



GREY POWER MARLBOROUGH

Advocating for people 50 +

From the President's Desk

Grey Power Marlborough had the great privilege of hosting the Aged Care Commissioner, Carolyn Cooper, on Wednesday the 26th of April. The Commissioner's role came in to being one year ago and was lobbied for through Grey Power Federation to give further voice for our most vulnerable seniors in New Zealand. This role is not a government position; it sits with the Governor General.

Ms Cooper presented to the Positive Ageing forum (previously known as the Older Persons forum), a public meeting at the Wesley centre, and staff at Alzheimer's Marlborough.

Ms Cooper took up her career in nursing at Masterton Hospital and she has furthered her career in the health sector ever since.

I found Ms Cooper to be a very down to earth person with a clear grasp on the plight of seniors with much focus on housing and health continuums.

Our Federation President, Jan Pentecost, sent advice to all associations on the list of issues they are taking to government ministers in May. We have been requested to give feedback from our members on some of these issues. Our committee made the decision to focus on three major issues, which are the Gold Card becoming a formal form of identification, senior housing, and the lack of banking facilities in certain areas.

A survey has been sent out to our members who are on email as due to the tight time frame we are unable to post it out. However, there will be hard copies of the survey at our office if others want to have their say. The cut-off date is Thursday 4th of May. The surveys will be collated by myself and findings sent through to the Federation office. I thank all of you who take part; it does make a difference.

Gayle Chambers
President



Walk for Wellbeing

Hippocrates once proclaimed: "If you are in a bad mood, go for a walk. If you are still in a bad mood, go for another walk." Centuries have passed but the Greek physician still has a point.

Author and actor Andrew Mc-

Carthy discovered the power of taking strolls when he traveled 800 kilometres across Spain on the Camino de Santiago, an ancient pilgrimage route.

"Has anyone ever emerged from ambling through nature for an

hour and regretted their improved state of being? Not likely," Andrew says. Walking "not only nourishes the body but also soothes the mind while it burns off tension and makes our troubles recede into a more manageable perspective."



A recent fund-raising walk above Picton.



Locals enjoying the Cape Campbell coastal walk.

Some tips for oncoming winter

- Stay warm and use the winter energy payment (see below).
- Eat well.
- Get your flu jab.
- Get your Covid booster.

Everything you need to know about the Winter Energy Payment

Winter can mean higher energy bills as we switch on the heaters and electric blankets to stay warm. Grey Power urges you to stay warm this winter by using the government-introduced Winter Energy Payment. This provides superannuitants, veterans and other eligible candidates with weekly payments to deal with the additional expenses involved with keeping warm, safe and comfortable over the colder months.

If you qualify, it will be paid to you automatically, in addition to any other regular payments you usually receive, to use as you like. The Winter Energy Payment is paid from 1 May to 1 October and is non-taxable.

A single qualifying person will receive \$20.46 a week. Qualifying couples and families (defined as a person with dependent children) will receive \$31.82 a week.

To learn more about the Winter Energy Payment, visit <https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/winter-energy-payment.html>

<https://www.greypowerelectricity.co.nz/our-blog/8-life-hacks-for-saving-money-on-your-power-bill-this-winter/>

Check out the Grey Power Electricity blog for tips on how to keep your winter usage lower at <https://www.greypowerelectricity.co.nz/our-blog/8-life-hacks-for-saving-money-on-your-power-bill-this-winter/>

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Let's Talk!

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Access and Mobility

Grey Power asked questions and got responses from the Access and Mobility meeting held under the auspices of the District Council in March. Committee member, Robyn Blackburn, reports as follows.

To a question of the need for Taylor River shared path signage to be improved, the answer was that MDC does have 'etiquette' signs up on the Taylor River at various places. Some painted messaging was on the ground, but this has worn away. Funding is being sought in 2024-2027 budget to promote 'Shared Path Etiquette' messaging.

The timely use by cyclists of cycle bells or other warning methods to alert walkers on shared pathways who they are approaching from the rear raised two issues. That the warning be timely enough to allow reaction, and the volume of the warning be loud enough, considering especially those hard of hearing. Cycle bells are not mandatory.

The response was that MDC has given out 400 bells during the 'Treasure Hun' cycle event. The use of a bell or calling

out is encouraged on the path etiquette notice board.

To the issue that training of older cyclists (E-bikes) returning to two wheels is being offered but the possible cost might be daunting for some members, the answer was that training costs \$95 pp for two hours. MDC Road Safety provides \$50 subsidy.

Considering training for mobility scooter users, the reply was that Age Concern were considering something in this space.

With respect to trip hazards on Council road network or parks/reserves, the answer was that trip hazards can be reported through the Crash/Near Miss link on the MDC website. In the search space, search for Near Miss. Reporting all pedestrian or cycling issues is actively encouraged.

Regarding a worsening trend of cyclists on footpaths, the reply given was that RSE pastoral care providers have been contacted about this issue. Cycle training is given in most schools now. Mobility scooters and other small



wheeled devices have to use footpaths. A discussion about footpaths being under-utilised and not enough safe space for cyclists will be discussed at the next A & M meeting.

If Grey Power members have any comments about these issues they can report these to GreyPower by emailing: office@greypowermarlborough.co.nz

Office Snippets

Thank you very much to all our lovely members who have paid their subscriptions already!

We are now up-to date with the online payments, the last ones are in the post. If you have not received your green membership card and Discount Book, please get in touch after allowing a week for the post to reach you.

If you have not yet paid, it is not too late! Please pay online or come into the office during the opening hours of 9am to 1pm Monday to Friday. We'd love to see you.

If for any reason you have not received an invoice, or have misplaced it, please get in touch with the office and we will email or send out a new one.

Please remember to let us know when you change contact information such as addresses, or if you switch from a landline to a new mobile phone number. It helps us speed things up when we have a query.

From time to time, we do send out emails regarding issues or events that we feel are of particular importance for our members. Please get in touch if this is of interest, and we will add you to our email list.

We try to keep you informed on Facebook, Grey Power Marlborough, where we advertise our events, local information, Grey Power Federation (the national body) press releases, and local groups events and classes.

The office will open one hour later on Wednesday 17 May. Opening hours that day will be 10am to 1pm.

Alan Washington, Grey Power Committee member

I was born in Blenheim and for many years worked in the Scott Street Social Welfare office, moved to Wellington for three years then returned to Blenheim where I was later employed at ACC and then in Workbridge, helping people with disabilities into paid employment.

I have never regretted the return to Blenheim with its healthier lifestyle to be appreciated, and friendly population.

Currently I have a role at the Kaikoura

Electorate office supporting the Member of Parliament to perform his role. It allows me to use my many years of experience in the public service to assist constituents and members in their own experiences with our own Government departments and agencies.

I am a Justice of the Peace and registered Celebrant which further allows me engagement in the community. It is a similar opportunity to support

our community that attracts me to Grey Power's work in supporting their members.

It was a privilege to be invited onto the Grey Power Committee and I hope I can continue to bring a worthwhile contribution. I witness the work of other committee members and am proud to be associated with this group who represent our members in a professional and meaningful way.

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