**Woodcote Volunteers**

**Digital Inclusion Project**

As the first part of our newDigital Inclusion initiative, announced in last month’s Correspondent, two public meetings were held in August on important issues of topical interest. The first, on 9th August in the Village Hall, covered *Moving from Traditional Landlines to a Digital Telephone Service – What You Need to Know,* was attended by 23 local people. The second, *Staying Safe Online – Avoiding Scams, Fraud and Identity Theft* washeld on August 16th. A report on that meeting will appear in next month’s Correspondent.

**One-to-one Digital Advice Sessions**

The other part of the Digital Inclusion initiative will consist of regular, free one-to-one advice sessions for local residents who have any queries that arise from using the internet (whether they already have a device or not). These one-to-one advice sessions will last approximately 45 minutes per client and will be held twice a month (see below). Being connected to the internet helps to prevent social isolation and in today’s world it has become an essential tool that enables us to connect with friends and family, make appointments, shop online, pursue interests or play games - amongst many other things.

To give you an idea of the questions you might have, these are examples of queries that might crop up:

* Why do I need the internet and how do I get online?
* Do I need Wi-Fi?
* I am technophobic - where do I start?
* How do I send and receive emails/texts/WhatsApp messages?
* How do I book a GP appointment online?
* How do I order a repeat prescription online?
* How do I do an internet search (e.g. Google)?
* How can I make video calls with my family?
* How do I manage my passwords?
* How do I store and manage my digital photos?
* Data – what is it and how much do I need?
* How do I backup my data?
* What about identity theft?
* I had an issue and my son/daughter/grandchild fixed it.  Now it’s come back and I don’t know what they did!
* What should I be doing about the end of support for Windows 10?

These are just some of the many issues that might arise and that we can help with. We have recruited a team of friendly, helpful local volunteers who together have a wide range of experience of the digital world. All are DBS-checked and will do their best to answer your queries, however simple or complex.

There are a few things we can’t help with, like repairs or setting up online banking. We are also unable to offer help over the phone or in your home – only at the advice sessions. However, we will aim to deal with most other issues - or if we can’t help, to suggest someone who can.

The advice sessions are to be held on the first Saturday and third Thursday of each month in **Woodcote Community Centre**.The first of these sessions will be at **2-4 pm on Saturday 6th Sept** and at **10 am – noon on Thursday 18th Sept.** To pre-book your slot, please call 01491 877749 and leave a voicemail if necessary. (Please don’t call our office number!) Someone will phone you back to take your details.

**Clients’ Tea Party**

On the afternoon of August 6th, we had our latest monthly tea party, which saw record numbers of attendees and featured a light-hearted quiz. Next month the tea party will be at **2.30 – 4.00 pm on Wednesday** **September 3rd** inthe Community Centre when our former Chair, Helena, will be giving top tips on how to declutter our houses (and our minds) for a calmer life.

**Drivers Needed!**

We are always looking to recruit new volunteer drivers, who are vital for keeping our service running. We especially need drivers who could help clients get to and from our regular monthly tea parties (afternoons of the first Wednesday of each month). For more information about Woodcote Volunteers and being a volunteer driver please go to our website (details below) or contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Jane, by email at info@woodcotevolunteers.org.uk.

**To Finish…**

As usual, if you need a driver, please don’t hesitate to give us a call on 01491 681171. We collect from Woodcote and the immediately surrounding villages. Please give us as much notice as possible before the date you need us. One of our friendly office volunteers will answer the phone between 9.30 and 11.00 am on weekdays (excluding public holidays) and at other times you can leave a message on the answerphone. Find out more about us and how to volunteer with us by looking at our website: [www.woodcotevolunteers.org.uk](http://www.woodcotevolunteers.org.uk). Or visit our Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/woodcotevolunteers](http://www.facebook.com/woodcotevolunteers).