

FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE

8 March 2023

Ongoing support for older people as Golden Age project marks 20th anniversary

Older people can access advice on services and support available to them at events across Fenland for the 20th year running – as the Golden Age initiative marks its anniversary.

Golden Age events were launched in 2003 by the late Cllr Mac Cotterell MBE and have continued to be valuable to residents ever since, the delivery of them remaining a Fenland District Council priority.

Golden Age events bring together many providers of care, financial assistance, social activities, health provision and other services for the over 60s. They are held at venues across the district throughout the year.

Cllr Sam Clark, portfolio holder for Health and Golden Age fairs, said: “It’s with great pride that we mark the 20th anniversary of these valuable and vital events.

“Over the years the Golden Age events have helped thousands of people to access the support, advice, health care and financial assistance they are entitled to.

“Ensuring the fairs continue as an asset and support to our older generations is an important priority for us. We can see the difference and impact they make.

“They’re a great legacy of Cllr Cotterell and his dedication to supporting people living in rural communities and the older people of Fenland.”

Over the years almost 7,000 visitors have attended the Golden Age events. Around 25 to 30 partner organisations now attend each event from a pool of around 80, including representatives from health care, transport providers, charities and statutory services.

To 2018, more than £1 million had been identified in unclaimed benefits for people who came along.

Since 2014, a scheme has been running to identify and replace dangerous and faulty electric blankets that are a significant fire risk. In total 300 faulty electric blankets have been identified and replaced with new safe ones for free. The old ones being repaired and donated to animal charities.

Between 2005 and 2015 alone, almost 1,000 health checks were carried out at the Golden Age events. In more recent years, Covid vaccines have been made available and administered.

The next planned Golden Age event is in Christchurch – where the first event was also held. It will be held at Christchurch Community Centre, Upwell Road, Christchurch, Wisbech PE14 9LL, 11am to 2pm on Friday 30 June.

Further events are being planned.

The events are now branded Mac’s Golden Age in memory of Cllr Cotterell who died aged 81, in 2013.

Marjorie (Madge) Cotterell, widow of Cllr Cotterell and former Elm parish councillor, said: “He was always so innovative. He had ideas which he would think deeply about and then put into operation.

“He was so enthusiastic about Golden Age then as he would be now if he were still alive.

“He always credited the team. He wouldn’t take any accolade for himself, he was most adamant that ‘it’s not me, it’s the team’.”

Psychology student Alexia Franklin (69), of Wisbech, an active volunteer with Fenland District Council’s [Street Pride](#) team, who is currently fulfilling a lifelong ambition to complete a degree, attended her first Golden Age event last year.

She said: “When you bring all these organisations together it is much more useful than one organisation on their own.

“You learn things about the area you don’t know – I don’t care if you have lived here all your life or not, there’s always something you’re not aware of.

“I came home with a lot of very useful connections and information about what support you can get as an older person.

“Since then, I have got financial support I didn’t previously know I was eligible for and Age UK helped to fill out a form for me. Many of the organisations at the event made it clear that if you find it difficult to complete the forms – which can be very daunting – they will help.”

Partners involved in the Golden Age events met this week for an anniversary celebration alongside planning for the next event. They each gave a short presentation on the support their organisation provides to further enhance collaborative working and signposting.

Find details of upcoming events via: www.fenland.gov.uk/goldenage

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Photo:

1: Partners and Golden Age committee members celebrate 20 years of the events. At the cake table (front far right), from left, Golden Age committee members Cllr Sam Clark, Cllr Maureen Davis, Fenland District Council’s Senior Community Support Officer Ash Godfrey, Cllr Will Sutton.

2: Marking 20 years of Golden Age events, committee members, from left, Cllr Sam Clark, Cllr Maureen Davis, Fenland District Council’s Senior Community Support Officer Ash Godfrey, Cllr Will Sutton.

3: Marking 20 years of Golden Age events, committee members, from left, Cllr Sam Clark, Cllr Maureen Davis, Fenland District Council’s Senior Community Support Officer Ash Godfrey, Cllr Will Sutton.

The late Cllr Mac Cotterell MBE