letter if they arranged an appointment?
- Check the company phone number in your phone book or on a bill (do not trust the number on the card) and call to check their ID.
- Never feel embarrassed to ask them to give you the card - **do not take the chain off**, get them to pass it through.
Take your time to check it - **there is no hurry.**

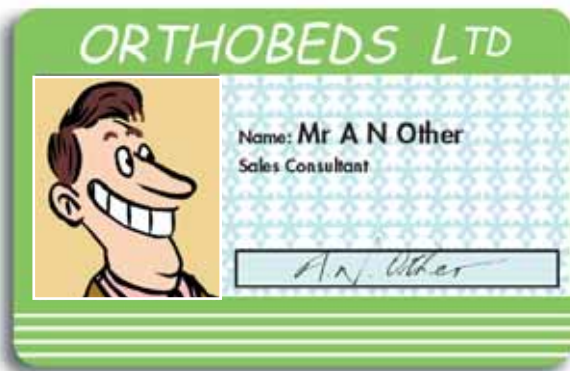


**NEVER let a stranger into your home unless you are 100% confident they are genuine. If you are unsure, ask the caller to call back when there is someone else with you or to make an official appointment by letter.
GENUINE CALLERS WILL NOT MIND.**

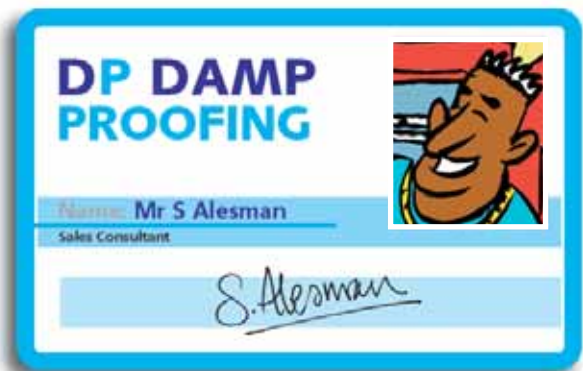
NEVER GIVE YOUR BANK DETAILS TO ANYONE ON YOUR DOORSTEP.

Your doorstep, your decision

Your guide to keeping control of doorstep sales



'I'm on your doorstep.
I give you a free gift,
You give me a sale.'



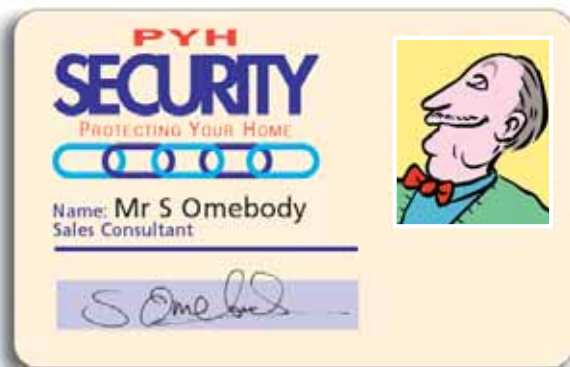
'I find out what your
interests are. I draw you in.
You can't say no.'



'I rush you into a decision
to buy now or lose a
special discount.'



'I get you to agree with me.
Then it's hard for you to
refuse the sale.'



'I tell you three people down
your road bought from me
last week.'



'I tell you that my products
are endorsed by experts to
make you feel secure.'

People come knocking on our doors to sell their wares; they are professionals and can be **very** persuasive.

It may help to be aware of how they will try to get you to buy:



"I've sold two of these to your neighbours already this morning."
[So it must be a good deal...]

"This is a limited offer... only available until Friday."
[Better buy quickly. You're lucky I'm offering this to you.]

"What a beautiful hanging basket. I love gardening too..."
[I'm your friend, trust me...]

"We're so proud of what we sell, we're giving you this free gift."
[You should listen to me because I've given you a present.]

"The Wizard of Oz has just proven that this is the best thing ever."
[The experts say you should buy this.]

"Lifting heavy things gets harder as you get older, doesn't it?"
[You think the same as me and I'm telling you to buy this.]

"You've won a competition..."
[You're lucky and I am offering you a prize ...]

"I'M NOT INTERESTED, THANK-YOU. GOOD-BYE!"



HAVE CONFIDENCE IN YOURSELF – do not let them tell you what you need or want.

The Doorstep Selling Regulations

provide a 7 day 'cooling off' period for contracts made in YOUR home, during which you can cancel.

This applies to goods and services above £35 in value but only if the visit was unsolicited (or follows an unsolicited telephone approach).

Doorstep selling takes place in two ways:

Solicited: where the consumer requests the visit by the salesperson, for example,

specifically requesting a quote for new windows after reading an advert in a newspaper.

Unsolicited: where the consumer DOES NOT request the visit, for example, a salesperson makes a surprise visit to offer work.

The seller MUST GIVE consumers their cancellation rights in writing if not they may commit a CRIMINAL OFFENCE.

If they do not, or you are not sure, phone Trading Standards as soon as possible to check and they will investigate.



'Distraction burglary'

This is when the thief tricks their way into a person's home rather than breaking in.

- The most common method is to pretend to work for either the Council, the Police, or a gas/water/electricity company.
- They may also ask if they can wash their hands, have a glass of water or to talk about a lost pet, for example.
- They may pretend to be door-to-door sales people.
- The offenders can be male or female and sometimes use children to distract the person whilst an accomplice takes whatever they want.

By following the STOP, CHAIN, CHECK routine you should prevent them from tricking you.

Thieves may also pretend to be tradespeople and offer to repair a person's house or garden. They will often carry out very poor work, sometimes no work at all and charge a huge amount.

THIS WORK MAY NOT NEED TO BE DONE AT ALL!

If you want a job done:

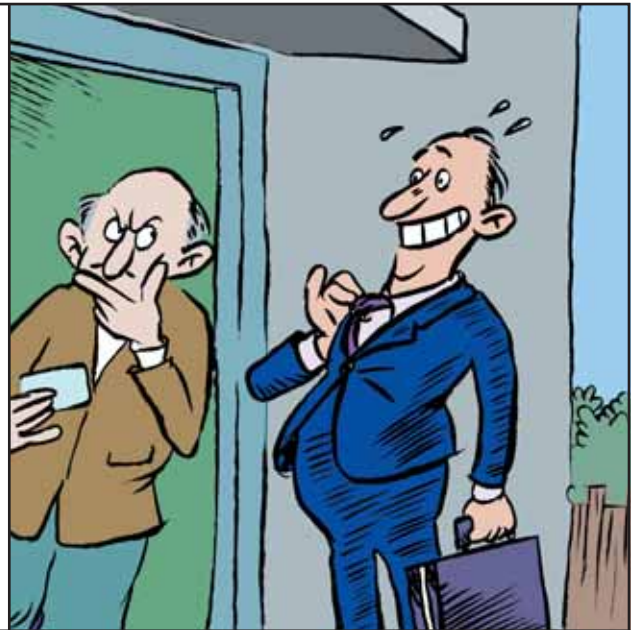
- Ask your friends or neighbours if they can recommend someone to you.
- Get two or three quotes from different companies so that YOU know what needs doing and how much it should cost.
- Always agree a cost before the work starts.
- Never pay someone cash before they do the job, even if they say they need to 'buy equipment'.
- Never let workmen or women know that you keep cash at home and never accept a lift from them to go to the bank to collect money.
- Do not give them keys to your home - whenever possible, be present or ask a neighbour to help.
- If you are not happy with their work then ask a friend or family member to be present when you talk to them about it, if it will make you feel more confident (or contact your local Trading Standards office).

And finally... three things to remember

1. Check the seller's identity

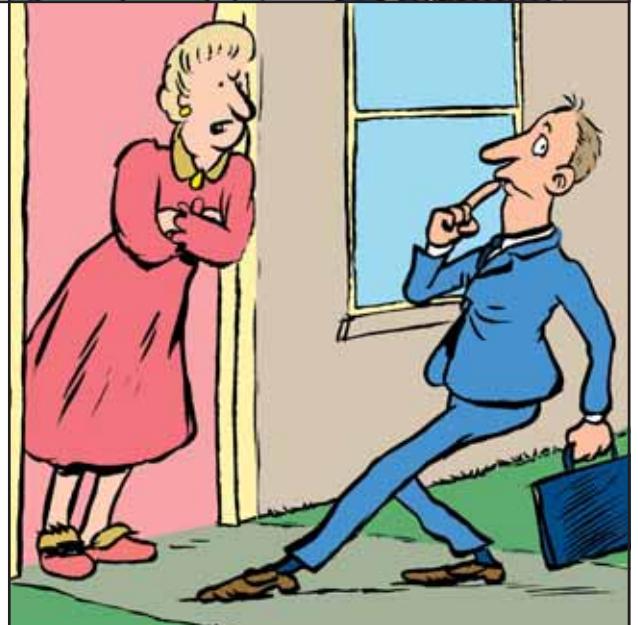
Were you expecting them? If not, be very cautious. If you are interested in what they are selling, you can ask them to come back at another time that is more convenient for you (for example, when you have someone else with you).

Always ask for an identity card and look at it carefully. The important thing is to be sure they are who they say they are. Check their identity by ringing their company using a number from the phonebook (not a number they give you).



2. Take control – you ask the questions

If you decide to have a meeting with a doorstep seller, make sure you are in control, not the salesperson. Remember it is a business situation, not a chat with a friend. Be aware of the seven sales techniques, shown on the previous pages.



3. Do not sign on the spot – shop around

How do you know if the price is right? Check with other companies offering the same product first. Do not be hurried into a decision even if they offer you a discount. The discount might be on a price that is too high in the first place. If you do not know where to go for other sources of information check the useful organisations in the Contact Details section at the back of this handbook.



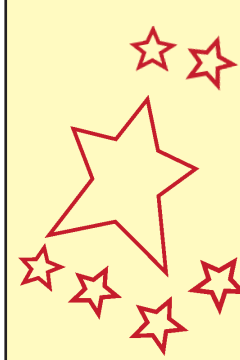
Be very cautious about giving personal information over the telephone when the caller has rung you. Con-people may ask things like your address, age, when do you typically do your shopping, for example, when are you out of the house...

These people are 'PROFESSIONALS' at what they do. Many people do not report crimes, or even mention it to friends and family, because they may be...

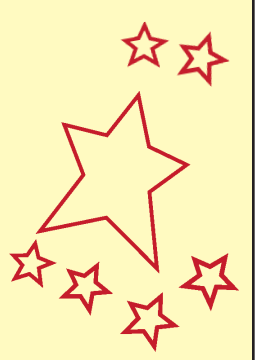


If this happens to you please REPORT IT TO THE POLICE - it may well stop the same thing happening to someone else. This is your home and your life. No-one else should be in it unless you want them there.

Fill in the missing words and then find them in the wordsearch!



L	E	H	T	O	M	S	P	T	A	R	G	E
O	P	E	V	I	S	A	U	S	R	E	P	M
P	R	O	F	E	S	S	I	O	N	A	L	O
T	I	T	T	S	A	W	K	U	E	T	O	C
A	P	L	W	S	O	C	I	C	R	C	H	L
T	E	O	S	J	E	N	E	H	P	A	C	E
A	R	E	M	H	E	P	V	U	I	R	F	W
D	R	A	C	Y	T	I	T	N	E	D	I	N
T	T	N	E	M	T	N	I	O	P	P	A	U
S	A	C	O	N	F	I	D	E	N	C	E	G



1. With every visitor - STOP, CHAIN and CHECK.
2. G _____ visitors will have a P _____, I _____ C _____ and A _____.
3. U _____, P _____ and P _____ is what these people are!
4. You should have C _____ and A _____ yourself.

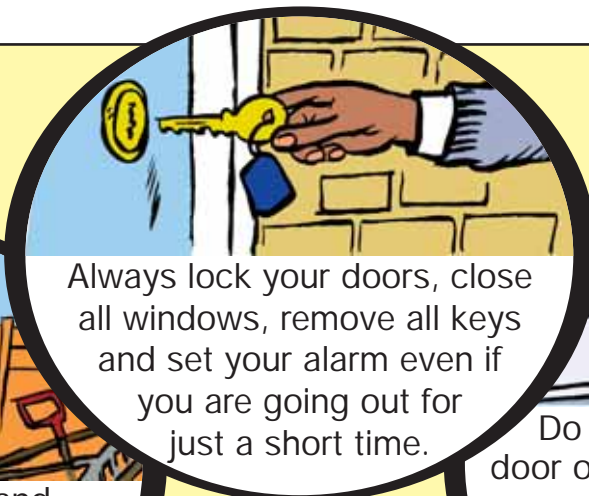
Keeping safe and secure at Home



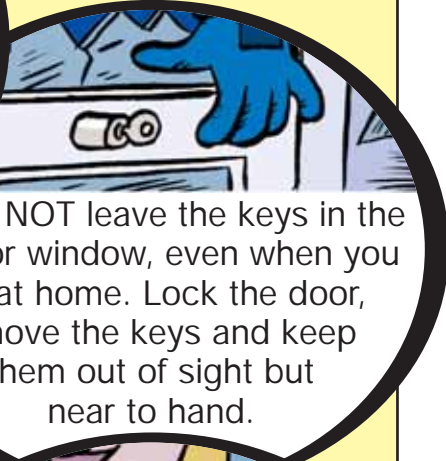
Burglars are opportunists. Unlike those we see on television, burglars do not tend to 'stake out a joint' and lay complex plans. It is much more likely that they are passing and see an open

window, an unlocked door, something of interest or value sitting nearby...

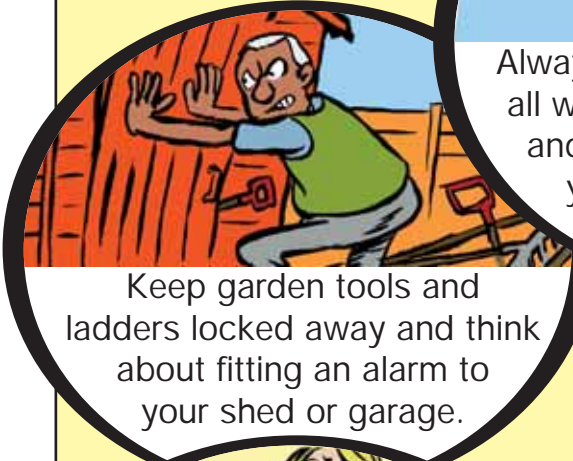
There are several simple and affordable things that you can do to put them off.



Always lock your doors, close all windows, remove all keys and set your alarm even if you are going out for just a short time.



Do NOT leave the keys in the door or window, even when you are at home. Lock the door, remove the keys and keep them out of sight but near to hand.



Keep garden tools and ladders locked away and think about fitting an alarm to your shed or garage.



Mark your property with your postcode and house number (use an ultra violet pen if possible).



Do not leave spare keys outside - criminals know where to look - like beneath flower pots and doormats.



Only keep money you absolutely need in the house - put the rest in the bank, post office or building society.

Check that...	True ✓	To do by (date)
Doors are in good condition (including hinges).		
Front and back doors to have deadlocks fitted (which can only be unlocked with a key).		
Window locks are fitted.		
I have a safe place to keep keys away from doors and windows, where they can be found in an emergency.		
Valuables are kept out of sight.		
I have marked my belongings.		
I have written a list of the serial numbers from my electrical goods and I have them in a safe place.		
I have got photographs of my valuables, for example, jewellery, in a safe place.		
I have written a list of all my bank and building society accounts as well as my pension / allowance books which are kept in a safe place.		
The side or back gate is kept locked and fences are secure.		
I have got an outside light, which comes on automatically when it is dark.		
The garage is kept locked and I have an alarm fitted.		
I have joined the local Neighbourhood Watch Scheme.		

Repairs, locks and so on can often be fitted by a friend or family member with good DIY skills. Get quotes in writing from several tradespeople and check them out with **Consumers Direct** (see the back of the handbook for details).

If you are getting new doors or windows, look for products certified to secure standards such as BS7950 and PAS024.

Your **Crime Prevention Officer** (at your local Police Station) can offer advice about alarms. 'Monitored' alarms are particularly good but may be more expensive.

Home **insurance** will need minimum security standards such as British Standard mortice locks and window locks. If you have good security, (for example, better locks) and if you are a member of Neighbourhood Watch, insurance may be cheaper.

If you think there is someone in your home...

- Do not go in. Call the Police from a neighbour's house.
- If you are inside, call the Police as soon as possible.

Remember: you and your family are the most precious things in your home!

Keeping safe at home

Almost one million older people a year go to hospital because they have had an accident around the home.

You can cut down the risks of having an accident by looking after yourself and your home.

A properly maintained home will keep you safe, warm and secure and can mean the difference between having to move from your home or being able to stay in the home of your choice.

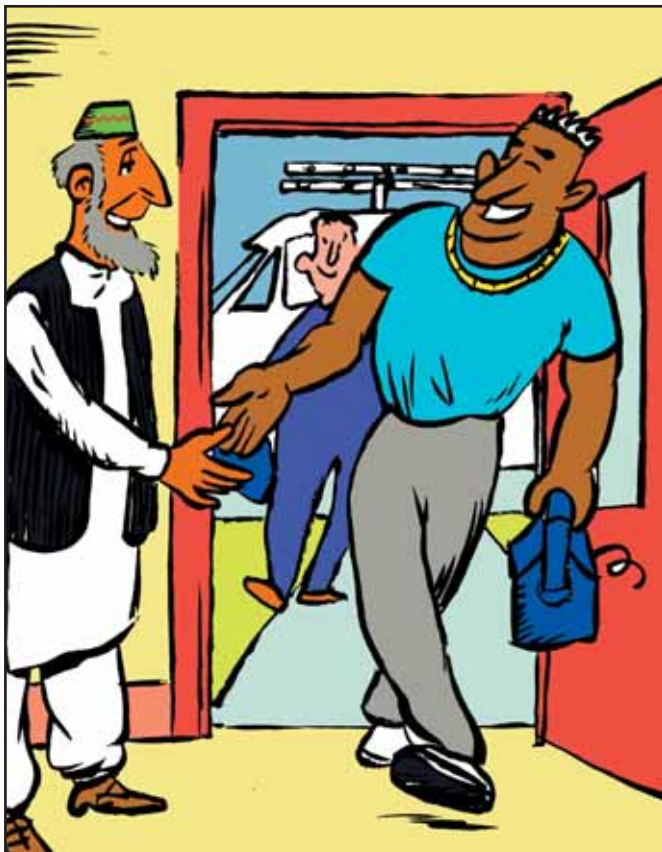
You may need smaller jobs doing around the home, for example, you struggle with ladders, or are not quite as agile as you were. Handyperson schemes do all sorts of minor repairs - fitting locks and handrails, fixing shelves, repairing windows or changing lightbulbs - often for free or at reduced costs. Contact the **Home Improvement Agency** listed at the back of this handbook.

For larger jobs, like roofing, major electrical, plumbing and building work, the Council may help you to apply for grants as well as find reliable tradespeople.

If you do have an accident at home, who will you call?

You can register with Careline, which lets you call someone in an emergency. Staff will come to your home 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to see what the emergency is and to help you.

Contact details for Careline are at the back of this handbook. Alternatively you can contact your local Council or Age Concern.



Sheltered Housing

Sheltered Housing can give you the best of both worlds – living independently in your own home while being safe and secure in the knowledge that there is an area warden nearby. It is also an opportunity to meet new people and make new friends. Many schemes have an active tenants group which arranges social activities and there may be a communal area you can make use of. Use the contacts list at the back of the handbook.

If you need more support, the area warden can start to arrange this for you.

Buy with Confidence - Trading Standards Approved

Buy with Confidence – Trading Standards Approved is a scheme launched to promote and support good, reliable tradesmen and retailers, whilst in turn increasing consumer protection and confidence by providing an approved trader list, initially in the area of renewable energy and energy saving products and services.

Member companies have been independently checked by staff from the authorities' Trading Standards Services, for compliance with the letter and spirit of the law.

Only if businesses pass stringent checks can they display the 'Buy With Confidence' logo. Details of firms you can trust are available on the Councils' interactive consumer website:
www.essex.gov.uk/buywithconfidence

This site gives you access to information on firms where you can buy goods and services with confidence, knowing they have signed up to the "commitment by business", details of which can also be viewed on the website.

You can give us your views on how member businesses are performing, and if you have had good service from a company that is not on the scheme, the website enables you to recommend them for membership.



**If you do not have access to the internet, full details are available
by calling 08454 040 506**

**Rip-offs, scams, cowboy tradesmen –
consumers are right to be wary when buying
goods or services.**

Can you ever trust a solar energy salesman?

Can you confidently employ
someone to carry out loft insulation?

**The answer to these questions is "yes"
thanks to a Trading Standards initiative.**



Carers

Do you care for a partner, relative or friend?

Who are carers?

Carers look after family, partners or friends in need of help because they are ill, frail or have a disability. The care they provide is unpaid and may include:

- Personal care, such as helping with washing, dressing, going to the toilet or dealing with incontinence.
- Eating or feeding and taking medicines.
- Getting out and about in the home or outside.
- Emotional support and company.



Carers:

- May themselves be unwell or have a disability.
- Do not necessarily have to live in the same house as the person they are caring for.
- May be providing physical and/or emotional care.

It could be you...

- There are 6 million carers in the UK.
- Every day another 6,000 people take on a caring responsibility.

So, you are not alone...

Becoming a carer can be confusing, bewildering and frightening. No-one is super human and all carers need help, support and back-up.



Find out what support is available in Essex.

This may include:

- Services to enable you to have a break.
- Help with household tasks.
- Training to assist with the caring role.
- A piece of equipment to make caring easier.
- Emotional support.
- Benefits advice.

**Ask for your free 'Carers Support Assessment'.
Telephone the Carers hotline: 01245 434 375**

Relatives and Residents Association (Essex)

For older people, their families and carers, decisions regarding residential care can be fraught with anxiety and confusion. There are so many questions - 'What are the alternatives to residential care?' 'Who pays for what?'

'What kind of home would be suitable?'

The Relatives & Residents Association (Essex) was launched in October 2008 to help local people find reliable answers, make informed decisions and maintain the best possible quality of life should they choose to move into residential care.

The Association, sponsored by Essex County Council, Southend Borough Council, Thurrock Council and the local Primary Care Trusts, is run by volunteers. Working closely with the national Relatives & Residents Association, the local branch offers support and advice through a local rate telephone helpline:

Helpline:
0845 017 7720
Monday - Friday
9.30am - 4.30pm

The Association also provides a comprehensive website, www.relresessex.org with information on rights and entitlements and signposts to local and national resources.

If you would like to know more about the R&RA(E), or if you are interested in volunteering opportunities, we would love to hear from you. For further information please contact info@relresessex.org or telephone **0845 017 1095**.

Emergency Planning

How to Prepare for an Emergency?

Fire, flooding, power or water cuts, extreme weather, accidents. Sometimes emergencies do happen but you can help yourself by being prepared. Here are some ideas that may help you cope.

Before an emergency

Key a friend or family member's telephone number into your mobile phone and call it 'ICE'.

'ICE' means 'In Case of Emergency'

In the event that you cannot make a call yourself, the Emergency Services will be able to look up 'ICE' in your telephone and contact someone who knows you.

Think about what you might need with you. Consider putting key items into a grab bag that is small enough to carry, stored safely and easy to find.

Grab Bag Checklist:

- Phone numbers for your friends, family, GP.
- Medicines.
- Insurance information.
- Glasses.
- Spare keys.
- Radio.
- Torch.
- Note book.
- Toiletries.
- First Aid Kit.
- Batteries.

In an emergency, wait in a safe place until the Emergency Services arrive. Have your grab bag at the ready. Listen to local radio stations for advice and information - Go in, Stay in, Tune in.

Fire... Electricity and Gas



Every year the fire service attends **over 50,000 household fires** in Britain...

That is 140 fires a day!

Sadly, these 50,000 fires resulted in 400 deaths and 3,000 injuries - and not one of those people thought it would happen to them!

Over half of these fires were caused by cooking appliances, which includes oil and fat pans.



3 out of 10 deaths are caused by fires from **smoking materials**, for example, cigarettes, pipes etc.

When cooking

Using a thermostat controlled deep fat fryer is safest but if you must use a deep fat frying pan on a cooker...

- Never fill it more than one third full.
- **Never leave it unattended - even for a few seconds.**
- NEVER cook with oil/fat if you have been drinking alcohol.

If your oil or fat pan catches fire...

- If it is safe to do so, turn off the heat. Close the kitchen door. Get out of the house and call 999.
- NEVER throw water onto the fire.

Also, remember NOT to dry tea towels, etc. on or near cookers and do not place anything metal in a microwave.

Smoking

- Make sure smoking materials are never left to burn unattended.
- Make sure that they are completely stubbed out in a proper ashtray before leaving the room. A small amount of water at the bottom of an ashtray will help to extinguish smoking materials.
- Never smoke in bed or in an armchair when feeling drowsy or when under the influence of alcohol or drugs (prescribed or otherwise).
- Never smoke near someone who is on oxygen.

Always keep matches and lighters in a safe place - out of reach of children.

Electric Blankets

Make sure you use your blanket properly **AND check its condition.**

- Switch it off before you get into bed (unless it is the type that can be used overnight).
- NEVER use the blanket if it is wet, soiled, creased or rucked-up. Never switch it on to dry it out.
- NEVER use a hot water bottle and electric blanket together.
- Replace the blanket if it is over 10 years old.

Scalds

Scalds are caused by hot water, hot oil and steam, especially from a kettle. One of the major causes of scalds is bath water, remember cold water should be placed in the bath first, then hot water added.

- Keep kettles well away from the edge of a kitchen work-top and check that the flex is not left hanging down.
- When filling the bath, always run the cold tap first.
- Bath water should not be more than 43°C (109°F) - you can buy thermometers which are specially designed to check bath temperatures.
- Keep the handles of pots and pans turned away from the edges of cookers and work surfaces at all times.
- Take extra care when ironing.

Scalds should be treated as follows:

- Remove anything tight from the patient like rings and watches, so long as it is not stuck to the skin. Burns can cause swelling, so these will then cause discomfort.
- Cool the skin immediately by holding it under cool (not cold) running tap water for at least 10 minutes, as burned skin will continue to burn for a short while after the accident.
- The burn should be covered with a clean, dry, soft cloth, plastic bag or kitchen film to prevent germs getting to it.
- Ointment or fat should NOT be put on the burn.
- The patient should be treated for shock if they look sick, weak or faint.
- If the burn continues to be painful, telephone the doctor or seek medical assistance.

Old or damaged electric blankets cause more than 500 fires a year!

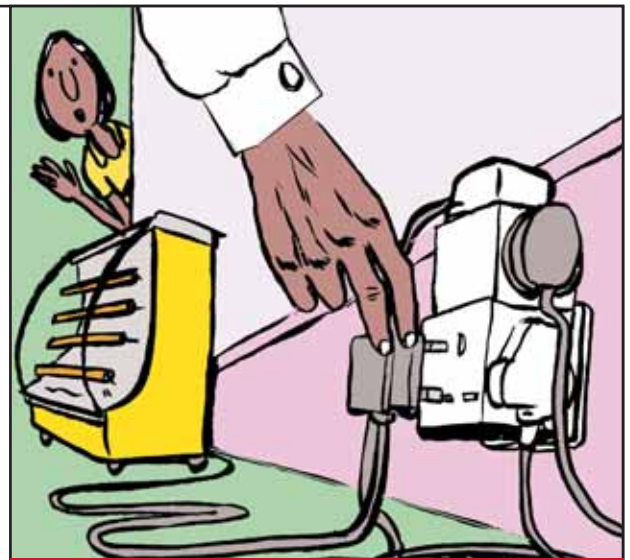


Other electrical things...

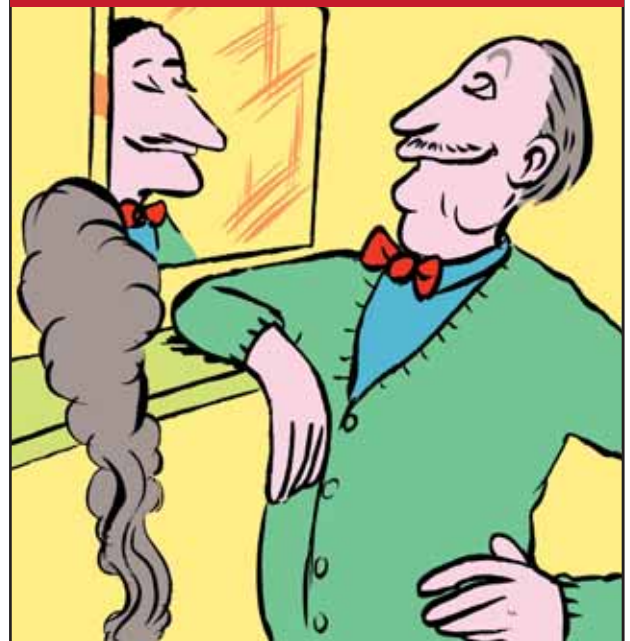
- Never repair or rejoin cables - always replace the entire cable.
- Do not run cables under the carpet – they will get worn and damaged without you seeing them.
- Keep cables away from the cooker.
- Always try to use one plug in one socket and never use more than one adaptor per socket.
- Make sure all heat producing appliances, for example, toasters, microwaves, hairdryers and kettles, are plugged into their own socket and not used with an adaptor.
- Use appliances as they should be used, for example, clean the fluff out of a tumble dryer and do not overload a washing machine.
- When going to bed make sure all TVs are switched off properly and not left on stand-by. Do not leave washing machines and tumble dryers running whilst in bed.
- Always unplug phone chargers when not in use.

DANGER! Look out for:

- Hot plugs and sockets.
- Fuses that blow for no obvious reason.
- Lights flickering.
- Brown scorch marks on sockets or plugs.
- Always put a fire guard around an open fire.
- Never place clothes on the guard to dry, or put newspapers on the guard as they will catch fire.
- Do not hang a mirror above the fire place.
- Never put aerosols near a fire or heater, they could explode.
- **Keep portable heaters away from furniture and all cloth materials, including clothes.**
- **Always keep portable heaters out of bathrooms.**
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions – particularly for changing gas cylinders and cleaning and have them serviced every year.



Remember prevention is always better than cure



**If a fire does start...
GET OUT... STAY OUT...
GET THE FIRE SERVICE OUT
BY CALLING 999.**

Just think... if you do not have a smoke alarm there will be nothing to wake you up if a fire does occur! They are cheap and easy to buy and fit, a relative or friend could help. Even the Fire Service will be happy to assist – they can provide and install alarms free of charge, or provide help and advice on planning an escape route. Just call your community fire safety department, please see the Contacts Section at the back of this handbook.

- Test your smoke alarm every week. Change the battery and dust the unit annually.

Where to put it:

- If your home is on one level you should fit the alarm in the hallway between the living and sleeping areas.
- If your home has more than one floor, one alarm should be fitted at the bottom of each staircase and an alarm on each upstairs landing.
- Smoke alarms should be fitted onto the ceiling (but not too near the kitchen as it may go off accidentally).



How would you get out of the house if there was a fire? Make an action plan TODAY. Where are the keys to doors and windows kept? Are they near to the exit (but NOT kept in the lock)?

IF THERE IS A FIRE, DO NOT INVESTIGATE, LEAVE THE HOUSE QUICKLY AND CALMLY, CALL THE FIRE SERVICE OUT AND STAY OUT.

Work out these sentences by unscrambling the anagrams:

1. Get a KEMOS MARAL. _____
2. Make a EFRI OATINC NAPL. _____
3. Put out STREGICATE and SCELAND completely. _____
4. Never MEKSO in bed. _____
5. Keep GLINTOCH and CIBARF away from ERESATH.

6. Check and service CRITECLE, SAG and GINHATE appliances regularly.

7. Cook with REETMEX AERC when using hot oil. _____



Carbon Monoxide

Every year about **30 people die** from carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning caused by gas appliances and flues that have not been properly installed or maintained, whilst many others also suffer ill health.

Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning could be...



When gas does not burn properly, as with other fuels such as coal, wood or oil, excess CO is produced which is poisonous.

You are at risk from CO poisoning if:

- Your appliance was poorly installed.
- Your appliance is not working properly.
- Your appliance has not been checked for safety or maintained regularly.
- There is not enough fresh air in the room.
- Your chimney or flue gets blocked up.
- You allow non-CORGI registered engineers to install or maintain your appliance(s).

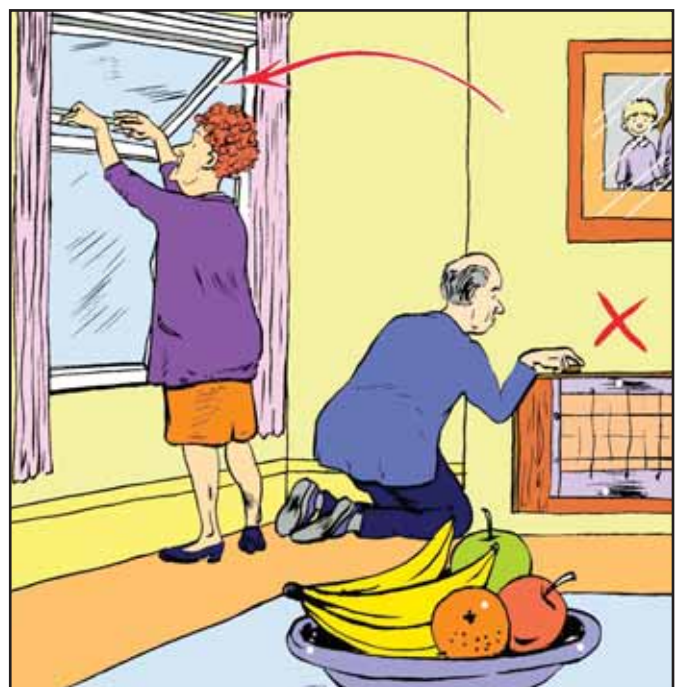
Signs to look out for include

- Yellow or brown staining around, or on appliances.
- Pilot lights that frequently blow out.
- Increased condensation inside windows.
- Yellow rather than blue flame (apart from flueless fires).

Suffering any of the symptoms described above.

If you think your appliance is spilling CO

- Switch off the appliance and do not reuse until remedial action has been taken.
- Open all doors and windows to ventilate the room - do not sleep in it.
- Visit your GP urgently and tell them that you believe your symptoms may be related to CO poisoning and request either a blood and/or breath sample.



Energy Efficiency



Tropics come to the British Isles

Michael Cairney aged 84, is today a warmer and wealthier man.

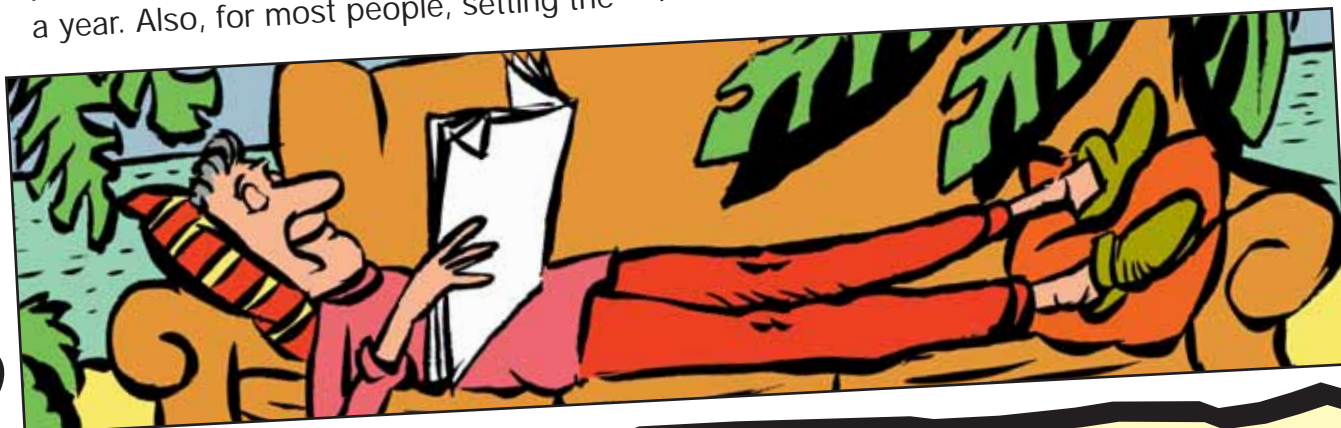
"I heard that I should be trying to keep my house at 21°C (70°F)! I couldn't afford that so I tried to at least keep my living room warm. I struggled to do that but now, I can't believe it! It is like I moved to the Bahamas! My rooms are much warmer and my bills are cheaper!"

When asked how he has done it he told our reporter that he followed some advice:

- Close your curtains as it gets dark - stop heat escaping through windows. Double-glazing cuts heat loss by 20% but a cheaper short-term alternative is to tape polythene across the frames.
- Stop draughts and heat escaping through floorboards and skirting boards by filling gaps with newspaper, beading or mastic sealant.
- Make sure your loft is properly insulated – the recommended depth is 270mm (10½ inches).
- An insulating jacket for hot water tanks only costs a few pounds. One that is at least 75mm (3") thick could save £10-£15 a year. Also, for most people, setting the

water thermostat at 60°C/140°F is fine for bathing and washing, it does not need to be hotter.

- Put the plug in when you run hot water and get a dripping tap fixed – a day's 'dripping' is enough to run a bath.
- Check your heating system is working properly and serviced at least once a year (your supplier may offer free safety checks).
- Make sure you know how to set the heating controls on your boiler. In very cold weather set the heating to come on earlier, rather than turning the thermostat up higher.
- Energy saving light bulbs can be a bit more expensive than 'ordinary' ones but they will last up to 12 times longer and every bulb will save you up to £7 each year.
- Turn off lights, television and any other electrical items when you do not need them. When you are buying a new electrical appliance check the energy efficiency rating (A is very good and G very poor).
- Have cavity wall insulation fitted if you can, this could save you between £100 and £120 a year.



You might want to think about **changing your gas or electricity supplier**. You would have the same meters, the same pipes and cables.

Comparing prices can feel very complicated and confusing as companies charge in different ways.

'Consumer Direct' are independent and can help you with this (see the contacts list at the back of this handbook).

What you need to find out is how much you pay for your gas and electricity each year – look at your last four quarterly bills.

You should be able to **spread your fuel costs over the full year**, rather than find your bills much higher in winter. Call your supplier to ask about this and other savings schemes.

Energy Efficiency Advice Centres provide free, impartial, expert advice to help you cut the amount of energy you use in your home. Because they work closely with local authorities and energy suppliers, they can also tell you about grants or offers available. To speak to your local advice centre call **0800 512 012** today.

Make your home warmer and healthier! If you own your home or rent from a private landlord, you could receive a **Warm Front** grant of up to £2,700 to use towards heating and insulation measures. **Call 0800 316 2805.**

If you fall behind with bills

Let the company know. Gas and electricity companies have a commitment not to disconnect supply to all-pensioner households in the winter. Make sure they know that you are a pensioner.

Work out these sentences by filling in the missing words.

- 1. Stop heating escaping through windows by closing curtains when it gets dark.
- 2. Keep in rising heat in your home by ensuring your I ___ is i _____.
- 3. Make sure your h _____ system is working properly by having it s _____ once a year.
- 4. Use e _____ saving l _____ b _____ and turn off lights, t _____ and other electrical items when they are not being used.



Benefits and Money Worries

The **benefits** system can be quite complicated and confusing. Many people miss out on claiming money they are entitled to as a result. Because the rules often change and people's circumstances alter, the fact that a claim made once was refused, does not mean that this will always be the case. For example, if you begin to need help doing things for

yourself you may be able to claim Attendance Allowance. If successful, it might mean becoming entitled to other benefits for the first time - even though your income has actually gone up.

It is a good idea to get your benefit situation checked out at regular intervals just to make sure you are not missing out.

There are several agencies and people to ask, who can help you do this.

- **Benefits Enquiry Line**

This is an enquiry line provided by the Department for Work and Pensions. Staff can offer advice and information about benefits for those who are sick or disabled and carers. They may also be able to offer help completing forms.

- **Citizens Advice Bureau**

The Citizens Advice service helps people resolve their legal, money and other problems by providing free information and advice from nearly 3,400 locations and by influencing policy makers.

In many areas Community Outreach Teams can visit you in your own home (if you have difficulty getting out), or at certain health centres and community venues.

If telephoning, the numbers can be busy and you may need to try more than once. Alternatively, you could try visiting the local office.

- **Pension Service**

The local Pension Service provides information for individuals about pensions and other pensioner benefits in the UK, whether you are planning for the future, are about to retire or have already retired. Benefits Officers can visit you at home to provide advice and to offer help to complete claims forms.

- **Age Concern**

Age Concern work locally, regionally and nationally in partnership with other public, voluntary, charity and community sector organisations. They promote and deliver a better quality of life for all older people, and have advisors who can provide information on benefits and other matters.

Please see the Contact Details section at the back of this handbook for local numbers of the above agencies.

If you have **money worries**, for example, dealing with people you owe money to, including considering borrowing from a doorstep lender, or if you feel you are constantly 'robbing Peter to pay Paul', there are people you can contact for free, impartial and confidential advice. Very often there are solutions to what might seem to be impossible situations.



- **No need to face money worries on your own**

Trying to cope with money worries alone can be very stressful. Bills, debts and just trying to get by can seem impossible. And ignoring money problems usually makes things worse. But now it is easier to get help and advice you can rely on.

- **Community Legal Advice (CLA)**

You may also get advice from CLA. They may be able to advise on a range of issues such as debt, welfare benefits and housing.

Contact - 0845 3454 345.

- **Housing and Council Tax Benefit**

Even if you do not get any other benefits you may still be able to get help towards rent and Council Tax. Contact your local district or borough council to ask about what help you may be able to get.

Contact details can be found at the back of this handbook. Or you can find the number in the local telephone directory.

- **Credit Union**

Credit Unions are mutual financial organisations which are owned and run by their members for their members. Credit Unions are regulated by the Financial Services Authority (FSA), and money saved in one is protected on the same basis as it would be if it was held in a bank or building society. Many credit unions offer a range of services including a current account, benefits direct, ISAs and Child Trust Funds. A credit union may suit those who do not want a bank account, but want the flexibility to save when they can. Once a record as a reliable saver has been established they will also responsibly lend money. More information is available from the Financial Services Authority and Consumer Direct. Contact details can be found at the back of this handbook.

- **National Debtline**

Contact - 0808 808 4000

This is a national telephone helpline for people with debt problems in England, Wales and Scotland. The service is free, confidential and independent, with any advice backed up with written self-help materials.

Depending on personal circumstances, it may also be possible to assist you in setting up a free Debt Management Plan.

- **Age Concern**

See details on previous page.

- **Citizens Advice Bureau**

See details on previous page.

Nuisance Neighbours

'Neighbour Nuisance' includes a wide variety of problems including rubbish dumped in the street, dogs fouling, verbal abuse, ball games played against your living room wall, drunken behaviour, graffiti...

The '**Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003**' defines anti-social conduct as 'that which causes or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household.'

It includes serious criminal acts such as drug-dealing or physical violence (which should always be reported to the Police).

It also includes noise and vandalism, which may not be criminal in nature but can strongly affect the quality of other people's lives.

Many complaints are about noise. This problem is not a new one - cases were being reported back in the 19th Century and long before that I suspect!

Arguments next door, midnight DIY, parties, burglar alarms that will not switch off... Just because it is common, it does not mean that you have to put up with it.

The reassuring fact is that the large majority of situations are resolved by open communication with the person responsible.



What you can do:

- If possible, check **who is responsible** for the behaviour or disturbance. If you are at all unsure it would be advisable to approach the person, or people, cautiously and with respect.
- Try to **talk to your neighbour** – problems may be caused by differences in lifestyle and a compromise or solution might be found easily.
- It may be better to **write a letter** if it seems likely that one or both parties will lose their temper or be unable to discuss the issue calmly.
- If other people are experiencing the same problem they may be interested in making a **joint approach** either by letter or in person. This should convey to the person responsible for the nuisance that more than one person is affected by their behaviour.
- You can also approach the **neighbour's landlord** to discuss the problem. This might be a housing welfare officer (if owned or run by a housing association), the local Council or a private landlord.
- **Keeping a record sheet** or diary with details of when the noise or disturbance occurs can be a valuable record, which can be referred back to. This might include the date and time of incident or be more detailed. (In some circumstances authorities will need your record to be corroborated and if other neighbours are also affected it would be advisable for them to keep their own record.)



- If you do not feel comfortable or able to approach the person responsible, for whatever reason, you might want to see if an **independent mediator** could listen to both your views and to help you find a solution.
- Some issues may relate to information recorded in **official documents**, for example, who is responsible for a wall between gardens. If possible, find out what the legal position is. If you are unsure, you can contact an experienced adviser at the Citizen's Advice Bureau (listed in your phone book).
- If a direct approach to the individual, group or landlord is not possible or unsuccessful, then you could either contact your Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator (through the local Council) or alternatively contact your Neighbourhood Specialist Officer at **Essex Police** on the non-emergency number - **0300 333 4444**.
- In situations that relate to your property such as overhanging tree branches causing a danger, then contact your **local Council**. They will direct you to the right department for your particular circumstances.



Contact the Police on 999 ONLY if you feel that you are in **immediate danger**. If you are experiencing on-going harassment or feel that you or your property are at risk then call the non-emergency number for **Essex Police** on **0300 333 4444**. You may want to consult a solicitor or take court action in certain circumstances. Only isolated situations result in this action and you can receive detailed advice about this from your Citizen's Advice Bureau.

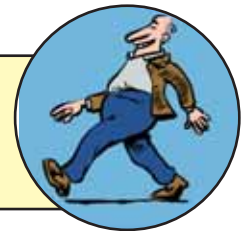
Getting Out, Travel and Holidays



Visiting friends or family, going shopping or to work, enjoying a walk in the sunshine, attending a club, enjoying your favourite drink at the pub, watching a new film, a game of bowls or scrabble... going on holiday!

Getting out and about is good for your mind, your body, your spirit and confidence. It provides stimulus that keeps you healthy, happy and engaged with life. **Here are some ideas that may make it easier for you to get out...**

WALKING is free and excellent for you! Even if you have to really take your time, you can see the world in a different way on foot.



TRAVELLING BY SCOOTER OR BUGGY can offer greater freedom when walking has become more difficult. Assist UK can offer help on which vehicle would best suit your needs and the Highway Code for Electric Scooters and Wheelchair Users, available from the British Healthcare Trades Association (see the contacts list at the back of this handbook), will help to keep you and others safe and to help you buy and maintain your vehicle. You should also consider insuring yourself against injuring members of the public.

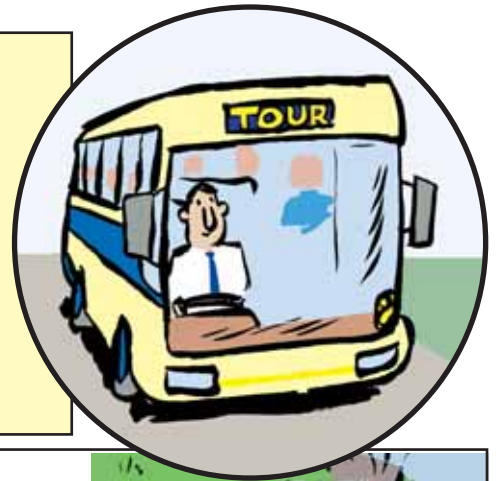
CATCHING THE BUS is free to every local resident aged 60 or over when you apply for your free bus pass. For bus services in Essex, you can use your bus pass between 9.00am and midnight weekdays and all day at weekends. For the rest of England, the operational hours are 9.30am to 11pm weekdays and all day at weekends. Contact your local council for more information about using or acquiring a bus pass.



HOPPING ON THE TRAIN is made easier by getting help from train companies to make connections and to get about the station, for example, contact them in advance.

Call the National Rail Enquiry Service (see the contacts list at the back of this handbook) for information and details about discounts.

TAKING A COACH is often available at a discount rate. National Express offers this and you can find out more by contacting one of their agents (often your local travel agent). As of January 2005, all new large coaches now have to have wheelchair access but it will be many years before they all have. Many coach companies can provide assistance - **check** when you make your booking.



TRAVELLING BY CAR can be the most convenient way to travel. There are no age restrictions to driving but by law you must notify the Driver Vehicle Licence Agency (0870 240 0009) if you develop a disability or medical condition that might affect your driving. You must renew your license at the age of 70 and every three years after that.

Contact your local Council to apply for a Blue Badge, which permits people with disabilities, travelling either as driver or passenger, to park on single and double yellow lines for example.

You can get attachments from car accessory shops such as key holders, which make turning the key much easier, grab handles to put around the doors and panoramic mirrors, which show a much wider view and save turning your head. But when you are choosing a new car consider the features it has already got, for example, how wide the doors open and how easy the handles are to open (contact 'Ricability' for independent advice).



ZOOMING AWAY BY AIR OR SEA can be a great adventure, stimulating experience or relaxing break. Some airlines and ferry companies offer discounts for us, although the age barrier varies – talk directly to the company you are thinking of booking with or to your travel agent.

There are also companies that specialise in holidays for those who are 50+, such as SAGA or Age Concern as well as special-interest holidays such as bridge and walking in Italy. You can find out about companies like these through your local travel agent, on the internet or by talking to your local bridge group, for example.



Some general points for when you are out and about:

- Keep to main roads that are busy and well lit. Do not take short cuts.
- Before you go out, plan your route and tell someone where you are going and when you will be back.
- If you get lost, ask for directions in a shop.
- Spread your valuables around your body if possible, for example, your house keys in your trouser pocket and your money in your jacket.
- Consider buying a personal attack alarm (available from DIY stores).
- If you use a wheelchair, keep your things beside you rather than at the back of the chair.
- Only carry the valuables and money you need, keep them secure and out of sight. For instance, use inside jacket pockets.
- Place your handbag strap across your body.
- Sit near other people or where the driver can see you if you are on a bus or tram.
- Move if someone makes you feel uncomfortable.
- Do not risk injuring yourself – if someone tries to take something from you, it may be better to give them what they want and then contact the Police.
- Shouting 'fire' rather than 'help' can get more reaction.
- Keep your car in good condition and when you are driving, make sure your doors and windows are locked, your valuables out of sight and do not run out of petrol!
- Keep bags and any valuables out of sight, preferably in the boot.
- Park in an area that is well-lit and overlooked. If you can, remove all your valuables, but otherwise, put them in the boot.
- Do not offer lifts to (or accept lifts from) people you do not know well.
- Only use approved taxi firms, book in advance and always sit in the back seat.



Most burglaries happen when a house or flat is empty so make it look like you are at home when you are not!

When you are away:

- Do not leave your curtains closed during the daytime – you could ask a neighbour to open and close them for you.
- Use timer switches to turn on some lights and a radio when it gets dark (available at DIY shops).
- Cancel any milk or newspaper deliveries when you go away.
- Keep all valuables such as televisions and computers out of sight.
- Do not put your home address on luggage labels until you are making the return journey.
- Lock all windows and doors, remove the keys and put them in a safe place, out of sight.
- Consider getting an approved safe, which you can hide and keep valuables in.
- Enjoy yourself!

Work out what is being described in the questions below and fill in the answers across the page to find out what "Getting out and about" will enable you to do!

1		S	C	O	O	T	E	R			
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- 1. Getting an electric one of these could give you a new lease of life! **SCOOTER**
- 2. A type of transport.
- 3. Another name for '1'.
- 4. You can get this from train and coach companies.
- 5. Do not tempt them in!
- 6. Getting out and about can help you to be
- 7. Another type of transport – the oldest one about!
- 8. Getting out and about is good for your
- 9. Ask your neighbour to twitch yours while you are away.
- 10. Yet another type of transport.
- 11. Streets described as this are safest at night.
- 12. 'Zoom' away on one.
- 13. Shouting this rather than "help" will often get more reaction.
- 14. Get some of these to help keep your home safe while you are away.



Safe in your Garden



For some people a garden is a great source of pleasure to look at, to nurture or both. For others it might be another chore – somewhere else to keep tidy, or simply to hang your washing.

Whatever it means to you, the key is keeping it accessible. This might mean practical ways to keep the paths safe or enabling yourself to “access” some pleasure from it while sitting in your armchair – placing a bird table or bath near the window or plants that attract butterflies.

Here are a few tips to help you keep active in and with your garden:

- Keep paths free of leaves and moss, which will make them slippery.
- Cut back plants that you might trip on.
- Make your paths wide enough to use with a stick or walking frame.
- Take care with overhanging trees and unprotected canes.
- Simple bending and stretching exercises before you start will loosen up your muscles, which will help to avoid strain and injury. Try to keep a good posture when gardening and vary the jobs so that different hand and body movements are needed.
- Put hanging baskets where they are easy to reach.
- Raised beds are easier to plant and weed.
- Use ground cover plants to cut down on weeding.
- Mulches of bark, plastic, or gravel, etc. will slow down the weeds.
- Try tools before you buy - consider their weight, your grip and balance. Some tools are adapted to prevent bending down or kneeling.
- Allow yourself sufficient time to complete a task. Rushing can lead to mistakes and injuries.
- Do not try to carry too much at a time – use a light watering can.
- You should have a tetanus injection every ten years. Tetanus is a serious infection of the nervous system. Ask your doctor about this.
- Stop before you get too tired - do not “do that extra little bit”.



Keeping Healthy and Active

Growing older brings a lot of changes to a person's life. Suddenly they may feel that they are without a routine and an identity (children may have left home, they may have retired from work, or moved to a smaller home).

Relationships also change, hopefully for the better with more time to spend together but this does not always just happen – it takes effort and good communication.

In retirement people can find frustration, social isolation and loneliness.

One of the keys to enjoying a happy healthy life is to keep active and that includes your brain. It is scientifically proven that your memory and cognitive functions are kept agile by keeping your brain active - with puzzles, discussion groups or study for example.

Here are some ideas for you to consider:

- Learn to play a new instrument.
- Research your family tree or local history.
- Try gardening or join a gardening group.
- Many museums and art galleries are now free.
- Shopping.
- Writers/artists and music appreciation groups.
- Author events at bookshops or start your own book discussion group.
- Annual essay and poetry competitions.
- Reading or listening to audio cassettes/CDs.
- Try a new sport or gentle exercise (try the exercise programme at the back of this handbook).
- Volunteer - there are many different opportunities available.
- Join a walking group (find out about health walks at the back of this handbook).
- Start swimming, cheaper for people aged 60+.
- Contact Better Government for Older People (see the contacts list at the back of this handbook).



You can find out about activities and groups in many different places: libraries, volunteer bureaux, Age Concern, town/village halls, local papers, adult or community colleges, the phone books, Tourist Information Centres, Internet...

What about keeping your body 'active'?

- Get your doctor to check your hearing and blood pressure every year even if you feel healthy – spotting a problem early makes it much easier to treat.
- People aged 60+ can have a free eyesight check, which you should have every two years even if you do not think your eyesight has changed.
- Women should check their breasts for lumps every month and have a free breast screening 'mammogram' every three years (available for all women aged 50-70. Older women who have any concerns should speak to their doctor as soon as possible).
- Men should look out for possible symptoms of prostate problems such as difficulty or pain when urinating or the need to urinate more frequently. Approximately 40% of men over 70 have symptoms of an enlarged prostate, however, there are different treatments available and you should always speak to your doctor if the problem worsens or you feel concern.

Consider the following... Quit Smoking and Drinking

Think of the money you would save too!
IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO QUIT
although no-one is claiming it is easy –
the key is to want to.

NHS Smoking Helpline: 0800 022 4332

The Department of Health suggests that women should have no more than 2 or 3 units of alcohol a day, and men no more than 3 or 4 units of alcohol a day. (1 unit = half a pint, small glass of wine or single pub measure of spirits).

Many people who drink a damaging amount do not actually get drunk often. Being able to 'handle' it does not mean that your body can! The **National Alcohol Helpline: 0800 917 8282** offers free support and advice.

Everyone has heard about the dangers of smoking but what about the benefits of stopping? Check your knowledge with the statements below:

1. Your blood oxygen levels increase to normal and your chance of having a heart attack starts to fall after
 - a) eight hours
 - b) twelve hours
 - c) two days
2. Your body is nicotine-free and your senses of taste and smell begin to improve after
 - a) 24 hours
 - b) 48 hours
 - c) a week
3. Your lung efficiency has increased by 5-10% so wheezing, coughing and shortness of breath improve after
 - a) a month
 - b) 3-9 months
 - c) 12-18 months
4. Your risk of having a heart attack is half that of a smoker after
 - a) 5 years
 - b) 10 years
 - c) 12 years



Look after your teeth

Adults lose more teeth from advanced gum disease than tooth decay, so keep brushing your teeth regularly. If you wear dentures, it is important to clean your gums, tongue and palate with a soft bristled brush every day. Be sure to leave your dentures out at night, keeping them in cold water when not being used and regularly soaking them for 20 minutes in a hypochlorite solution. Your local pharmacist can offer advice.

Everyone, whether you have your own teeth, full or partial dentures, should have regular check-ups with the dentist. Dentures usually need to be replaced every five years as the shape of your mouth continues to change. Some toothbrushes have large handles and angled heads to make them easier to use and grip. It is also possible to get handle adaptors (contact Assist UK for advice, number at the back of this handbook), or consider getting an electric toothbrush.

A healthy mouth allows you to choose a variety of foods and enjoy healthy eating. If you have your own teeth, keep sugary foods and drinks to meal times. Cutting down on sugary things can also help you maintain a healthy weight.

Buying sweets for children?

Sweets can harm children's teeth and many children now have decayed teeth. Treat them instead by buying comics, small toys or pencils, etc.

Flu Jab

The 'Flu Jab' is free and recommended by the Department of Health for everyone over 65, as well as everyone with a chronic heart or chest complaint, kidney disease, asthma, diabetes or low immune system. Also have the jab if you are a carer for someone whose health would be at risk if you caught the flu. If you have any concerns or questions, talk to your doctor or NHS Direct (number at the back of this handbook). **NEVER** worry that you are 'bothering' your doctor.

Different flu viruses are around each year, so it is important you get your 'flu jab' each year. Last year's jab may not protect you this year. The 'flu jab' is **NOT** a live virus and **CANNOT** give you the flu.

Fill in the missing words!

1. Be **p o s i t i v e** - it is scientifically proven to boost your immune system!
2. Keep w _ _ _ .
3. Eat w _ _ _ .
4. D _ _ _ _ with moderation.
5. Quit s _ _ _ _ _ .
6. Drink more w _ _ _ _ .
7. Keep your brain and body a _ _ _ _ _ .
8. Have a f _ _ jab.
9. B _ _ _ _ your t _ _ _ _ .
10. Have a free e _ _ _ _ _ check.
11. "Doctor, test my h _ _ _ _ _ and blood pressure!"



Medication



Knowing about the medicines that YOU are putting in YOUR body, can mean the difference between good and poor health.

Pills, pills and more pills... managing what you take, and when, can feel very complicated. **PLEASE** read the following tips below. If there is just one tip that is new then it will be worth the five minutes!

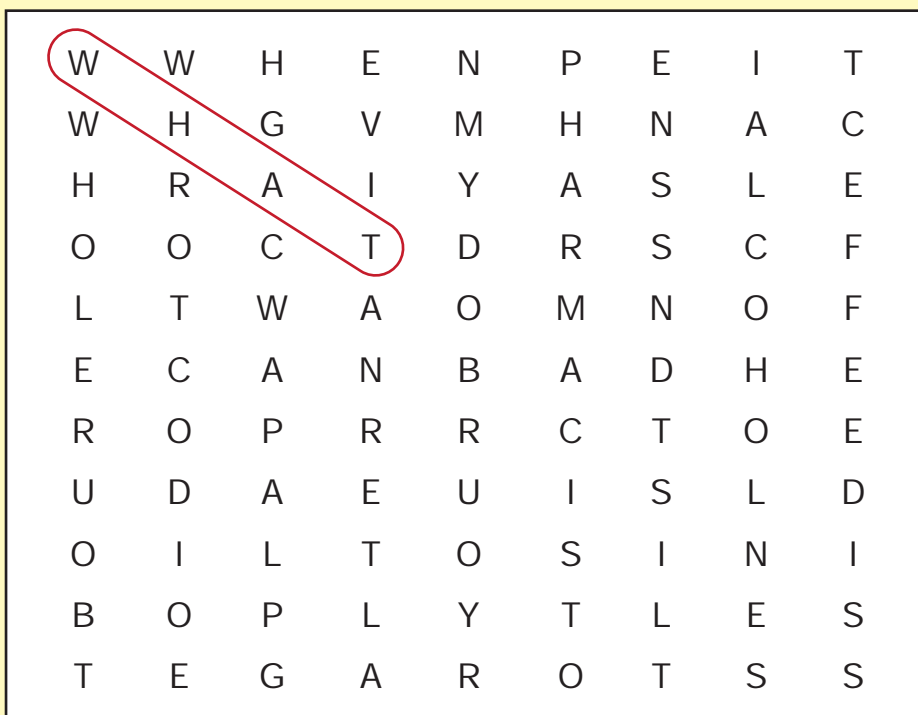
- Tell your doctor about all the medication that you are taking, including vitamin supplements, over-the-counter medicines such as paracetamol, herbal medicines or alternative treatments such as acupuncture.
- Let your doctor know about your past reactions to certain medicines. Your tolerance may change as you get older; some people become more sensitive to blood pressure tablets or painkillers, for example.
- Tell the pharmacist if you are taking any prescribed medicines before buying others (including vitamins) over the counter.
- Write down the answers to these questions, or ask your doctor to. Keep the answers somewhere safe, for example, on a fridge door or in the medicine box.
- Ask the pharmacist to mark each container with all the instructions and check if anything is different to what the doctor told you.
- If your pills look different, for example, shape, size or colour, check carefully that the medication dose strength in milligrams ('mg') or micrograms ('mcg') and dose frequency, is the same as you have taken before. If you have any doubts, check with your doctor or the pharmacist.



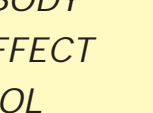



- **Ask your doctor or pharmacist:**
What is the medicine for? How long should I take it for? When should I take it? Should I take it before, after or with food? Do the tablets have to be taken whole or can I crush them? Can I drink alcohol while on these? What are the side effects and what do I do if I have them?



- Check storage instructions AND follow them! They do matter, some conditions will mean that the medicine will not work.
- Always keep medicines in their original containers.
- If you are struggling to manage your medicines, ask your usual community pharmacist for help. The pharmacist will assess you and make adjustments to the way your medicines are supplied, as appropriate. This may include giving you large print labels, different packaging, a reminder chart or a monitored dose system.
- Make sure you take enough medication away with you on holiday.
- Never take other people's medicine.
- Carry a list of all your medication with you, in a wallet or your diary, for example, in case you need urgent treatment or are away on holiday.
- Do not stop taking medication even if the symptoms have disappeared - always talk with your doctor first. For example, an infection treated with antibiotics will start to improve within 72 hours. However, if you do not complete the course of tablets, you may develop a new infection, which is resistant to the medication already taken.
- Give old, expired or unwanted medication back to the pharmacist for correct disposal. Do not flush them down the sink/toilet or put them in the dustbin.

**Find the following words in the wordsearch.
Do you know what they have to do with medication?**



- WHAT 
- WHEN 
- HOW 
- WHOLE
- YOUR BODY
- SIDE EFFECT
- ALCOHOL
- TOLERANCE
- ALTERNATIVE
- PHARMACIST
- STORAGE 
- SAME
- LIST 
- DOCTOR 

Food

Most people have heard of '**5-a-day**', encouraging us all to eat five portions of fruit and vegetables every day (which can include dried fruit, tinned / frozen products and long-life fruit juice). We are also told by the Department of Health and scientists to eat a good mixture of other foods:

- Wholemeal bread, potatoes, rice, pasta and cereals.
- Fish, meat, beans and pulses such as lentils.
- Milk and dairy products.

It is also important to drink **at least 6** to 8 cups of liquid every day, to help prevent dehydration. Try tea, coffee, water, milk, milky drinks, soups, fruit juices and fruit squash.

But do YOU? Over time our diet has a profound effect on our health, as much or more than most of the medication that we might take. Many people do not like cooking, or find it increasingly difficult as they get older, but aim to have at least one hot meal a day (particularly in the winter) and to have a mixture of different 'types' of food – although put in the same group, different vegetables give you different vitamins, (for example, sweetcorn is rich in lutein which helps protect against cataracts and macular degeneration while cooked tomatoes have lycopene, which

appears to help protect against heart disease and prostate cancer).

Omega-3 oils, which help keep your heart and arteries healthy, are mostly found in oily fish so try not to have meat every day.

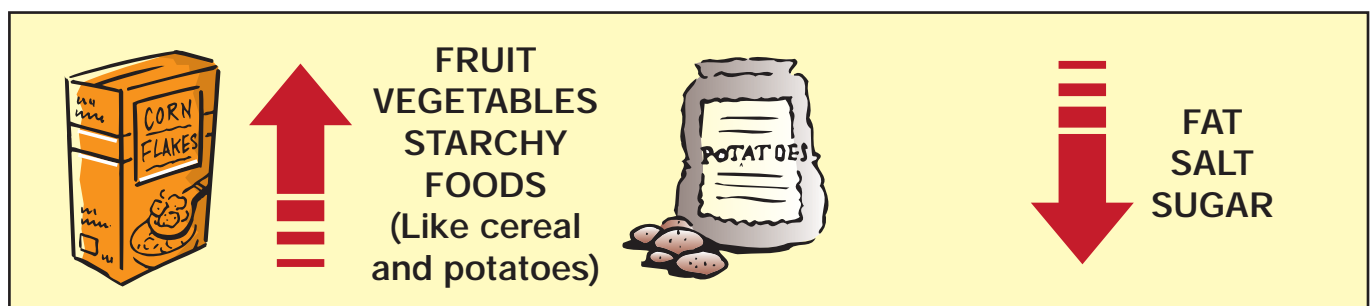
Obesity is especially common in middle aged and older people. It increases the risk of stroke, coronary heart disease, type 2 diabetes, osteoarthritis, colon and breast cancer.

You can find out more about how your diet could affect your health, not just for now but **for the future**, talk to your doctor, look on the internet or ask someone to grab some books from the library.

Winter Tips

Frequent hot drinks are comforting and warming. Try keeping a flask by your bed, so you can have a hot drink without getting up in the night.

Eating regular meals each day can give you warmth and energy. In case it is too cold to go out to the shops or if you are ill, keep a stock of basic foods in your store cupboard. Useful foods include long life milk, tinned meat or fish, long life fruit juices, breakfast cereals, pasta, rice, crispbreads, plain biscuits, tea, coffee, cocoa, canned and dried soups.



REMEMBER... Each year 5.5 million people in the UK get food poisoning! Food poisoning is serious, particularly if you have a weakened immune system, kidneys or other condition that makes it harder for your body to cope. Your health can be affected for the **long-term** not just a few days.

- Throw old food away - do not be tempted to eat it, even though you hate waste. **Your health is too important to gamble with.**
- Always read the storage instructions and keep food...
 - in the right place;
 - at the right temperature;
 - for the right amount of time.
- Keep a list on your freezer door of what is in there and when it must be eaten by. You could also attach stickers of different colours to the packaging as a reminder, for example, green for eat before August, blue for September (remember to record your code).
- Your sense of taste or smell can be weakened by medication or illness. You may not be able to tell when meat is spoiled or milk sour. Even if a food is within the date do not eat it if it looks, tastes or smells off.
- Left-overs should be stored in the fridge and eaten within two days.
- Be strict about keeping raw meat away from other foods and always wash your hands and all utensils after you have touched these foods.
- Regularly clean kitchen surfaces and keep pets' food away from yours.
- Never put open cans in the fridge - move the contents into a bowl, cover and remember to use within two days.
- Keep pests out. Seal packets of dried foods like flour and breakfast cereals tightly or put the contents in a storage jar.
- Never re-freeze food once it has started to thaw.
- Double check that sausages, burgers and poultry are cooked right through. They must not be 'rare' or pink in the middle and when pierced with a knife the juices that run out should be clear, not bloody.
- Do not reheat foods more than once.



Falls



The consequences of falling get more serious as we get older. Our bodies take longer to heal and the damage to our confidence and independence can be the most difficult of all. HOWEVER... falls are not a 'normal' part of getting older. There are measures that you can take which will reduce your chance of falling and the damage done.

Be aware of your limitations - it is not safe to stand on a wobbly chair. Do not do things just because you have always done them!

Keep active - Exercise can improve strength, balance and co-ordination, all of which may prevent you falling.

Enjoy the sun - Vitamin D is in some foods but we get most of it from the sun. It helps to keep our bones healthy and strong.

Take care of your feet - More than 80% of us have one or more foot problems. Wear low-heeled footwear with good grip and throw away old pairs with the sole worn away.

Check your medicine - Some can make you dizzy. Ask your doctor about this, particularly if you take more than four different medicines.

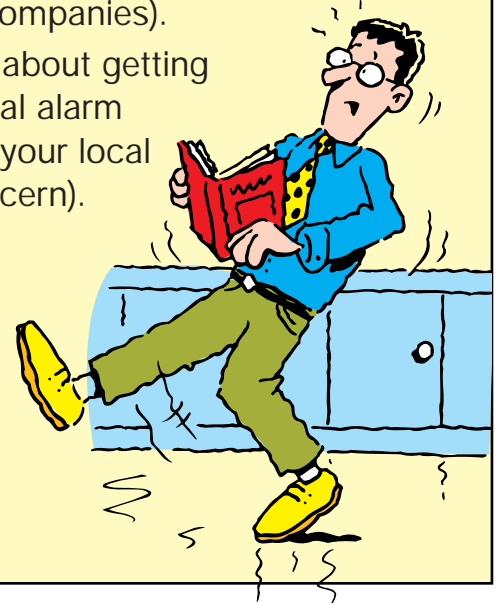
Separate glasses - Using bifocals can be disorientating. Talk to your optician about having two different pairs of glasses.

Take your time getting up - You can feel light-headed, particularly if you have been sitting or lying down for some time.

Keep the floor free of clutter, particularly the stairs and around your bed.

In your home...

- Have bright lights - particularly on the stairs, and put on the light if you get up in the night.
- Keep the floor, particularly the stairs, free of clutter.
- Repair or replace carpets with worn areas, holes or long threads.
- Check that mats and rugs are secure and have no tears or wrinkles.
- Put a non-slip mat in the bath.
- Wipe up spills immediately.
- Put grab rails in the bathroom and on the stairs.
- Keep things that you use often in easy reach.
- Think about getting an answer machine or an extra phone extension so that you are not tempted to run to answer it.
- Consider having someone come in to help with domestic tasks or personal care (contact the local Council or private companies).
- Find out about getting a personal alarm (contact your local Age Concern).



"You think you know your own stairs off by heart, but I must have taken a step too far and just fell the whole length..."

"It was my own fault, I suppose, because I have a double-bed cover on a single bed so it trails on the floor."

"I tripped over a piece of carpet in my hall. It wouldn't normally have been there... I could have predicted it would happen - I'd actually walked past it earlier and thought I must move that."

If you do fall...

- Do not panic. Stay still for a few minutes and try to calm down.
- Call for help if you can.
- You may feel able to try to get up - use a sturdy piece of furniture to help and move slowly.
- If you cannot get up try to get to something that will keep you warm while you wait for help, for example, bedclothes, cushions, a coat.

EXERCISE helps prevent high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, poor circulation, obesity, joint and bone problems. It also provides valuable social contact, reduces anxiety, helps with depression and makes you feel more alert, energetic and cheerful!

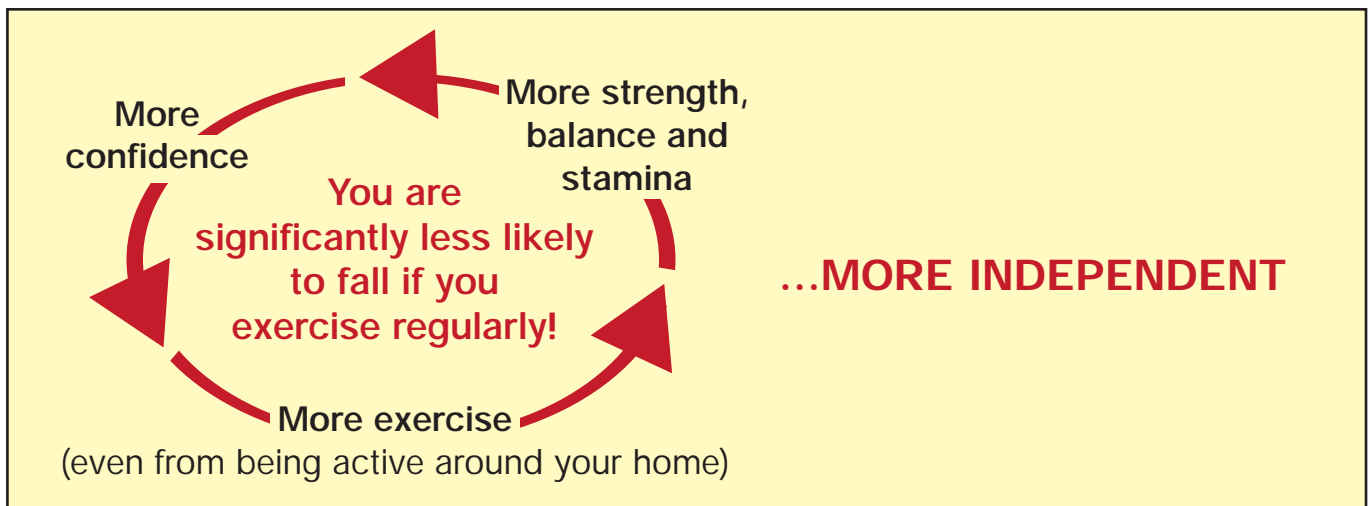
What is stopping you?

- I am too old to start.
- I have never been an exercise type of person.
- I am too fat.
- It will be expensive.
- I have not got the time.
- I have got no-one to do it with.
- I will be too embarrassed - everyone will be better than me.

Talk to your doctor about different types of exercise or contact a qualified instructor to discuss your needs or any physical conditions that might be affected. It is important to... **TAKE IT SLOWLY** - Be aware of your limitations and build up your exercising gently. **ENJOY IT!** - This is what will keep you going back.

Some exercising ideas: *walking, swimming, cycling, tennis, badminton, keep fit or aerobics, "Extend" - movement to music for over 60s, yoga, pilates, tai chi, golf, dance, gyms and bowling.*

If it feels too difficult at the moment to get out and join a group, then aim to do more exercise more often. Everyday chores around the house are exercise as well. Try to be more conscious of the muscles that you are using for each task - such as holding your arms out to do the washing up or lifting towels to put them away.



Exercise Programme

Before you start:

- **DISCUSS THE PROGRAMME WITH YOUR DOCTOR**
- **Find a clear space in a warm room**

Do not race through the exercises, keep control of the movement. Your sense of balance will develop more quickly the more aware you are of your body. If one is difficult, try to relax and aim to move half the amount. Always warm up before you start.

(All of the exercises can also be done sat down, just place your feet hip-width apart and sit up tall.)

Warm-up: Walk about the room or on the spot.

Swing your arms gently, keep your head up and relax your shoulders.

1. Stand feet hip-width apart, hands hanging at your sides. Hold your head up and take five slow full breaths, breathing out with a sigh. Breathe out and drop your head slowly forwards so that your chin moves towards your chest. Breathe in, lifting your head up (do not bend your head backwards). Repeat five times.



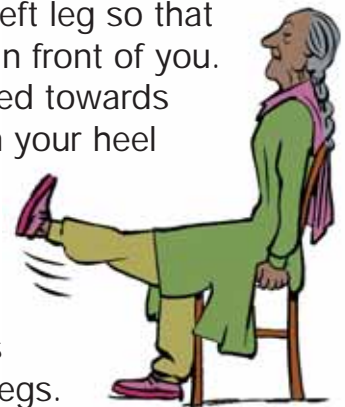
2. Stand feet hip-width apart, hands hanging at your sides. Breathe in and lift both shoulders up towards your ears. Keep your arms loose at your sides. Breathe out slowly relaxing your shoulders. Repeat five times.



3. For finger wriggle dexterity stand or sit up tall. Hold hands up to chest height, elbows bent, then clench hands. Release and wiggle the fingers. Repeat three times.



4. Sit in a chair, grip the seat for balance with your back straight, head up and shoulders relaxed. Slowly straighten your left leg so that your foot is out in front of you. Keep toes pointed towards the ceiling, push your heel away from you. Slowly lower your foot back to the floor. Repeat 10 times and then swap legs.



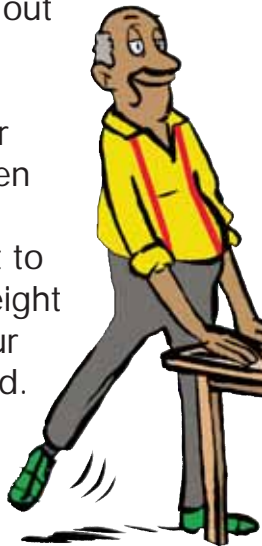
5. Hold onto a sturdy table or worktop at waist height for balance. Keep your feet facing forward. Tighten your tummy muscles. Breathe in and push through the balls of your feet to lift your body up. Keep your weight over your big toe and try not to lean forward. Hold for one second and then breathe out as you lower yourself back down onto your heels. Repeat up to 10 times.



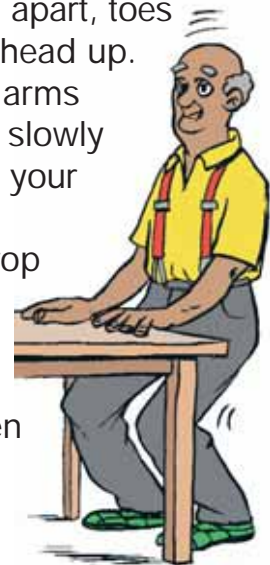
6. Stay in the same position and as you breathe in raise your toes off the ground as high as possible balancing on your heels. **Do not lean back or stick your bottom out.** Hold for one second and then breathe out as you lower your toes back onto the ground. Repeat up to 10 times.



7. Hold onto a table with both hands. Feet together, toes pointing forwards. Slowly lift your left leg out to the side, foot flexed and toes pointing forward. Lift only as far as comfortable and then hold it there for one second. Be careful not to lean and keep your weight even. Slowly lower your foot back to the ground. Repeat with your right leg and then once more with each again.



8. Loosely hold a table with both hands. Feet hip-width apart, toes pointing forwards and head up. Keep your shoulders, arms and neck relaxed and slowly bend your knees over your toes. Keep your back straight and do not drop further than 15cms (aim to lower yourself 2cms the first time you try this). Straighten back up by pushing through your feet.



9. Stand upright facing a wall. Take a small step placing one foot in front of the other with your front heel about level with the toes of the back foot. Bend both knees slightly. Place your hands on the wall in front of you at shoulder height. Palms flat on the wall, fingers pointing to the ceiling and elbows bent. Push against the wall so that you can feel the pressure in your arms, shoulder and the back of your leg. Keep pushing for a count of five and then relax. Repeat this five times.



Winding down: Walk about the room or on the spot. Swing your arms gently and keep your head up. Relax your shoulders and feel pleased with yourself!

Answers

PAGE 10

1. With every visitor - **STOP**, **CHAIN** and **CHECK**.
2. **GENUINE** visitors will have a **PASSWORD**, **IDENTITY CARD** and **APPOINTMENT**.
3. **UNWELCOME**, **PERSUASIVE** and **PROFESSIONAL** is what these people are!
4. You should have **CONFIDENCE** and **ASSERT** yourself.



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1. Get a **SMOKE ALARM**.
2. Make a **FIRE ACTION PLAN**.
3. Put out **CIGARETTES** and **CANDLES** completely.
4. Never **SMOKE** in bed.
5. Keep **CLOTHING** and **FABRIC** away from **HEATERS**
6. Check and service **ELECTRIC**, **GAS** and **HEATING** appliances regularly.
7. Cook with **EXTREME CARE** when using hot oil.

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Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning could be **TIREDNESS**, **DROWSINESS**, **HEADACHES**, **DIZZINESS** and **CHEST PAINS**.

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1. Stop heating escaping through **WINDOWS** by closing **CURTAINS** when it gets dark.
2. Keep rising heat in your home by ensuring your **LOFT** is **INSULATED**.
3. Make sure your **HEATING** system is working properly by having it **SERVICED** once a year.
4. Use **ENERGY** saving **LIGHT BULBS** and turn off lights, **TELEVISION** and other electrical items when they are not being used.



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“Getting out and about” will enable you to **ENGAGE WITH LIFE**.

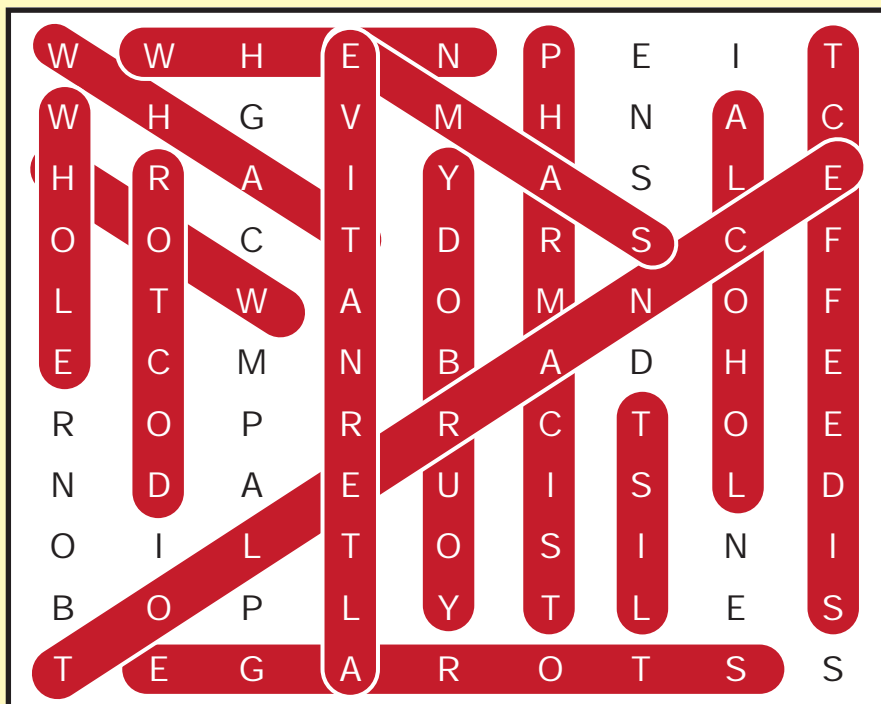
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- 1.a. Your blood oxygen levels increase to normal and your chances of having a heart attack start to fall after **eight hours**.
- 2.b. Your body is nicotine-free and your senses of taste and smell begin to improve after **48 hours**.
- 3.c. Your lung efficiency has increased by 5-10% so wheezing, coughing and shortness of breath improve after **3-9 months**.
- 4.a. Your risk of having a heart attack is half that of a smoker after **5 years**.

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1. Be **POSITIVE** - it is scientifically proven to boost your immune system!
2. Keep **WARM**.
3. Eat **WELL**.
4. **DRINK** with moderation.
5. Quit **SMOKING**.
6. Drink more **WATER**.
7. Keep your brain and body **ACTIVE**.
8. Have a **FLU** jab.
9. **BRUSH** your **TEETH**.
10. Have a free **EYESIGHT** check.
11. "Doctor, test my **HEARING** and blood pressure!"

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Contact Details

Essex Countywide Contacts

Essex County Council Services

Contact Essex / General ..0845 743 0430
(Textphone)0845 758 5592
Environment0845 603 7624
Libraries Enquiry Service ..0845 603 7628
Waste, Disposal &
Recycling0845 603 7625

Social Services

Adult Social Care0845 603 7630
Children & Young People ..0845 603 7627
24 Hour Protection Line0845 606 1212

Road & Transportation Services

Blue Badge Applications ..0845 603 7630
C2C Railway0845 601 4873
Driver Vehicle Licence
Agency0870 240 0009
First Bus01245 293 400
Highways0845 603 7631
National Express.....0845 600 7245
National Rail Enquiry
Service0845 748 4950
Ricability0207 427 2460
Traffic Control Centre0845 600 0110

Carers' Support

Carers UK0808 808 7777
Princess Royal Trust
for Carers0844 800 4361

Benefits & Money Worries

Benefit Enquiry Line0800 882 200
Job Centre Plus0800 055 6688
National Debtline0808 808 4000
The Pensions Advisory
Service08456 012 923

Holidays

SAGA0800 096 0089

Crime & Community Safety

Community Fire
Safety Advice0845 601 2495
Crimestoppers0800 555 111
Domestic Violence
Helpline.....0808 200 0247
Essex Police
(Non-emergency)0300 333 4444
Fire, Police & Ambulance999
Victim Support0845 3030 900

Utilities & Keeping Warm

British Gas0845 600 5090
Gas Safe Register™0800 408 5577
Corgi0870 401 2300
Energy Efficiency Advice0800 512 012
Gas Leaks/Transco.....0800 111 999
National Grid Emergency0800 111 999
United Utilities0800 195 4141
Warm Front Grant.....0800 316 2805
Winter Fuel Payment0845 915 1515

Advice

Better Government for
Older People.....0207 553 6530
British Healthcare
Trades Association0207 702 2141
Cancer Link0808 808 2020
Community Legal Advice ..0845 345 4345
Consumer Direct0845 404 0506
Drugs Helpline0800 776 600
Financial Services Authority ..0845 606 1234
Floodline0845 988 1188
Help the Aged (Seniorline)..0808 800 6565
National Alcohol
Helpline.....0800 917 8282
NHS Smoking Helpline.....0800 022 4332
Trading Standards0845 404 0506

Helplines

Samaritans0845 790 9090

Contact Details

Chelmsford Local Contacts

Chelmsford Borough Council

CBC General01245 606 606
CBC Emergency Only.....07836 256 688
Chelmsford Police01245 491 491

Housing Advice

Careline:
(Chelmer Housing
Partnership)01245 613 131
Chelmsford Shelter.....01245 350 792
CBC Refuse & Recycling ..01245 615 840
General Housing Enquiries ..01245 606 606
Home Improvement Agency:
(Guinness Independent) ...01245 392 121
Sheltered Housing01245 606 336

Health

Assist UK0870 770 2866
(Textphone)0870 770 5813
Chelmsford Council for
Voluntary Services01245 351 888
Chelmsford Primary
Care Trust01245 398 710
Health Walks.....01245 606 208
MIND.....01245 345 083

NHS Direct0845 46 47
NHS PCT01245 398 770

Advice

Age Concern.....01245 346 107
Citizens Advice Bureau ...01245 257 144
Local Pension Service0845 606 0265
Meals on Wheels0845 603 7630
Pensioner Action
Association01245 268 220
Women's Aid Outreach
Centre01245 493 114
.....or 01245 493 056

Benefits & Money Worries

Council Tax Benefit.....01245 606 780
Council Tax Recovery.....01245 606 805
Housing Benefit
(Housing Advice Team).....01245 606 228

Bereavement Services

Cemetery and
Crematorium.....01245 605 630
Crossroads01245 360 706
Register Office01245 430 700

Personal Contact Details

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Living Well in Later Life

Over the coming years, the population of Essex will undergo considerable change, with a significant increase in the number of older people living in the County.

It is very important that the needs of this specific age group are met...



The Essex Older People's Planning Group, along with the County Council, Local Health Services and other Partners, are working together to deliver a Later Life Strategy that will improve the quality of life, health and overall wellbeing for older people wherever they live.

The Later Life Strategy recognises the need for organisations and communities to work together and to invest in basic things that may make a big difference to people's everyday life.

The priorities identified in the Later Life Strategy are:

- To maximise income.
- Provide more accessible local transport.
- Present more learning opportunities.
- Offer greater access to information and advice.
- Provide a range of local social, cultural and leisure opportunities.
- Supply good quality housing.
- Enable older people to live at home independently for as long as possible.
- Ensure that all residents live in safe, clean and secure neighbourhoods
- Allow everyone to make independent choices when choosing services.
- Discourage age discrimination.
- Encourage further participation in the way our future services are developed.