C17T2P1

jane: Hello, Jane Fairbanks speaking.

frank: Oh, good morning. My name's Frank Pritchard. I've just retired and moved to Southoe.

I'd like to become a volunteer, and I gather you co-ordinate voluntary work in the village.

jane: That's right.

frank: What sort of thing could I do?

jane: Well, we need help with the village library. We borrow books from the town library, and individuals also donate them. So, one thing you could do is get involved in collecting them – if you've got a car, that is.

frank: Yes, that's no problem.

jane: The times are pretty flexible so we can arrange it to suit you. Another thing is the records that we keep of the books we're given, and those we borrow and need to return to the town library. It would be very useful to have another person to help keep them up to date.

frank: Right. I'm used to working on a computer – I presume they're computerised?

jane: Oh yes.

frank: Is the library purpose-built? I haven't noticed it when I've walked round the village.

jane: No, we simply have the use of a room in the village hall, the West Room. It's on the left as you go in.

frank: I must go and have a look inside the hall.

jane: Yes, it's a nice building.

frank: Do you run a lunch club in the village for elderly people? I know a lot of places do.

jane: Yes, we have a very successful club.

frank: I could help with transport, if that's of any use.

jane: definitely. People come to the club from neighbouring villages, and we're always in need of more drivers.

frank: And does the club have groups that focus on a particular hobby, too? I could get involved in one or two, particularly if there are any art groups.

jane: Excellent. I'll find out where we need help and get back to you.

frank: Fine. What about help for individual residents. Do you arrange that at all?

jane: Yes, we do it as a one-off. In fact, there's Mrs Carroll. She needs a lift to the hospital next week, and we're struggling to find someone.

frank: When's her appointment?

jane: On Tuesday. It would take the whole morning.

frank: I could do that.

jane: Oh, that would be great. Thank you. And also, next week, we're arranging to have some work done to Mr Selsbury's house before he moves, as he isn't healthy enough to do it himself. We've got some people to decorate his kitchen, but if you could do some weeding in his garden, that would be wonderful.

frank: OK. I'd enjoy that. And presumably the day and time are flexible.

jane: Oh yes. Just say when would suit you best, and we'll let Mr Selsbury know.

frank: Good.

jane: The volunteers group also organises monthly social events, which is a great way to meet other people, of course.

frank: Uhuh.

jane: So next month, on the 19th of October, we're holding a quiz – a couple of residents are great at planning unusual ones, and we always fill the village hall.

frank: That sounds like fun. Can I do anything to help?

jane: Well, because of the number of people, we need plenty of refreshments for halfway through.

So, if you could provide any, we'd be grateful.

frank: I'm sure I could. I'll think about what to make, and let you know.

jane: Thank you. Then on November the 18th, we're holding a dance, also in the village hall.

We've booked a band that specialises in music of the 1930s – they've been before, and we've had a lot of requests to bring them back.

frank: I'm not really a dancer, but I'd like to do something to help.

jane: Well, we sell tickets in advance, and having an extra person to check them at the door, as people arrive, would be good – it can be quite a bottleneck if everyone arrives at once!

frank: OK, I'm happy with that.

jane: We're also arranging a New Year's Eve party. We're expecting that to be a really big event, so instead of the village hall, it'll be held in the Mountfort Hotel.

frank: The …?

jane: Mountfort. M-O-U-N-T-F-O-R-T Hotel. It isn't in Southoe itself, but it's only a couple of miles away.

The hotel will be providing dinner and we've booked a band.

The one thing we haven't got yet is a poster. That isn't something you could do, by any chance, is it?

frank: Well actually, yes. Before I retired I was a graphic designer, so that's right up my street.

jane: Oh perfect! I'll give you the details, and then perhaps you could send me a draft …

frank: Of course.

C17T2P2

Good morning, and welcome to Oniton Hall, one of the largest estates in the area. My name's Nick, and I'm one of the guides. I'll give you a brief introduction to the estate while you're sitting down, and then we'll walk round. The estate consists of the house, gardens, parkland and farm, and it dates back to the fourteenth century. The original house was replaced in the late seventeenth century, and of course it has had a large number of owners. Almost all of them have left their mark, generally by adding new rooms, like the ballroom and conservatory, or by demolishing others. The farm looks much as it's always done, although the current owner has done a great deal of work to the flower beds.

In the seventeenth century, the estate was owned by a very wealthy man called Sir Edward Downes. His intention was to escape from the world of politics, after years as an active politician, and to build a new house worthy of his big collection of books, paintings and sculptures. He broke off contact with his former political allies, and hosted meetings of creative and literary people, like painters and poets. Unusually for his time, he didn't care whether his guests were rich or poor, as long as they had talent.

Big houses like Oniton had dozens of servants until the 1920s or 30s, and we've tried to show what their working lives were like. Photographs of course don't give much of an idea, so instead, as you go round the house, you'll see volunteers dressed up as nineteenth-century servants, going about their work. They'll explain what they're doing, and tell you their recipes, or what tools they're using. We've just introduced this feature to replace the audio guide we used to have available.

I see there are a number of children here with you today. Well, we have several activities specially for children, like dressing up in the sorts of clothes that children wore in the past, and as it's a fine day, some of you will probably want to play in the adventure playground. Our latest addition is child-sized tractors, that you can drive around the grounds.

We'll also be going into the farm that's part of the estate, where there's plenty to do.

Most of the buildings date from the eighteenth century, so you can really step back into an agricultural past.

Until recently, the dairy was where milk from the cows was turned into cheese. It's now the place to go for lunch, or afternoon tea, or just a cup of coffee and a slice of homemade cake.

The big stone building that dominates the farm is the large barn, and in here is our collection of agricultural tools. These were used in the past to plough the earth, sow seeds, make gates, and much more.

There's a small barn, also made of stone, where you can groom the donkeys and horses, to keep their coats clean. They really seem to enjoy having it done, and children love grooming them.

The horses no longer live in the stables, which instead is the place to go to buy gifts, books, our own jams and pickles, and clothes and blankets made of wool from our sheep.

Outside the shed, which is the only brick building, you can climb into a horse-drawn carriage for a lovely, relaxing tour of the park and farm. The carriages are well over a hundred years old.

And finally, the parkland, which was laid out in the eighteenth century, with a lake and trees that are now well established.

You'll see types of cattle and sheep that are hardly ever found on farms these days. We're helping to preserve them, to stop their numbers falling further. OK, well if you'd like to come with me ….

C17T3P1

WOMAN: JACK, I'm thinking of taking the kids to the seaside on a surfing holiday this summer and I wanted to ask your advice – as I know you're such an expert.

JACK: Well, I don't know about that, but yes, I've done a bit of surfing over the years. I'd thoroughly recommend it. I think it's the kind of holiday all the family can enjoy together. The thing about surfing is that it's great for all ages and all abilities. My youngest started when he was only three!

WOMAN: Wow! But it's quite physically demanding, isn't it? I've heard you need to be pretty fit.

JACK: Yes. You'll certainly learn more quickly and won't tire as easily.

WOMAN: Well – that should be OK for us. You've been surfing a few times in Ireland, haven't you?

JACK: Yes. There's some great surfing there, which people don't always realise.

WOMAN: And which locations would you recommend? – there seem to be quite a few.

JACK: Yes, there are loads. Last year we went to County Donegal. There are several great places to surf there.

WOMAN: What about in County Clare? I read that's also really good for surfing.

JACK: Yes, it is. I've been there a few times. Most people go to Lahinch. My kids love it there.

The waves aren't too challenging and the town is very lively.

WOMAN: Are there good hotels there?

JACK: Yes – some very nice ones and there are also a few basic hostels and campsites. It's great if you need lessons as the surf schools are excellent.

WOMAN: Sounds good.

JACK: Yes and there's lots to see in the area – like those well-known cliffs – I've forgotten the name of them …

WOMAN: Oh don't worry – I can look them up.

JACK: I've also been surfing in County Mayo, which is less well-known for surfing, but we had a really good time.

That was a few years ago when the kids were younger. There's a good surf school at Carrowniskey beach.

WOMAN: How do you spell that?

JACK: C-A-double R-O-W-N-I-S-K-E-Y WOMAN: OK.

JACK: I put the kids into the surf camp they run during the summer for 10–16 year olds.

WOMAN: Oh right. How long was that for?

JACK: Three hours every day for a week. It was perfect – they were so tired out after that.

WOMAN: I can imagine.

JACK: One thing we did while the kids were surfing was to rent some kayaks to have a look around the bay which is nearby. It's really beautiful.

WOMAN: Oh, I'd love to do that.

WOMAN: Now the only time I went to Ireland it rained practically every day.

JACK: Mmm yes – that can be a problem – but you can surf in the rain, you know.

WOMAN: It doesn't have the same appeal, somehow.

JACK: Well, the weather's been fine the last couple of years when I've been there, but actually, it tends to rain more in August than in the spring or autumn. September's my favourite month because the water is warmer then.

WOMAN: The only problem is that the kids are back to school then.

JACK: I know. But one good thing about Irish summers is that it doesn't get too hot. The average temperature is about 19 degrees and it usually doesn't go above 25 degrees.

WOMAN: That sounds alright. Now what about costs?

JACK: Surfing is a pretty cheap holiday really – the only cost is the hire of equipment. You can expect to pay a daily rate of about 30 euros for the hire of a wetsuit and board – but you can save about 40 euros if you hire by the week.

WOMAN: That's not too bad.

JACK: No. It's important to make sure you get good quality wetsuits – you'll all get too cold if you don't.

And make sure you also get boots. They keep your feet warm and it's easier to surf with them on too.

WOMAN: OK. Well, thanks very much …

C17T3P2

My name's Mrs Carter and I run the before and after school extended hours childcare service.

I hope you've had a chance to have a good look around the school and talk to staff and pupils.

I know that many of you are interested in using our childcare service when your child joins the school, and perhaps you already know something about it, but for those that don't, I'll go through the main details now.

We offer childcare for children from the ages of four to eleven both before and after school.

I know that many parents who work find this service invaluable. You can leave your child with us safe in the knowledge that they will be extremely well cared for. We are insured to provide care for up to 70 children, although we rarely have this many attending at any one session. I think we generally expect around 50–60 children for the afternoon sessions and about half that number for the breakfast sessions. Although we currently do have 70 children registered with us, not all of these attend every day. It's ten years since we began offering an extended hours service and we've come a long way during that time. When we first opened, we only had about 20 children attending regularly. We try to keep our costs as low as we can and we think we provide very good value for money.

For the afternoon sessions, which run from 3.30 until 6 p.m., it's £7.20.

But if you prefer, you can pay for one hour only, which costs £3.50, or two hours which costs £5.70.

The cost of the childcare includes food and snacks. They'll be given breakfast in the morning and in the afternoon, a healthy snack as soon as they finish school. At 5 p.m. children are given something more substantial, such as pasta or a casserole. Please inform us of any allergies that your child might have and we'll make sure they're offered a suitable alternative.

As you may know, the childcare service runs through the school holidays from 8 a.m to 6 p.m..

We offer a really varied and exciting programme to keep the children entertained – we don't want them to feel as if they are still at school!

It will also feel different because they'll get the chance to make new friends with children from other schools – spaces are available for them because a lot of our term-time children don't always attend during the holiday.

In the past, parents have asked if children over the age of 11 are allowed to come with their younger brothers and sisters – but I'm afraid we're unable to do this because of the type of insurance we have.

So now let me tell you about some of the activities that your child can do during the after-school sessions.

As well as being able to use the playground equipment, computers and the library, there is usually at least one ‘special' activity that children can do each day.

For example, Spanish. We have a specialist teacher coming in every Thursday to give a basic introduction to the language through games and songs. She does two sessions: one for the over 8s and one for the younger children. This is the only activity which we have to make an extra charge for – but it's well worth it.

Once a week the children have the opportunity to do some music. We're very lucky that one of our staff is a member of a folk band. On Mondays, she teaches singing and percussion to groups of children. We do rely on parental support for this, so if any of you sing or play an instrument and would be prepared to help out at these sessions, we'd be delighted.

Painting continues to be one of the most popular activities. To begin with we weren't keen on offering this because of the extra mess involved, but children kept asking if they could do some art and so we finally gave in. Art is great for helping the children to relax after working hard at school all day.

Yoga is something that we've been meaning to introduce for some time but haven't been able to find anyone available to teach it – until now that is. So we'll see how this goes.

Hopefully, children will benefit in all sorts of ways from this.

Cooking is another popular activity. They make a different sort of cake, or pizza or bread each week.

Although the younger children love doing it, we found that the mess was just too much, so we've decided to restrict this to the over 8s, as they are better able to clean up after themselves.