

Cotswold Decorative and Fine Arts Society

The Cotswold Decorative and Fine Arts Society will hold its April lecture on **April 9th**. It is by Dr Nicola Smith and entitled *Has Listing Gone Too Far? The Rise and Rise of Historic Building Preservation*. This lecture will explore the origins and development of historic building preservation and consider the future for heritage protection in England.

And on **May 14th** the lecture will be *Treasures and Curiosities from the Royal Library at Windsor Castle*, by Oliver Everett. The library is full of treasures

associated with the history of Britain and the Royal Family. The lecture gives a tour of the library similar to that which the Queen might do after dinner for her guests at Windsor Castle.

Lectures are held at the Bradwell Village Hall, Burford OX18 4XF. They begin at 11am with complimentary coffee and tea from 10.15am to 10.45am. Non-members are very welcome, no need to book (suggested donation £8). For further information please see our website <http://www.cotswolddfas.org.uk/>

The Consumer Partnership in Oxfordshire

The partnership is a network of consumer and support groups, advice agencies, housing associations, and trading standards working together to give advice and campaign about all consumer issues.

January 2014 saw several advice agencies and housing associations in our county go orange as Big Energy Saving Week 2014 took hold. In Abingdon, Banbury, Oxford, and Witney at least 30 volunteers helped to pass on key messages in shopping centres and libraries; to check, switch, insulate, or just use less energy. We were particularly glad to be able to work closely with the Oxfordshire Affordable Warmth Network; they joined us at Abingdon market, Witney library and Banbury's Castle Quay shopping centre.

Fit for Work?

We now turn our attention to the consumer aspects of a new campaign called 'Fit for Work' around the Work Capability Assessments required for certain benefits. The Consumer Partnership's interest in this campaign lies

in the fact that people's claims depend on medical assessments from private firms, and yet these companies seem to be unaccountable for poor quality or bad customer service, as has been reported only recently in the press. We are carrying out a survey of GPs across the county and also collecting evidence from claimants.

Scams Awareness Month

May will once again be Scams Awareness Month. One recent scam was adverts for non-existent jobs, which wasted applicants' time, money and emotion, just in the hope that they might also click on a CV-writing service for which the scammer would be paid a pound.

You will all have your pet examples. We would love to have yet more helpers throughout Oxfordshire for our May campaign. Can you help to raise awareness in your local library or church or sports club?

Get in touch through:
www.caiox.org.uk/consumer
or call David on 01865 304125.

David Soward