



Covid-19 – what our customers need to know about additional measures we have taken

Age UK Cheshire East takes the threat posed by Covid-19 seriously and where we do not feel we can adequately protect against this, have suspended those services. At all times during the pandemic crisis, we have followed the current Government guidance as a minimum, and where appropriate, introduced additional measures to protect everyone involved in our service delivery.

In addition, we have taken a number of steps to protect the health and welfare of our customers, clients, staff and volunteers and to control the spread of Covid-19, where it is felt that services can run safely.

Our Shops

You will note on entry to our shops that there are **restrictions on the number of customers** we allow in at any one time. Restrictions vary from shop to shop and are in place to ensure your comfort and ability to maintain adequate social distancing.

We have also introduced **hand sanitising stations** which we encourage all shoppers to use in addition to requesting everyone who is able to, to **wear a mask** while on our premises (in line with Government guidance).

We have also taken **additional precautions** with our staff and volunteers, requiring them to wear face coverings while in the shop (and not behind a screen), increasing the frequency of hand washing and also supplied each person with PPE and hand sanitiser.

Donations to our shops are now pre-booked for drop off and all items are quarantined for 72 hours before being handled by our staff. All clothes and fabrics are steamed prior to making it to the shop floor.

We have also increased the **frequency of cleaning** in our shops, with all touch surfaces being cleaned several times per day in addition to the daily deep-clean.

Whilst we understand some people prefer to pay by cash **we do encourage payment by card** where possible.

Information Posters are located in each shop reminding people of their responsibilities, in particular the requirement to maintain a 2 metre distance between themselves and other shoppers.

Our Help at Home Service

Our Help at Home service provides essential support to older people, many of whom rely heavily on the service as their only companionship each week. It was essential therefore, that we put in all measures possible to maintain this service.

Our Home Helps now have **increased PPE** including disposable gloves and aprons, masks and visors, and hand sanitiser.

All Home Helps are **trained** in the correct ways to put on, wear and remove PPE. They also adhere to strict hand washing routines both on entry to the client's house and prior to departure.

We **encourage** clients to wear masks while our staff are present and in order to minimise risk, **we will not enter** a client's house if there are other visitors, including nursing staff, care workers and family.

Where a client has returned home from a **hospital admission** we will not visit the client until the 14 days isolation period has elapsed.

Where there is a confirmed Covid-19 positive test result in the place where the client resides we will not be able to attend until the isolation period has completed or when there are no further positive results. This is to protect the welfare of the home help and their clients.

In exceptional circumstances, where a client needs **transport to an appointment** and this cannot be accommodated by family or the NHS we may, subject to strict adherence to current guidelines, support the client with this. No other client will be permitted in the car for 72 hours after this journey, and the car will be deep cleaned after being used to transport clients.

We no longer accept cash payment for Home Help service and all payments are made by **Direct Debit** against invoice.

Men In Sheds

Recognising the huge impact Men in Sheds has on the mental health of older men, we have made significant changes to the shed, both in terms of the **layout** and the **way we operate**.

The Shed is now laid out in strict adherence with **social distancing** which means the numbers of people using the Shed at each session is **limited to 3**.

Each client is issued with their **own tools and allocated machines** for the session; these are then cleaned and quarantined at the end of the session. It is no longer permitted to share/swap or exchange tools with other clients.

All stations have their own **cleaning kit** to enable sanitisation between sessions.

All clients are required to **wear masks and disposable gloves** for the entire duration of the session; where clients are exempt we will provide face shields.

We no longer permit clients to bring **food** to the sessions, although bottled drinks are still allowed.

There is now a **15 minute break** between sessions to enable the Shed Co-ordinator to sanitise touch-points and reset tool stations. During this break **no clients are permitted to enter the building**, and must wait outside until given permission to enter.

Information & Advice

This service is currently delivered by telephone only.

New Horizons Club (Dementia Day Support)

This service is currently suspended and will only re-open once we believe it is safe to do so.

Head Office

Although we do have a skeleton staff on site every day, our Head Office is currently **closed to visitors** with Dementia Day Support and IT classes **suspended**.

Our Head Office staff are making full use of the option for **home-working**. Providing key staff with encrypted laptops and remote access to our servers, means they can work as effectively from home. This allows us to control the number of staff on site and adhere to **social distancing** requirements.

Meetings and conferences have been held 'virtually' since March and it is anticipated that this will remain the case indefinitely.

Touch surfaces are cleaned daily and **screens** are provided between desks to protect staff.

Our Staff's Physical and Mental Health – we are very conscious of the strain and additional demands dealing with Covid19 places on our workforce and have procedures and support in place to look after their physical, mental and financial welfare throughout this period.

We hold regular meetings with our **Trustee Board** who receive updates on measures being taken, as outline above.

Copies of individual risk assessments undertaken at each site are available on request.

This statement updated: January 2021