

# BREATHE EASY TELFORD

November / December  
2013

[www.breatheeasytelford.btik.com](http://www.breatheeasytelford.btik.com)

## Hadley & District Orpheus Male Choir To Perform for Breathe Easy Telford

Members of Hadley & District Orpheus Male Choir are joining us for our November (28<sup>th</sup>) group meeting. The choir was formed in 1901. They have been three times winners of the Welsh National Eisteddfod in 1923, 1925 and 1933. This sets what is believed to be a record of which the choir is still justly proud, in that no other English choir has won the Welsh National three times. Together with all the competitions entered, hundreds of concerts have been given throughout the country where many thousands of pounds have been raised for various charities, including concerts in Eastbourne, Sandown & Shanklin on the Isle of Wight, Scarborough and Weymouth. One of the recent highlights was singing in Hyde Park in 1995 with 3,000 male voices and soloists including Dame Vera Lynn, Elaine Paige and Sir Cliff Richard. The choir has also performed at the Hundreds in Harmony Concert at the Symphony Hall, Birmingham and more recently with a massed choir in aid of the Tsunami Disaster at the Telford International Centre. It promises to be a memorable meeting, all welcome as usual, with tea and coffee available along with complimentary mince pies!



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### Anniversary Meal 2014

**Our forthcoming anniversary lunch is being held at the  
Ramada Telford Ironbridge Hotel (Grays),  
Forgegate, Telford Town Centre TF3 4NA  
Wednesday 19th February 2014 arriving at Noon for 12:30.  
Bookings are now being taken. [Download booking form](#)  
Or please contact Mary Cook on 01952 254678**



Breathe Easy Telford is a self-help group affiliated to the British Lung Foundation, dedicated to bringing together all those in our area affected by respiratory diseases, both patients and carers. Meetings are monthly, every fourth Thursday at Wellington Civic & Leisure Centre [Swimming Baths], Larkin Way, Tan Bank, Wellington, Telford TF1 1LX at 2.00 p.m. Please contact chairman:- Gerald Newton on 01952 593561 for further details. E-mail the editor: [dillarstone@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:dillarstone@blueyonder.co.uk)



# Prepare for Winter!

There are some suggestions this winter may be a very cold one, with so much media coverage lately about rising fuel costs we have put together the following information about staying warm this winter. It is well known how harmful living in a cold home can be to a person with a lung condition.

**Warm Home Discount Scheme (WHD)** The scheme is run with electricity providers and gives a one-off £135 discount on your winter electricity bill.

To qualify in the core group you must:

- be aged under 75 and receive only the guarantee part of Pension Credit; or
- be aged over 75 and receive the guarantee part of pension credit (you can also receive the savings element); and
- be with a supplier participating in the scheme.

You may also be able to claim this rebate under the broader group rules if you are classed as being in a vulnerable group, for example if you have an illness or disability. The electricity providers will have their own criteria for eligibility under the broader group.

The participating suppliers are in this scheme are: Atlantic, British Gas, EDF, Energy, EON, Equipower, Equigas, Manweb, M&S Energy, npower, Sainsbury's Energy, Scottish Gas, Scottish Hydro, Scottish Power, Southern Electric, SSE, Swalec and Utility Warehouse.

The Home Heat Helpline - 0800 33 66 99 - has advice and information on this scheme and other heating issues. Calls are free and lines are open Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm.

**Winter Fuel Payment** is a tax-free payment for people aged 60 and over. It is paid every year during the winter months to help with your fuel costs. Winter Fuel Payments do not depend on how cold the weather gets.

**Cold Weather Payment** This is only paid when the weather falls below a certain temperature. These payments are made to people on the following income-related benefits:

- Income Support or Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance because you are aged 60 or over
- Income Support or Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance if you have a child under five or are responsible for a disabled child;
- Income Support if you are long-term sick or disabled; or Pension Credit.

**Switch Suppliers** Changing who supplies your gas and electricity can potentially save you money on your bill. It may be cheaper to get your gas and electricity from the same supplier and if you can pay by direct debit and opt for paperless billing as this may also come with a discount.

Each supplier is different; they may offer different deals depending on how many people live in the home and how many bedrooms there are. Always ask what discounted or social tariffs they may have for people on certain benefits and/or illnesses and chronic conditions.

There are also a number of companies on the internet who offer free 'switching services', you contact them with the details of your current provider and usage and they will try to find you cheaper energy deals.

**Oil Suppliers** There are also organisations on the internet that can help you compare the price of domestic oil suppliers in the UK. Some communities where oil is the main or only fuel have joined together to buy oil supplies in bulk to help keep the price down.

## Tips for keeping warm

Although we always advise keeping the heating at a constant temperature we appreciate this may not always be possible, below is a list of ideas to help you keep warm. The BLF advises a temperature of 21c in the living areas and 18c in the bedroom.

- Wear thin layers of clothing together rather than thick jumpers, thinner layers help to keep heat in next the body.
- Draw your curtains as soon as it gets dark to help keep heat in the home.
- Set the timer on your heating to come on before you get up in the morning and ensure your bedroom is warm before you go to bed.
- Eat regular hot food high in carbohydrates such as potatoes, rice and bread.
- Keep internal doors closed to keep in the heat.
- If you are sitting down keep your feet up as cold air circulates nearer the floor.

## Check if you may be entitled to free cavity wall and loft insulation

You may be able to get help with the cost of insulating your home or making it more energy-efficient through various grants and schemes. This can help you reduce your gas and electricity bills.

For further information contact:- Energy efficiency Helpline (England & Wales) - 0300 123 1234

If you do feel you are having difficulties paying your fuel bills contact your provider straightaway to discuss the situation to see if there is any help they can give you.

For any further information on the Warm Home Discount Scheme or any other questions on keeping warm please call the BLF Helpline on 03000 030 555 – Monday - Friday 9am -5pm. © BLF



## Breathe Easy Calendar 2014 Now on Sale

Already in the second print run, our calendars have been a big hit this year. If you would like a copy please call Mary Cook on 01952 254678, in the first instance to reserve a copy and this year we can post them out to you. The calendar costs £3.50 plus 69p for postage. They can also be collected from our November meeting subject to availability.

*Merry  
Christmas  
and a  
Happy  
Healthy  
2014 from  
us all at  
Breathe  
Easy  
Telford*

**The NHS  
belongs to  
the people**

**A CALL TO  
ACTION**

## Join the debate!

**The NHS in England wants to hear your views and experiences on these and other questions.**

**Why?** Across the country the NHS faces pressures as never before:

- Ever increasing demand
- More people living longer
- More people living with multiple illnesses
- Greater public expectation of services.

Rising costs and fixed resources mean different ways of doing things need to be explored, if high quality, free 'at the point of use' health services are to be safeguarded for future generations.

The NHS is now involved in a period of intense discussions with the public, clinicians, other NHS staff and the wider public in a 'Call to Action' debate on the issues. Join the debate!

**What is most important to you and your family and why?**

What do you think are the main difficulties and opportunities for the NHS over the next five years?

What might be some options for change?

To let us know:

- What is most important to you and your family and why?
- What might be some options for change?
- What do you think are the main difficulties and opportunities for the NHS over the next five years?

or, to give more general feedback on the issues raised by the 'Call to Action', please:

- Email [calltoaction@telfordccg.nhs.uk](mailto:calltoaction@telfordccg.nhs.uk)
- Attend our joint 'Call to Action' conference at Telford International Centre, St. Quentin Gate, Telford, Shropshire, TF3 4JH, on 25 November 2013. Attendance is free and you can reserve your place from 1 November 2013. Visit [www.telfordccg.nhs.uk](http://www.telfordccg.nhs.uk) or [www.shropshireccg.nhs.uk](http://www.shropshireccg.nhs.uk) to find out more about 'Call to Action' and the conference.

## December's Pub Meal



**Monday - December 2nd - Noon. Wickets Inn, 240 Holyhead Rd, Wellington, Telford, TF1 2EB. Xmas meal with all the trimmings and reduced main menu will be on offer. All Welcome!**

## Two 4 wheeled walkers with seat available

We have recently been given two 4 wheeled walkers with seat. They have been passed by health and safety and are available to anyone who could use them.

Please contact Mary Cook on 01952 254678

## A Fond Farewell to our Former Newsletter Editor

It is with great sadness that I have to announce the passing of Steve Evans on the 16 October. Steve was one of our earliest members of the Group and with his wife Mary had produced and distributed the Group's Newsletter before I took it on in June 2008.

The late Pat Rea our former Welfare Officer for the Group sums it up well in a letter to me at the time I started, with the following thoughts:

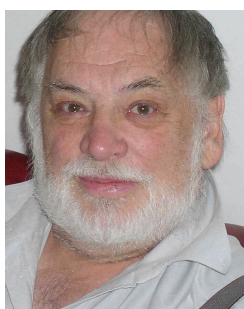
*"We have had a wonderful editor in Steve Evans - ex university lecturer in English, also a journalist in past lives - no wonder the standard is so high! He has quite sensibly decided to retire from this onerous job because of poor health. We all wish you well Steve and thank you for your humour, compassion, valuable advice and research".*

He was a very interesting person to talk to and I will miss his wealth of knowledge and experience. It was good to see so many from the group at his funeral.

It is at these occasions, a time of reflection I find, we think of all the members we have lost over the years. In particular as the nights draw in for for the approaching winter.

Mary Cook said "Having known Steve for many years, I found his last words at his funeral a great comfort and assurance, that he acknowledged the community and support of his fellow gaspers of breathe."

Mark Dillarstone



## A Piece of My Mind

### Are you an Edna or a Dora?

I was chatting with a Northern friend over a delightful meal while on holiday a couple of weeks ago, when she asked me out of the blue whether I was an Edna or a Dora?

Well, I ask you, how was I to react to that?

I would have reacted with less confusion if I had been asked whether I was an 'Enry or a David. What could she be getting at? Was this a slur on my gender or a less than subtle taunt at my increasing senility? An Empty Edna or a Dotty Dora?

My friend saw my confusion, and added with a smile: 'That's how we refer to patients who come for treatment.' I should explain that my friend works in a large hospital up North.

Ednas, she explained are patients Entirely Demanding of Nothing at All; and Doras are patients Demanding of Regular Attention.

'Of course,' my friend added. 'Those categories are pretty rough. You can be a mixture: a bit of DORA and more of EDNA, or vice versa.'

Well, it is quite a shock, when you are half your way through a lamb shank to hear just how others see you.

I had no response to make at the time, only a polite nod of understanding, while burying my gaze into the pattern on the plate.

But it does make you think. Which I did. I am now rather pleased to think that the NHS has a sense of humour, even if the categories show mordant wit. I can see it now. One nurse to another, 'We've got a real Dora here. Why don't we get more Ednas?'

Quite clearly I am not an Edna. Of that I'm sure; but I hope I am not too much of a Dora.