

We would like to **WELCOME** you to the **Christmas edition** of **YOUR** latest Volunteer Newsletter. Our vision is to produce three editions a year that we hope will inform, engage and entertain. We want to ensure that you are all kept up to date with all things Volunteering and encourage you to share what is happening in your local communities throughout Cornwall & The Isles of Scilly.

Remember that this is **YOUR** newsletter and we would really like your input in every edition. Do contact debbie.stubbs@ageukcornwall.org.uk with your ideas and stories for our Spring Edition.



Macmillan Corner - Meet Maria

My name's Maria Faulkner and I'm working at Age UK Cornwall and the IOS, for the second time, in my new role as Community Navigator. It's been wonderful meeting colleagues and, especially, volunteers. I'm so looking forward to working with all of you on this partnership project with Macmillan.

I've lived in Cornwall for over thirty years and had varied roles from Programme Coordinator for a Complementary Health Therapy programme to Education Officer at Newquay Zoo! In between I've written books for children and taken an MA in Professional Writing – for which I was proud to get a Distinction, as I was diagnosed with dyslexia at the age of eight when I found it nearly impossible to read.

I would never have achieved the things I did without the support from my teachers, family and friends. It's that supportive role I've always loved, and I've been mentor, teacher and adviser to many people in the community, whether seeking employment or setting-up small to medium enterprises. My goal is to offer training and guidance to my Cancer Information and Support Volunteers, who will be the human face and listening ear to anyone who visits the Macmillan Hubs.

If you are interested in being a Cancer Information and Support Volunteer **feel free to contact me directly** (maria@ageukcornwall.org.uk)

Community Hubs

We are very proud of our Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Hubs, made possible through our highly-valued partnership with Macmillan. Two of the hubs are up and running: one in St Austell Library

and the other in Liskeard Methodist Church. The second location includes a further partnership with the Junk Food Café project as well as members of the church community.

Community plays a key role as the hubs offer support and information to anyone affected by cancer; this could include parents, friends, siblings, partners or grandparents, and is for anyone who has cancer, at any stage of their journey. The idea of the hubs being in a public place is to allow people passing by to access information and support they might not easily access in their location. Using our Cornwall Link community website, a mini Macmillan 'library' and Macmillan's online resources, we are able to better inform and signpost people.



Above photo, Maria setting up shop at St Austell Library, ready to talk about her work with Macmillan Cancer Support & Age UK Cornwall

"Working at the hubs and with the Macmillan team has been a moving and inspiring experience."

Being Polish!

A useful, if odd, advantage to being an Age UK Cornwall volunteer.

As volunteers, we all have a lot to give and we each have our strengths and individuality to lean on. This enables us to assist our clients in a pleasant way for mutual benefit. I have an additional advantage – I am not English as the ‘ski’ at the end of my surname reveals – I am Polish.

Now some may regard that as a disadvantage, as not everyone is comfortable in dealing with foreigners. However, I have a major factor in my favour – I speak English without an accent. Most people are surprised to see my full name (highlighted on my Age UK Cornwall name badge), and often they voice their surprise as well. The secret is my English education, as I have been practicing the language since the age of 10 (I am now 70 years young!).

In all cases I have had a very positive response, with most wanting to know more of my history and the ones who remember the Second World War period want to share their memories too. The people I support are usually fascinated when I share some of the history of my own parents, who went through it with all the horrors they experienced, but it was also what brought them together as a couple.

“It always gives me a nice feeling when peoples’ memories of the Poles they came across were so positive.”



I have been an Advocate, or Information & Advice volunteer with Age UK Cornwall for eight years now. I trust I have made my own positive contribution in assisting with our clients needs while leaving them with a smile on their faces and even, occasionally, a word or two of Polish. **‘Sto lat’ is my favourite phrase (it is also a traditional toast) – easy to learn, and it means ‘I wish you a 100 years’.** ***This story was written by Leonard Szepietowski, our Information & Advice Volunteer.***



A Healthy Workplace

The Healthy Workplace team have been hard at work looking for ways to improve the health of our teams. In November we ran some joint pain advice sessions, and held some workshops to help people who sit at a desk incorporate exercise into their day.

In January we are running some sessions on healthier eating and physical activity ([link to calendar](#)). **To find out more and sign up to one of our workshops, please contact Jayne Marsh on 01872 266388 or jayne.marsh@ageukcornwall.org.uk**

On 25 November 2019 the assessment team from Cornwall Council visited us to talk through our self-assessment and to hear about what we are most proud of. We were delighted to have the support of Tracey and Nigel from the senior team and the Chair of the board, Louise Southwell at this meeting.

The assessment team looked at a range of documents and spoke to team members to get a good understanding of how we are doing and to offer further advice.

Following this Assessment, we are excited to confirm that Age UK Cornwall & Isles of Scilly has achieved a Bronze Healthy Workplace Award.

To find out more about the scheme please look at their website:

<https://www.behealthyatwork.org/>

If there is a health topic you think you could help us do better in for our staff and volunteers please DO get in touch.

Lone Working Update

In October, we asked all Staff and Volunteers to complete our Lone Working Survey. 60 people completed this survey, which is a great result, and this will help us shape and update our current Lone Worker policy and processes.

Our vision is to develop a policy that provides practical support to Volunteers & Staff in the organisation that work alone in a wide range of roles and venues.

We would like to thank everyone for participating and providing a rich source of data. Your frontline examples will help our working group develop the right policy, processes and guidance for your needs.

If you would like to find out more or get involved, please contact Helen Newson on:
helen.newson@ageukcornwall.org.uk

The full staff & volunteer briefing can be found online here - www.ageuk.org.uk/cornwall/about-us/news-and-campaigns/



Changing face of Volunteer recruitment

Over the last few months we have been introducing some changes & improvements to Volunteer recruitment processes at Age UK Cornwall.

We have added all Volunteer roles to our main website and Cornwall-Link, we have also streamlined our own internal application process to eliminate volunteer applicant frustration.

Our team have also made changes to the Recruitment process, which will help us to reduce/eliminate delays so that new volunteers can start in their chosen roles as soon as possible.

Next Steps

Service Leads and Debbie Stubbs, our Volunteer Officer, are busy developing volunteer role descriptions, so that everyone can be clearer about role requirements and be better positioned to offer support where required. This will also highlight how vital volunteers are to the delivery of our services and where new roles need to be developed within Age UK Cornwall & The Isles of Scilly.

We also plan to develop a volunteer package, which includes reviews, training and engagement events so that each and every volunteer feels supported, valued and part of the wider organization enabling them to support our clients across Cornwall.

“Since April 2019, our Volunteer Drivers have supported 50,000 trips across Cornwall & South Devon”

A Loving Poem

John, one of our Volunteers received a lovely thank you card for the support he offers, inside was the following poem.

***Two Octogenarians in Cornwall
Under the weather and mournful.
Failed in our quest,
To keep up with the rest,
Age UK Cornwall helped us to feel
Included and joyful.***



Introducing Jen

I'm really excited to have recently joined the Age UK Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Team. After starting my career in banking, and 12 years working in Education, I was looking for a new role that was challenging, professional, but person centred.

The Business and Performance role really interested me because it uses my business management and development skills whilst making sure it adds value to people in my community. I've had a connection to Age UK Cornwall for over 15 years, as my Nan used to attend Falmouth Day Centre, and it made a real difference to her personal wellbeing.

In my short time here, I've seen what a huge impact our services have, and how vital volunteers are in that process.

My top priority is to make our garden service, home care, home admin service and day centres financially more secure, so they can feed back into our care activity. This includes implementing a marketing plan to shout about our services, and to make it easy for colleagues and volunteers to refer clients to different services.

In 2020, we will be launching a new service, based on our client and colleague feedback; watch this space for more information! If you could help me promote our services by talking to everyone you know about the benefits of the services we offer, along with the new 'gift voucher' so family and friends can gift our services to a loved one, you will make a massive difference to the charity and our clients. **I look forward to working with you all! Jen Siggs, Business & Performance Manager**



Above photo, Jen Siggs

Merry Christmas and your Volunteer Survey Results

In September 2019, we asked you to take part in 'My Volunteer View'. We wanted to hear about your experiences, what matters most to you and what we could do to improve. **You can find the full survey results & our Volunteer briefing on this link below:**

[My Volunteer View](#)



All the staff from Age UK Cornwall would like to say a huge thank you for another amazing year. The compassion and respect you show to the people we support is an inspiration for us all. We want you to know that your work makes a huge difference to the community and we couldn't help thousands of people every year without you. **Thank you**

"Without your wonderful volunteer, I wouldn't be able to pay for my heating this Winter"

Share with us

For the final edition this year we want to celebrate all the wonderful ways in which our Volunteers support people.

We would love to hear your ideas and share your stories for our Spring Edition.

Please email debbie.stubbs@ageukcornwall.org.uk

If you change your mind about receiving these Newsletters or about the way we contact you, email email@ageukcornwall.org.uk

In partnership with
**WE ARE
MACMILLAN.
CANCER SUPPORT**