



KEEP FEET FIT

Please Support National Shoe Fitting Starting 12th April 2014



The Society of Shoe Fitters launched National Shoe Fitting week in 2013 and because of its success we are repeating this week commencing 12th April. It is designed to increase the public's awareness of how feet change over time, that no two manufacturer's sizes are the same and to help improve footfall for the Independent Retailer and anyone with retail businesses prepared to give a fitting service. Even within a manufacturer's range shoes will fit differently despite being marked with the same size - so those buying online with a size in mind are still unlikely to get a well-fitting shoe.

Our Secretary attended and spoke at the recent Sohealthy Conference at Salford University made up of Health leaders, biomechanic experts and professionals. They stated that there are massive problems with obesity and diabetes in the UK which are adversely affecting feet. 1 in 5 reception class children, 1 in 3 11-12 year olds and a quarter of men and woman are obese, leading to more cases of diabetes, skin cancers, plantar fasciitis, osteoporosis etc. and a third of NHS expenditure is spent on these problems. 6,000 diabetics have an amputation annually, 80% die within 5 years of amputation and 50% in 2 years. If their feet had been fitted professionally with well-constructed footwear, this number would

decrease dramatically. Quote: J.S. Ulbrecht said: A neuropathic patient is a patient for life! ... the ongoing cost to the NHS is a massive.

With increasing problems with the nations' feet, the society decided to launch its campaign through its members who are all qualified shoe fitters. The campaign is supported by other footwear organisations including IFRA, CFHR and BFA etc.

This year the campaign has been additionally endorsed by the Society of Chiropractors and Podiatrists (SOCPOD). They are sending out one of our posters to 11,100 of their members. The NHS actually employs 18,000 podiatrists - which says a lot about the nations feet and what we are doing to them.

Together will all our supporters we are once again promoting National Shoe Fitting Week commencing 12th April 2014. We are encouraging shoe retailers, suppliers and shoe organisations to advertise our campaign as it will help them even more than it will help us. This is a public information campaign aimed to promote our industry and the only skillbase we have left, which continues to be eroded.

We also wish to lobby MP's and government organisations to raise awareness of the state of the nation's foot health. There are too many suppliers of poor fitting shoes and un-qualified retailers offering cheap footwear that can actually harm feet in a very short time of wearing. We wouldn't trust an unqualified person to cut our hair, fix our computer or give us an eye test, yet how many of the public buy shoes self-service/online, expecting them to fit, support their foot and keep them in good shape? Shoe shops around the country are contacting schools, libraries, local media as well as other activity groups to get as many members of the public to have their feet measured by a qualified fitter, and get the population wearing shoes that fit well, and are for the purpose intended.

Ellie Dickins, President Society of Shoe Fitters

National Shoe Fitting Week has had tremendous success, given that it was just last year that the Society of Shoe Fitters launched this

campaign. It just goes to prove that there are some discerning people out there who truly believe that properly fitted footwear is the way forward. It is just as important to have adults feet measured as it is children's! As we get older we alter in size and shape, including our feet, so it is imperative we have our feet properly measured and checked for any alterations in structure that need to be taken into consideration when purchasing good quality footwear.

Our aim is to spread the word, and we have full endorsement from the Society of Chiropractors and Podiatrists who have joined us in this very important venture. We now have to throw our net even wider and lobby MP's to ensure we have a fairer playing field and spread the word in the media - all and any papers, local and national, radio, GP surgeries - any way we can, to stop people potentially risking their health by purchasing footwear on-line. Not enough importance is given to looking after our feet properly and it's about time people realised that to neglect that part of our anatomy will only lead to health problems - wearing the wrong shoes or badly fitting footwear can affect our whole physiology, (bad knees, back, hips can, in many cases, be attributed to badly fitting footwear,) and cost the NHS thousands of pounds having to treat painful neglected feet.

Lesley Waddy, Fellow Society of Shoe Fitters



Please join with us in supporting National Shoe Fitting Week starting 12th April 2014.
For more information please view www.shoefitters-uk.org or contact secretary@shoefitters-uk.org