

# Housing Learning & Improvement Network

The Health and Social Care Change Agent Team (CAT) was created by the Department of Health to improve hospital and social care associated arrangements. The Housing Learning & Improvement Network, a section of the CAT in the newly formed Care Services Improvement Partnership, is devoted to housing based models of care and support for adults.



Care Services Improvement Partnership The logo for the Care Services Improvement Partnership (CSIP), consisting of the letters 'CSIP' in a bold, sans-serif font inside a rounded rectangular border.

## Dee Park Active Retirement Club - Age Concern Berkshire

Prepared by **Geoff Chivers**, for the Housing Learning & Improvement Network

### Lead Organisation:

Age Concern Berkshire

### Lead Contact:

Geoff Chivers  
Director, Age Concern Berkshire  
Email: [geoffc@acberk.org](mailto:geoffc@acberk.org)

### Introduction

Following a successful application to the Partnership Development Fund, funding was secured for a period of three years to provide an active retirement club on Dee Park.

The objective was to manage an Older Persons Health Project whereby issues of social interaction and isolation are addressed and the promotion of an active and healthier lifestyle for older people in the area.

### Location

The group meets every Friday morning from 10am until 12 noon at Ranikhet Extended School Spey Road Tilehurst. For those needing transport the Readibus will convey them from their home address to the centre and return

At the school we have the use of the common room, which has kitchen facilities and the music room.

### Programme

Persons attending the group arrive between 9.45am and 10am where there is time for registration, social interaction and community nurses are on hand to monitor blood pressure.

At 10.15am the Tai Chi class commences in the Music Room under the instruction of

Amritah Lutchanah who is a member of the British Council for Chinese Martial Arts and registered as a Coach/Instructor.

The class last for one hour and then individual assessment are carried out by the Instructor. Every member attending the classes is encouraged to keep a diary recording progress.

After the Tai Chi Class group members return to the common room where tea, coffee and biscuits are served, there then follows a general knowledge quiz on the previous weeks events, which has proved to be very popular.

The session finishes promptly at 12noon and those requiring transport the Readibus is available.

## **Launch**

The Dee Park Active Retirement Group was launched on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2007 and formally opened by the Mayor of Reading Cllr Bet Tickner. There were representatives from Reading PCT, Reading Social Services, Reading Leisure, Ward Councillors Graeme Hoskins and Terry Byrne and members of the Voluntary Sector.

## **Attendance**

To-date there have been 20 sessions averaging between 15 – 24 clients who's ages range from 68 yrs to 86 yrs.

## **Health Interventions**

35 clients had their health needs assessed, these are the health needs identified;

### Hypertension

2 clients had raised blood pressures of 160/90 mm/Hg

1 client had a blood pressure of 199/102 mm/Hg

1 client had a blood pressure of 190/100 mm/Hg

1 client had a blood pressure of 148/103 mm/Hg

1 client had a blood pressure of 175/100 mm/Hg

### Postural drop in Blood Pressure

9 clients were found to have a postural drop of more than 10 mm/Hg when they stood up from standing. Doctors informed and medication reviewed.

### Healthy Bones

2 clients had broken bones in past and not commenced on any bone health medication, after consultation with their Doctor's medication commenced.

### Mental Health

4 clients stated that they felt low in mood, within 5 months all 4 clients have stated that they now feel happier and one man said that his family say he is a different man. He is a more confident happier dad and granddad.

Others also said they felt more confident in going out.

### Other Health Issues

1 client had a urinary tract infection (confirmed by path lab) Doctor informed and infection treated.

### Medication

1 client had not been taking medication for over a month. She had run out of tablets and had not ordered any more, she did not feel unwell and did not feel that it was necessary. After explaining the medication and the importance of taking it, the client stated that she had never been told what they were for and agreed to start taking medication again. Many clients were not aware of why they were taking different types of medication; some said that they could not get to see a pharmacist and had never been able to discuss their medication with anyone.

Compliance of medication continues to be an ongoing issue for a few people in the group.

11 clients had more than one long-term condition.

### **Proposed Events for the Future**

Working in partnership with Reading Leisure, three members of the group are to be trained as walk leaders with a view to organised walks being arranged.

Working in conjunction with the school an Intergeneration Project will be introduced where members of the group will encourage pupils from the school to develop new skills. These will include play reading, patchwork, needlework, gardening and fishing.

Members attending the group will be encouraged to become involved in a weight management programme, which will improve their general health and well-being.

Raising awareness of the new labelling system on food products. This will enable group members to have a better understanding and ensure a healthier diet.

### **Quotes**

"I am gaining confidence with every attendance

"Still enjoying it feeling better

"Friday is the best day of the week it Tai Chi

"I am less concerned about falling

" My neck and shoulders continue to improve

" My daughter says I have come back to life

"I practice every day

" I have written a poem about Tai Chi"

## Conclusion

Recognition of the group was made reference to at the launch of Reading 2020 Vision by the Leader of Reading Borough Council and the Chairman of Berkshire West PCT together with an article which has recently appeared in the Reading Borough Council Life Quarterly Magazine.

The Dee Park Active Retirement Group will be giving a demonstration of Tai Chi at Age Concern Berkshire AGM Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> March at 2pm in the Council Chamber.

The project has addressed a definite need for older people living within the catchment area of Dee Park and there is evidence to support that the quality of life of older people attending this group has improved significantly.



Geoff Chivers  
Director  
Age Concern Berkshire

### **Poem about Tai Chi composed by Peter Champion member of Dee Park Active Retirement Club**

Tai Chi has no horizon as when you look  
Into a clear blue sky  
Rising early each morning standing head bent  
Forward eyes closed and knees bent hands  
Tingling by each side one becomes one with  
The cosmos then moving slowly from one  
Movement into the next feeling each joint becoming  
More fluent as the energy free flowing begins to travel through the  
Body from head to each toe the years of pain now  
Fast disappearing the benefits of tai chi becomes endless  
The slow movement develops tolerance towards others  
And gives an inner peace and stillness of mind not know  
Before energetic liveliness will help you to move forward  
Tai chi is a long road to travel but at the end rewards are  
Many ...

Other Housing LIN publications available in this format:

Case Study no.1:	<b>Extra Care Strategic Developments in North Yorkshire</b>
Case Study no.2:	<b>Extra Care Strategic Developments in East Sussex</b>
Case Study no.3:	<b>'Least-use' Assistive Technology in Dementia Extra Care (Eastleigh)</b>
Case Study no.5:	<b>Village People: A Mixed Tenure Retirement Community (Bristol)</b>
Case Study no.6:	<b>How to get an Extra Care Programme in Practice</b>
Case Study no.7:	<b>Supporting Diversity in Tower Hamlets</b>
Case Study no.8:	<b>The Kent Health &amp; Affordable Warmth Strategy</b>
Case Study no.9:	<b>Supporting People with Dementia in Sheltered Housing</b>
Case Study no.10:	<b>Direct Payments for Personal Assistance in Hampshire</b>
Case Study no.11:	<b>Housing for Older People from the Chinese Community in Middlesbrough</b>
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Case Study no.25	<b>Broadacres Housing Association Older Persons Floating Support</b>
Case Study no.26	<b>Unmet Housing-Related Support Needs in Wokingham District - an investigation</b>

The Housing LIN welcomes contributions on a range of issues pertinent to Extra Care housing. If there is a subject that you feel should be addressed, please contact us.

Published by:  
Housing Learning & Improvement Network  
Care Services Improvement Partnership  
Department of Health, 3rd Floor  
Wellington House  
135-155 Waterloo Road  
London SE1 8UG

[www.icn.csip.org.uk/housing](http://www.icn.csip.org.uk/housing)

Administration:  
Housing LIN, c/o EAC  
3rd Floor  
89 Albert Embankment  
London SE1 7TP  
020 7820 1682  
[housing@csip.org.uk](mailto:housing@csip.org.uk)