

## **Accompanied Walks at Chiltern Open Air Museum for vulnerable members of the elderly community.**

**Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1st September - 29th October 2020**

### **The Project**

The team at Chiltern Open Air Museum (COAM) recognises that since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, difficulties for those members of the elderly community who were already experiencing social isolation, have been exacerbated. To promote and support the health and wellbeing of this sector of our community, COAM is inviting individuals to the museum for an accompanied walk with a friendly and knowledgeable COAM volunteer. Government guidelines on social distancing will be followed. A carer or friend can come along for support, if needed.

This project, funded by the Sherling Trust, will give visitors the opportunity to enjoy a walk around the Chalfont St Giles-based museum and learn about its 37 heritage buildings which are set in 45 beautiful acres of gardens, park and woodland.

**Accompanied Walks** will run on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1<sup>st</sup> September to 29th October 2020. They will be **free of charge** and finish with a free cuppa or cold drink on the Museum's village green. For those without transport, taxis may be arranged at a pre-agreed cost.

Benefits to the visitor will include:

- A dose of 'vitamin green' from being outdoors in a rural setting.
- The security of being in a supervised setting (as opposed to a public park) with clean and attended toilets.
- A social interaction.
- The knock-on well-being benefits associated with the above, such as an increase in confidence, a greater ability to manage existing health conditions, and a diversion from negative thoughts.
- The option of bringing a relative, friend or carer along for moral support, who is also likely to benefit from the experience.
- An introduction to COAM and warm-up towards next year's fuller Social Prescription museum activities programme.

We are partnering with local professionals who support older, vulnerable people to ensure the programme remains relevant and who will refer clients to the programme as a complement to medical interventions. We will also be encouraging people to self-refer through posters in GP surgeries.

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### **Chiltern Open Air Museum**

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01494 871117 [enquiries@coam.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@coam.org.uk) [www.coam.org.uk](http://www.coam.org.uk)

The Museum is a registered charity (no.272381) and all proceeds go towards its valuable conservation work.

Our work in Social Prescription is inspired by the success of social prescribing initiatives in the heritage sector such as *'Museums on Prescription'* and by our collaboration in a cultural partnership with other leading organisations for culture in Buckinghamshire, set up by Bucks County Council, to ensure the county champions culture as a key way to improve quality of life, enhance well-being and deliver sustainable and inclusive economic growth. As a registered charity we always seek new ways of fulfilling our charitable objective of operating for public benefit.

## **Logistics**

**Transport:** COAM will pay reasonable, local travel expenses for taxis if Accompanied Walkers have no other means of transport. Otherwise, free on-site parking is provided.

**Access:** We are an accessible Museum and have made it as easy as possible for those with impaired mobility to move around our site with the provision of all-terrain wheelchairs, scooters and ramps. Wheelchair users **must** be accompanied by a carer due to social distancing restrictions.

**Dogs:** Dogs on leads are welcome to join their owners.

**Referral:** Participants will be able to register for the programme via their surgery Social Prescriber, care provider or directly by completing a referral form which can be obtained from Jacqui Gellman, COAM Outreach, [outreach@coam.org.uk](mailto:outreach@coam.org.uk), 01494 871117.

**Participation criteria:** Participants must be 65+ yrs; considered or perceived to be socially isolated and willing to take part in a brief evaluation study. Up to 20 participants will be invited to join this programme. One carer/companion is welcome to join for each walk.

**Confidentiality:** All personal data on participants will be treated with confidentiality and as per GDPR guidance.

**Indemnity:** As with all public visiting the Museum, participants will be covered by the Museum's Public Liability insurances. Visitors will be required to sign a Coronavirus Health Declaration form. Companies providing transport will have the necessary insurances.

## **General Information**

The Chiltern Open Air Museum is a leading regional visitor attraction with 37 heritage buildings set in 45 beautiful acres on the edge of Chilterns AONB. It is a leading centre of lifelong learning, keeping the heritage of the Chilterns alive for all to enjoy

Chiltern Open Air Museum is a registered charity and receives no regular grants towards its running costs or capital projects. We are grateful for the fantastic support of over 200 volunteers and the Friends of the Museum Association.

**For further information on Accompanied Walks at COAM, please contact Jacqui Gellman, COAM Outreach, [outreach@coam.org.uk](mailto:outreach@coam.org.uk), 01494 871117.**