**Community Actions – Support for Older Residents**

Six residents attended a meeting in Old Dalby village hall on the 11th October 2018 to discuss how this Community Action might be moved forward. Four apologies were received. All of the attendees lived in Old Dalby. Rhonda Fazackerley, Resource Centre Manager, AgeUK Leicestershire & Rutland, also attended by invitation.

The meeting noted that during the development of the Neighbourhood Plan dialogue and consultation generated a number of potential ideas to improve the Parish. These ideas were included in the Neighbourhood Plan as Community Actions. One of these Actions was broadly listed as ***Support for Older People.*** The notes that follow summarise the discussion which took place and the current position.

**Target:** There are a higher than average number of over 65s in the Parish, in addition to Hunters Lodge care home. Any initiatives should also include the long term infirmed. When planning recent day trips a list of 150 elderly residents had been drawn up. However, these were mainly from Old Dalby and Queensway, as information was not available for Nether Broughton. Special concern was expressed for the isolated and housebound. Help with transport to events in the village, shopping in Melton, and the medical centre was needed. A better understanding of the needs of this group of people was necessary.

**Current Initiatives:** It was acknowledged that many individuals are already cared for and supported informally in different ways by neighbours, friends and relative in addition indirectly by a number of more formal groups. However, the only activities which appeared to be specifically aimed at the elderly were the Thursday Drop-in, in Old Dalby village hall, and the offer of transport to Long Clawson medical practice.

**External Support:** Rhonda provided some printed materials and a briefing on AgeUK services, including:

-Info and advice line (including ability to help people in their own homes)

-Day Care at Gloucester House

-Home Care (mainly domestic tasks)

-Handyman/gardening service

-Befriending service (not currently in this area but could access telephone help)

Some of these have to be paid for by the individual but some people receive a personal independence payment so could use that to access services. It was thought that only one person from Old Dalby currently uses one of these services. It was not known whether other residents were aware of these services and did not wish to, or could not, access them. Transport to and from Gloucester House might be a reason.

**Future Actions:**  Those present made a number of suggestions for consideration including the following.

-Hire a minibus eg. to enable AgeUK try-out days (Vol Action Melton has one).

-Establish more connections with Hunter’s Lodge.

-Run a whist drive, indoor bowls or new age curling.

-Better identify nature of need re isolation.

-Discuss, clarify and communicate who Thursday’s drop-in is aimed at.

-Possibly contact GP surgery to identify those in need.

-Explore better links with the school and encourage parents and PTA to engage in the debate and potential opportunities.

-Obtain telephone numbers of older people so they can be asked to comment and advise on need and also possibly to receive calls from others to check they are OK.

-Explore and action ways of publicising what AgeUK has to offer.

-Organise try-out days (‘taster’ sessions) with transport, at GH to help people to better consider whether AgeUK services would be of value to them.

It was thought that in all cases initiatives should be progressed ideally in an informal manner as this approach appears to work best for the Thursday drop-ins.

**Current Position:** (1st November 2018) The next step is to further develop some of these ideas into concrete actions. A number of attendees at the above meeting were willing to volunteer to support these. However, any future actions must be deliverable and sustainable. Given this emphasis, and the relatively small number of people currently identified as willing to be involved, initial actions will be limited, although it is to be hoped that more volunteers will come forward in future. The Parish Council will be kept informed.

John Harper