

LOCAL OLDER PEOPLE'S PANELS

Chance for older people to advise and influence.

Feel nobody listens? Now people over 50 have a chance to be heard through five Local People's Panels around the county. The new scheme aims to feed their opinions into policies as organisations seek their views on services. It's a chance to turn ideas into suggestions by getting a word in edgeways before big decisions are taken. The independent Local Panels are being set up by Age Concern Oxfordshire City & County with support from the Oxfordshire Better Government for Older People (BGOP) project. They will advise local authorities, health services and voluntary services.

The idea has been taken up enthusiastically and those providing public services are waiting to hear what older people say is needed. We are hoping it will appeal to people of all interests and backgrounds, who just feel like having their say, I'm sure they will enjoy it and make a useful contribution too.

We know we need better communication. There's an important job to be done to make sure that in planning and developing services we take account of the views of those they are intended for. We need a genuine dialogue and partnership in reshaping local services. That's the way to a better balance of care provision, easy access and good information and advice.

Already the Local Panels have started to meet and West Panel had its first meeting on Tuesday 18th July

More people are needed for the Local Panels and those that do volunteer their time will be offered appropriate training where needed to help them feel at ease in the process. All out of pocket expenses will be paid.

To find out more about joining a Local Panel in your area please contact Gill Martin at Age Concern, The Lodge, Rivermead Centre, Abingdon Road, Oxford OX1 4XD (Tel: 01865 240619)

or Barbara Jordan of Oxfordshire County Council's Social Services at PO Box 118, Thame DO, Oxfordshire OX9 3FT (Tel: 01844 217904)

FARMERS' MARKETS.

The arrangements for the Farmers' Markets have now been finalised, and will be held on a monthly basis as follows:-

Carterton Market Site, 9.00 am – 2.00 pm 1st Saturday in the month, starting 5th August.

Witney Church Green, 9.00 am – 2.00 pm 3rd Thursday in the month starting 17th August.

Chipping Norton Market Square, 9.00 am – 2.00 pm 4th Thursday in the month starting 24th August.