

Volunteer's Voice

Autumn newsletter



Welcome back



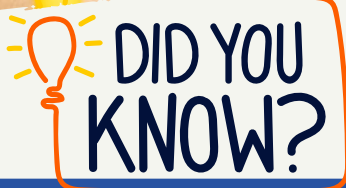
We are thrilled to present the the **2nd issue of our Volunteer Newsletter, Volunteer's Voice.**

This newsletter aims to capture and showcase some of the incredible support that volunteers provide to Age UK Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. In this edition, you will find inspiring stories, news, uplifting quotes, and updates.

Sharing what matters to you!

As always, if you have any exciting news to share - be it a celebration, event, or a topic that holds special meaning for you - please reach out to Tamsin or lee.davies@ageukcornwall.org.uk - it is always exciting to work with our wonderful volunteers to create fun content for these newsletters.

*Tamsin and I would also like to extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed. Your stories are truly inspiring and will empower and motivate many more volunteers to become a part of the Age UK Cornwall family. **Lee and Tamsin***



Find out more about our Volunteer roles

Our volunteers support us locally, all year round, helping to make sure older people feel included, respected, and valued. We couldn't continue to run our vital services without them.

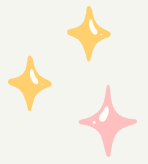
Please help us out by sharing details of our latest roles.

www.ageuk.org.uk/cornwall/get-involved/volunteer/



In the period of 2025-26, 18% of adults indicated they engaged in formal volunteering - defined as "offering unpaid assistance to groups, individuals, or clubs" - every month. This marks an increase from 17% in 2024-25, although it remains 3% below pre-COVID levels. Notably, 25% of individuals aged *65-74* participate in volunteering, with *33%* in Cornwall, showcasing our strong local commitment to supporting others.

Angie's Story - Making an impact with the Community Gateway



My name is Angie, and I am a new volunteer with the Community Gateway team in Truro. A few months ago, after retiring, I chose to volunteer as a way to contribute positively to the local community. I truly admire the essential work carried out by the Community Gateway team and Age UK Cornwall as a whole, and I hoped that my background in Adult Social Care would enable me to make a meaningful contribution.

My role within the Gateway

Initially, I was introduced to a role focused on completing Attendance Allowance forms online via phone with clients; however, that position did not come to fruition. This left me with alternative options: I could either upload client data or conduct client feedback forms over the phone. Since I am a 'people person' who thrives on conversation and client interaction, I chose to focus on completing the Feedback questionnaire forms. In this role, ***I reach out to clients who have recently received services from the Community Gateway team, gathering their feedback on the quality of the service - whether positive or negative!***



"I take pride in being a volunteer with the Community Gateway Team."

Why did you join Age UK Cornwall?

The aim of this feedback is to evaluate our service and guarantee that we are delivering a quality and meaningful experience that truly benefits individuals in Cornwall and beyond. Throughout this process, participants will remain anonymous. The feedback form consists of fewer than ten questions, with sections available for additional comments. ***When I connect with a client, the length of the telephone conversation can vary; at times, I'm fortunate enough to hear captivating life stories or anything else they wish to share in that moment!***



Communication challenges

It can be challenging to maintain focus on the purpose of a call! The conversation might last 15 minutes or extend much longer, while another call could be brief and to the point. At times, I find myself calling repeatedly without any response. The reception of my calls is often unpredictable, as many people are cautious these days and might suspect it's a scam. Communication barriers, such as hearing difficulties or memory loss, can also pose challenges, but I strive to obtain clear feedback, whether it's positive or negative. ***Fortunately, positive responses significantly outnumber the negatives. Clients often refer to the assistance they received as a "life-saver" or a "Godsend," and they truly value the intervention.*** While some appreciate the help, they may feel let down when certain services are unavailable or require payment. A few clients have expressed frustration, wishing that the team could handle all the calls without any action on their part. Many clients are also uncertain about the source of the help they received and often want to discuss the services post-referral, such as the performance of the gardener or cleaner, which is not the focus of the feedback form.

Despite my best efforts to clarify the Community Gateway's role in this process, it can be challenging to differentiate the services provided. During our conversations, I may uncover additional needs and can refer them back to the CG team for further follow-up. I aim to spend one day a week at the Truro office whenever possible. The warm welcome and ongoing support from my colleagues there have been incredible. I continue to face challenges with the various computer screens, and their assistance has been invaluable. ***A huge thank you to everyone, I truly take pride in being a volunteer with the Community Gateway Team.***

Anastasia - Volunteering and Gardening for Life initiative



Hello! My name is Anastasia, and I am a volunteer with Age UK Cornwall, supporting the Gardening for Life initiative. Within my role, I work closely with the Gardening Lead, helping to support projects that use gardening to bring people together, improve wellbeing, and nurture a sense of community.



Why do you volunteer for Age UK Cornwall?

I volunteer due to my heartfelt passion for nurturing and supporting communities. Gardening for Life truly resonates with me, as it not only motivates individuals to stay active and connect with nature but also fosters meaningful social interactions. Being involved in projects that positively influence people's wellbeing is incredibly fulfilling, and I take pride in contributing to something that helps individuals feel valued, supported, and part of a larger community.

Currently, I am pursuing a degree in Creative Event Management at Falmouth University, and relocating to Cornwall has profoundly transformed my life. I quickly developed a deep affection for the county, not just for its stunning landscapes but also for the kindness, values, and strong sense of community that Cornwall embodies. From the moment I arrived, I felt a warm welcome and support, leaving a lasting impression on me. Coming from the outskirts of South London and Kent, this feeling of belonging was particularly significant. It motivated me to give back and assist in building and supporting communities, just as I have experienced here. **Volunteering enables me to do precisely that while also honing valuable skills and gaining a deeper insight into community-led initiatives.**

Anastasia

What are your goals and future ambitions?



Through my volunteering efforts, I aspire to create impactful projects for Age UK Cornwall that will leave a lasting impression on both the community and the organisation for years to come, even after my role ends. My aim is for the contributions I make to continue benefiting individuals well into the future. After graduation, I hope to maintain my connection, and volunteer, with Age UK Cornwall while advancing my career, as I genuinely believe that every generation deserves a voice.

As Cornwall continues to grow and its elderly population increases, it is crucial that we remember those who have contributed to making Cornwall the rich, caring, and vibrant community it is today. Supporting older generations is not just important; it is vital for fostering strong, connected neighborhoods.

In my free time, I love to dive deep into Cornish culture. I enjoy visiting local cafés and restaurants, swimming in the sea, and spending time outdoors. I also cherish the opportunity to meet local residents, forge friendships, and listen to their stories. This engagement helps me better grasp the community's true needs and broadens my understanding of what makes Cornwall so unique.

Volunteering with Age UK Cornwall has been an incredibly rewarding experience, and I am thankful to be part of an organisation that is making such a significant and lasting difference throughout the county.



Sharing quotes and feedback

Your driver is truly special, he always puts me at ease and makes a difficult appointment better.

How nice it is to have someone to talk to, I don't have any family nearby, so your befriending service really matters to me.

She is 1 in a million - supporting us lot takes a bit of work, but she always does it with a smile.

Staff can be really busy sometimes, but your volunteer always has the time for a proper chat

Your volunteer is a godsend, she offers time, support, and care within the hub - she really listens to us.

Reasons for Volunteering

We asked for your top reasons on why you volunteer, this is what you shared with us.



It gets you out and about – and increases my social connections.



Volunteering really engages the brain again - it can be easy to switch off, but I can safely say that volunteering at the hub makes me think about everything!



To be part of something bigger - we all hear the word 'community' thrown around, but volunteering has meant that I feel connected and part of the whole.



I do it to help others who are less fortunate - this is a simple reason, but the action of volunteering can bring meaning to your life, and can help somebody else in a life-changing way. I think we all feel a sense of hope and purpose by volunteering.

In other news...

Connecting with us - your Voice Matters!

Recently, several volunteers have shared their feelings of disconnection since the pandemic, highlighting the challenges of staying informed about the latest news, services, and changes.

This response is entirely understandable. We are currently implementing new programs and processes aimed at enhancing our charity and positioning us for future success.

We want to stress that every volunteer's voice matters. Your suggestions, feedback (both positive and negative), and curiosity greatly impact our direction and progress. We encourage you to:



****Ask questions.****

****Share your ideas.****

****Provide feedback from those we support.****

Most importantly, please don't hesitate to keep us updated about what's happening in your area - whether related to your service, a recent event, or local news that helps us stay connected. We genuinely want to hear from you as often as possible.

Latest Vacancies | Age UK Cornwall Chief Executive

As most of you will be aware, Tracey is stepping down at the end of March 2027, enjoying the next brilliant chapter of her life. Our board of Trustees are supporting this process throughout and are very happy to share the advert (**see link below**) with all volunteers - this should provide you with any information you require.

The advert is now live on several mediums and will continue to be shared widely - please feel free to take a look at the role and forward on.

For a confidential conversation about the opportunity, please contact **Anna Jay, Managing Director of Public Leaders Appointments**, at anna@publicleadersappointments.com

To apply, please submit your CV together with a covering letter outlining your motivation for applying and how your skills, knowledge and experience equip you for the role. Please note that applications without a cover letter will not be considered.

Full details and candidate brief:

<https://getjobs.org.uk/jobs/chief-executive>

Free Wills Service - start writing yours.

For the next 24 months, we have partnered with expert estate planners, Octopus Legacy, so people can write or update your will for FREE. This offer is available to all volunteers and staff too.*

The cost of your Will is now covered by us up to £150 – so you can write or update a simple will for free or get a will with trust at a discounted rate. A simple will covers a large proportion of cases - covering assets, gifts, executors, funeral wishes, gifts, and dividing of estates. While many supporters choose to include a gift in their Will to Age UK Cornwall, there's no obligation to do so when using this service.

How to write or update your will:

To help you find the right will for you, Octopus Legacies have provided contact methods below:

- **Online - click this link to find out more**
- **Scannable QR code - where you will be supported throughout.**
- **Over the phone/video call - 020 4525 3605.**



Applies to simple wills only. Discounts are applicable for trusts. Simply quote **AGE UK CORNWALL to take up this offer.*

Tim Guy and lee.davies@ageukcornwall.org.uk are always happy to field any questions you may have, but it should be noted that we are not specialists in this field and any questions relating to your Will should always be forwarded to the estate planning team at Octopus Legacies.