County Durham age UK Newsletter Living life later, longer, stronger

We work with anyone age 50+ across the entire County

Did you know?

We are an independent local charity and have been working with communities throughout the County for over 45 years

Did you know?

We offer free benefit checks and last year our Information & Advice team reclaimed over £3million in welfare benefits well as raising funds, we are also helping the planet by recycling goods and clothes through our charity shops & eBay store

As

We offer bespoke one to one training to help you get to grips with your mobile phone, tablet or laptop



We are developing warm spaces with a friendly atmosphere throughout County Durham



Have you had a recent benefit check?

Last year our information & advice team helped older people in County Durham claim over **£3 million worth** of benefits



Latest figures show that between 1.4 and 2.1 million pensioners in the UK are living in poverty, yet around 2.4 billion pounds of Pension Credit and Housing Benefit are unclaimed every year

- 16.5% of pensioners are living in relative poverty in County Durham
 - 8.9% of older people in County Durham were experiencing fuel poverty (2020 figures)

With the current huge financial pressures due to rising costs, it is more important than ever that people receive their full entitlement

Age UK County Durham provides FREE information and advice to anyone aged 50+ living in the County

Call us on **0191 374 6367** to arrange a **FREE** benefit check or you can email us at **your.rights@ageukcountydurham.org.uk**

I can't believe what we were entitled too. It's like winning the lottery thanks to Age UK County Durham



The extra benefits have helped us to cope with everyday living. Especially with the rise in fuel bills

What is the Energy Price Cap?

The energy price cap is a limit on the price people pay for their energy and sets a maximum price that energy suppliers can charge consumers for each kilowatt hour (kWh) of energy they use.



How much you pay depends on how much energy you use

The cap is a government protection, calculated by Ofgem; they regulate energy suppliers, but do not regulate the oil and gas production sector. The cap ensures that the profit energy suppliers make is capped.

The **Energy Price Guarantee** is a temporary additional measure to protect consumers from the recent significant increases in wholesale gas prices. The Guarantee was put in place on 1 October 2022 and will last until April 2024. It means that consumers will pay less for their energy than they would under the price cap.

Why is there a price cap?

Customers who don't shop around and get stuck on their supplier's basic default energy tariff are disadvantaged in the energy market. The price cap is applied to customers on a default energy tariff, whether you pay by direct debit, standard credit, prepayment meter, or have an Economy 7 (E7) meter.

The cap ensures that prices for customers on default energy tariffs are fair and cost-reflective. This will reduce the unit cost of electricity and gas so that households with typical energy use in Great Britain would pay, on average, around £2,500 a year on their energy bill until 31 March 2022 and around £3,000 a year until 31 March 2024. These figures are based on a household with typical consumption on a dual electricity and gas bill paid by direct debit. The amount you pay will depend on how much energy you use, where you live, how you pay for energy, and your metering arrangement.

Customer with typical usage, paying by direct debit*

The table below shows the average capped rates for a customer with typical usage paying by direct debit on a default tariff.

Energy Price Guarantee from 1 October 2022		
Electricity	£0.34 per/kWh Daily standing charge: £0.46	
Gas	£0.10 per kWh Daily standing charge: £0.28	

* Rates are averages and will vary by region, payment method and meter type. You will need to contact your supplier for more personalised information

Standing Charges

Average standing charges for customers on default tariffs will remain capped in line with the levels set for the default tariff cap for a typical dual fuel customer paying by direct debit.

Are you worried about your energy bills?

If you're finding it hard to keep up with energy payments or you're worried you won't be able to afford the energy you need this winter, you might be entitled to financial support.

Warm Home Discount

This is a one-off payment to help with the cost of energy over winter. It's usually added as credit to your electricity bill. This winter (2022-23), it's rising from £140 to £150. You qualify if you either get the Guaranteed Credit element of Pension Credit or are on a low income and have high energy costs. You don't have to apply for the warm home discount, you will receive a letter between November 2022 and January 2023 if you are eligible.

Winter Fuel Payment

You could be entitled to an annual one-off payment of £100-£300 depending on how old you are, who you live with and any benefits you receive. This year (2022-23), eligible households will get an extra £300 top-up to help with the cost of living. If you're over State Pension age - which is currently 66 years old - and receive the State Pension then you should be paid automatically. Payments are usually made between November and December.

Money off energy bills

All households in Britain will get £400 off their energy bills between October 2022 and March 2023. This is a discount, not a loan – so you don't have to pay this money back through future bills.

In most cases, it will be credited to electricity accounts automatically. If you pay by pre-payment meter it will either be credited to the meter or you will receive a voucher which you should redeem as soon as possible.

A limited number of households may need to make further enquiries to access the scheme. If you need more advice, contact your energy supplier.

Our friendly team of advisors can offer drop in sessions in various venues and locations in the County to offer information, advice & signposting to services and activities.

So if you think your coffee mornings, church groups, WI meetings, GP surgery etc.. would like to host a drop in information session then please get in touch us to discuss and where possible we'd be happy to help.

Call us on **0191 374 6367** or you can email us at **your.rights@ageukcountydurham.org.uk**

Warm Homes Programme

- Does your home feel cold?
- Are you worried about paying your energy bills?



Our Warm Homes programme can offer you a FREE home energy check

Our trained handyperson will come to your home and discuss your home energy needs as well as install free energy efficient equipment, such as light bulbs and reflective radiator panels to help make your heating more efficient



For more information call us on **0191 374 6367**

Winter Response & Warm Spaces

The dramatic increases in energy prices and the cost of living are of deep concern to everyone. Age UK County Durham is aware that many older people may struggle in the coming winter months.

There are lots of warm spaces popping up in community locations including libraries, community centres and village halls for you to access, meet new people, chat and keep warm.

We don't want anyone having to choose between heat and food!

Thanks to the support and generosity of our local supermarkets, our **Winter Aid Programme** is supporting even more people across County Durham.



Asda, Morrisons and Sainsburys have generously donated non-perishable goods which we able to deliver in food parcels to older people in need of assistance.

If heating your house is a problem whilst waiting for a broken boiler to be repaired then we can also loan out portable oil filled radiators to help heat your home in an emergency, along with blankets and hot water bottles too.



If you need help, call us on **0191 386 3856**





Come along to our warm space, have a chat, relax or try our optional activities Tell us what you would like to see at our social group (for adults aged 50+) Let us know if you would like to come along by calling 0191 374 6577 or email us cet@ageukcountydurham.org.uk

Warm Winter Activities

We're working with Morrisons supermarket in Dalton Park and Consett and Asda in Peterlee to have regular warm space activities in their community rooms.

Keep an eye out for lots of new and exciting activities

We have a Warm Winter space in our main office in Belmont on Fridays between 9.30am and 12.30pm

Come along and keep warm with free refreshments and activities and some of our lovely team will keep you company Just call us on 0191 374 6577 for more information and to let us know you're coming along



Come along to our warm space, have a chat, relax or try our optional activities Tell us what you would like to see at our social group (for adults aged 50+)

Let us know if you would like to come along by calling **0191 374 6577** or email us cet@ageukcountydurham.org.uk

POWER CUT? CALL 105 Vour power Supply? Problems with Northern Gas Networks

If you have a power cut, call Northern Powergrid on 105 No gas? Call the Gas Emergency Services on 0800 111 999

If you have difficulty taking meter readings at home (which can affect your energy bills), you may be eligible to register with the Priority Services Register (PSR). They can offer a wide range of support:

- Being informing about planned power supply disruptions
- Appointing a nominated person who can contact the PSR on your behalf
- Moving a meter that is inaccessible or unsafe for you to reach

You are eligible if you have reached your state pension age, are disabled, have a long-term medical condition, have a hearing or sight condition, have a mental health condition or you are pregnant or have children under 5. It is worth asking if you are unsure as there are many other reasons that may apply to your situation.

You can ask your supplier for more information or contact **Northern Powergrid on 0800 169 2996** for electricity customers or **Northern Gas Networks on 0800 040 7766**



Digital Inclusion Project



Our **FREE** digital inclusion project service can help you to access digital services and communication

We are committed to supporting older adults in accessing digital services and communications. Our project provides personalised digital skills support, technology and connectivity for you to agin confidence in

connectivity for you to gain confidence in using technology to help you in your daily life.

Would you like to ...

- Stay in touch with loved ones?
- Shop from the comfort of your own home?
- Access services you need in a quick and easy way?

Our friendly team of volunteer **Digital Champions** will be happy to work with you to improve your digital skills so that you become confident and comfortable when using your phone, tablet or laptop—they'll be able to help you with

- Searching the internet
- Sending emails
- Chatting to your family and friends online
- Booking GP appointments
- Shopping and banking online

No technology or WiFi connection at home?

No Problem! We have a **FREE** tablet loan scheme that will bring the technology to you.

For more information call us on 0191 374 6568



Using technology the fun way! Online shopping with Amazon

In October, 20 clients, members of staff and some of our Digital Champions spent a fun and informative morning at the Amazon Logistics Centre in Bowburn.

Amazon staff gave an amazing 'virtual' tour of their facility, showing us how goods were checked in and sorted for distribution to customers. This was followed by an information session on how to shop online.

The Amazon team then treated us to a virtual raffle, with one our clients winning a wonderful prize!







Digital history at Beamish Museum

In November another group of clients, staff and volunteers enjoyed a somewhat chilly, but immensely interesting morning at Beamish

Museum. We were treated to a vintage bus ride down to the 1900s Town and then settled in the old Bank building for a digital history tour of their eye-catching website. We found out how to plan a day at the museum, starting with booking tickets and exploring all the areas to visit. Collection Manager, Dan, then took us on a journey of discovery into family history research which inspired some of us to go home and start looking up our own ancestors straight away.

What do you think?

We provide a wide range of services and activities to meet the needs of older people in the community including social groups and activities, specialist mental health support, information and advice, volunteering opportunities and a range of help at home services

We'd like to know what you think about us and what we do

- **YOU** are the expert in knowing what **YOU** want to happen locally
- **YOU** can make a difference and help us shape our future services to meet **YOUR** needs
- Can **YOU** help us by completing the questions on the next page?

Your answers will be entered into our prize draw with the winner receiving a £25 supermarket voucher Entries must be received no later than 28 February 2023 and the winning entry will be drawn at random on 1 March 2023





What do you think is missing from services within your area?



What else can we help you with? Is there anything else you need?

Call us on **0191 386 3856** Email us at **cet@ageukcountydurham.org.uk** or post your answers to **Age UK County Durham, Houghton House, Belmont Business Park, Durham, DH1 1TW**

Our aim is to respond to the needs of older people in County Durham

Keep Moving, Keep Warm

We're working hard to expand our social activities programme so over the coming months you'll see lots of free taster activity sessions popping up in warm spaces across the County so that could be anything from archery in Consett to gentle seated exercise in our warm space in Belmont. For more information just call us on **0191 374 6577**

Circuit exercise classes

It's a big thumbs up from our circuits group for the new location being used for their classes. Sessions are now held at The Venue in Stanley. Everyone agreed, there is lots of space to move around, plenty chairs to rest and the volunteer staff are absolutely lovely. The group had a great session and are looking forward to welcoming new members as the class expands. If you would like to give the class a try, give us a call.

Funny Fact: One participant said that she had stretched and strained and now aches in muscles she never knew she had. And that was for just putting her trainers on!

> We also have regular Tai Chi and gentle seated exercise classes and New Age Kurling which is played the same way as in the winter Olympics but not a drop of ice involved!

For those with perhaps more restricted mobility we're running "Keep Calm & Craft" sessions – these monthly sessions aim to promote an

improvement in general wellbeing with therapeutic crafts in a relaxed social setting.







Community Shed

Now the festive season is almost upon us, our community shed members (Christmas Elves) are hard at it creating some lovely decorative items for Christmas. Christmas trees, snowmen and Christmas Eve boxes are for sale in our **Superstore**.









Strength and Balance

Our twice weekly sessions held in six extra care settings across County Durham have been hugely popular and of great benefit to the residents taking part.

Participants have become far more confident and steady with one of them losing almost 3 stones in weight since taking part!

> Moved great today, my hands and arms are not as stiff and I feel fitter and stronger!



The 60s music made everyone energetic, I got out of my wheelchair so I could move my arms better!

Mental health occupational therapy service

Age UK County Durham has a mental health occupational therapy service. Our aim is to help you increase your overall mental wellbeing by helping you to be able to care for yourself, reconnect and engage in work, leisure activities and your community. We will work with you to identify your needs and find what is most meaningful to you.

Occupational Therapy is holistic therapy which means we will consider your physical and mental health along with everything else that enables you to participate fully in life. Our staff can instil you with hope and work towards increasing your motivation and confidence, so you feel empowered to live with independence and resilience. Our Occupational Therapists have worked with previous clients to create lasting change in their lives, by helping with

- Motivation to do activities that are interesting and valuable to you
- Increasing your confidence in your abilities.
- Help to organise day-to-day roles and responsibilities of yourself and others in your home, improving daily functioning and relationships
- Finding new routines so you can find balance between selfcare, productivity, and leisure
- Increase the skills needed every day to organise tasks and physically manage your daily life
- Assessing what supports are needed in your home and community

Bereavement support group

For many bereaved people the upcoming holiday season is a particularly difficult time of year. Regardless of how much time has passed, it is only normal that you will think of your lost loved one, and the yearly traditions you once had together.

Meeting with peers in your community can help you to heal and remind you that you are not alone in this experience. We have a monthly bereavement support group in Durham. We meet between 1-3pm at the Belmont Parish Hall. The group is free and open to anyone in County Durham aged 50 and over who has experienced the death of a loved one, regardless of the amount of time that has passed since their loss. The group is confidential and those taking part find comfort and appreciate the space to talk through the challenges of grief.

Dementia therapies

Age UK County Durham is supporting older people and their families who are living with dementia by providing access to better services. Dementia presents a significant challenge to the health and social care services in County Durham. There are approximately 5000 older people registered with Dementia in the County, over 0.9% of the population which is higher than the national average. These numbers of over 65 year olds living with dementia in the County are expected to rise to over 10,000 by 2030.

Age UK County Durham is working in partnership with **Bishop Auckland College** to develop a new and innovative approach to dementia therapy. We are delivering sessions that include MCST and additional activities, engaging the clients both physically, mentally and emotionally. College students plan and deliver a stimulating



programme of arts and crafts, gentle sports and exercise and treats such as hair and beauty exclusively for our client group.

A hot and nutritious lunch is provided by the College's catering students. This project provides our clients with cognitive stimulation, the chance to make new friends and fun filled day out. It also gives the students a chance to grow in confidence and develop their communication skills This approach will also benefit the carers, giving them an opportunity for brief respite.

For occupational therapy, call Paula 0191 374 6569 For bereavement support, call Amanda 0191 374 6570 For dementia therapy, call Amy 0191 374 6562 or send an email to <u>wellbeing@ageukcountydurham.org.uk</u>



Age UK County Durham's Activity Calendar

MONDAY					
What	When	Where	How much		
Tai Chi	Weekly	Shakespeare Hall, North Road	£3.00 per		
	10.30am – 12noon	Durham City DH1 4SQ	session		
New Age Kurling	Weekly	Delves Lane Village Hall	£3.00 per		
New Age Runing	11.00am - 12noon	Delves Lane.	session		
	11.00am - 12100m	Consett DH8 7BH	36331011		
Trinity Lunch Club	2nd Monday of the	Trinity Church	£6.00 per		
	month	Rosa Street	person		
	12noon - 2.00pm	Spennymoor DL16 7NB	person		
TUESDAY	1210011 - 2.00pm	Spennymoor DET6 /NB			
What	When	Where	How much		
			How much		
Dementia therapy	Weekly	Bishop Auckland College	FREE		
	10.30am – 3.00pm	Woodhouse Lane,			
		Bishop Auckland DL14 6JZ			
The Elms Lunch Club	1 st Tuesday of the	The Elms	£8.00 per		
	month	Moorfoot Avenue	person		
	1.00pm - 2.30pm	Chester le Street DH2 3DQ			
Virtual Tai Chi	Weekly	Online sessions with a	£12.00 per		
	12.30pm - 1.30pm	qualified tutor – you will need	month paid		
	5 U	to have a tablet/laptop and	by standing		
		access to your own Wi-Fi	order		
The Old Mill Lunch	3 rd Tuesday of the	The Old Mill	£9.00 per		
Club	month	Metal Bridge	person		
	12noon - 2.00pm	Ferryhill DH6 5NX			
WEDNESDAY	•		•		
What	When	Where	How much		
Gents Breakfast	3 rd Wednesday of the	Café Cenno, Durham Indoor	£3.00-£6.00		
	month	Market, Durham City	per person		
	9.30am - 11.00am	DH1 3NJ	1.0		
New Age Kurling	Weekly	Bournmoor Community Centre	£1.00 per		
	10.00am – 11.00am	2 Rose Crescent	session		
		Bournmoor DH4 6ED			
New Age Kurling	Weekly	St Marys Church Hall,	£3.00 per		
i terri i ge i tarinig	10.30am - 12noon	Easington Village, Peterlee	session		
	, chocain , chocain	SR8 3GA			
The Saxon Inn Lunch	2 nd Wednesday of the	The Saxon Inn,	£9.00 per		
Club	month	1 Saxon Green, Escomb,	person		
Club	12noon - 2.00pm	Bishop Auckland DL14 7SY	percent		
Ramside Lunch Club	3 rd Wednesday of the	The Ramside Hall Hotel	£8.50 per		
Rambide Lunch Olub	month	Carrville	person		
	12noon - 2.00pm	Durham DH1 1TD	Person		
Crafts at The Venue	Weekly	The Venue Community Centre	£4.00 per		
Craits at the venue			session		
Donuontoide Cellers	1.00pm – 3.00pm	Wear Road, Stanley DH9 6LU			
Derwentside College	Monthly on Wednesday	Derwentside College	£8.00 per		
Lunch Club	12.00pm - 2.00pm	Front Street	person		
Dates may vary	term time only	Consett DH8 5EE			

For anyone aged 50+ living in County Durham

THURSDAY	Jaffe an	34/4	l llann mar a b
What	When	Where	How much
Circuits Exercise	Weekly	The Venue Community Centre	£4.00 per
	10.00am - 11.00am	Wear Road, Stanley DH9 6LU	session
Gentle Seated	Weekly	Glenroyd House	£3.00 per
Exercise	9.45am - 10.45am	Medomsley Road	session
		Consett DH8 5HL	
Woodcraft at The	Weekly	Community Shed	FREE
Shed	10.00am - 12.00noon	Charity Superstore Yard	
	and	Mandale Business Park,	
	1.00pm – 3.00pm	Durham DH1 1TH	
Bishop Auckland	Monthly on Thursday	Bishop Auckland College	£8.50 per
College lunch club	12.00noon – 2.00pm	Woodhouse Lane	person
Dates may vary	Term time only	Bishop Auckland DL14 6JZ	
Gentle Seated	Weekly	Delves Lane Village Hall	£3.00 per
Exercise	10.45am - 11.45am	Delves Lane	session
		Consett DH8 7BH	
East Durham College	3 rd Thursday of the	East Durham College	£8.00 per
Lunch Club at the	month	Willerby Grove	person
Peterlee Campus	12noon - 2.00pm	Peterlee SR8 2RN	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
Term time only			
FRIDAY			
What	When	Where	How much
Walking Group	Fortnightly	Betjeman Resource Centre	FREE
	10.00am - 12.00noon	16D Betjeman Close	
	(finish time may vary	East Stanley DH9 6UD	
Bereavement	Last Friday of the month	Belmont Parish Hall	FREE
Support	1.00pm to 3.00pm	Broomside Lane	
Pre-booked		Durham DH1 2QR	
appointments only			e at time of iss

Accurate at time of issue

We are also delivering regular Digital Inclusion sessions, both in group and one to one settings so that you can learn how to use the internet safely and with confidence

Contact us for more information



Activities call 0191 374 6568 Digital Inclusion call 0191 374 6573 Dementia/Mental health work call 0191 374 6562 / 0191 374 6570 Lunch clubs call us on 0191 374 6577

or email us at info@ageukcountydurham.org.uk

Volunteers are always welcome at Age UK County Durham

Can you offer just an hour or so now and then?

Our volunteers work incredibly hard so that we can continue to develop, grow and create new and innovative ways to support anyone aged 50+ living in County Durham

New volunteers are always welcome – we particularly need volunteers to support the following roles:

- Digital Champions to support older people gain confidence when using the internet, you don't have to be a technological wizard, your people skills are much more important!
- Van Drivers driving licence a must! Supporting our charity shops with deliveries and collections
- Retail sorting donations and helping on the shop floor of our charity shops in Belmont and North Road Durham
- Help at Home service are you a bit of a DIY whizz or love a bit of gardening? Our Handyperson service is very popular, particularly so in the warmer months when those lawns need cutting! We're also recruiting volunteers to do home energy checks
- Volunteers to help support warm spaces in various locations for older people who might be worrying about heating their home this winter
- Meet and Greet Volunteers for lunch clubs

If you would like to join us or have a chat about volunteering with us, call us on 0191 386 3856 or email us at info@ageukcountydurham.org.uk

Trustee Profiles Denise Elliott, David Marrin and **Emma Hignett** joined our Age UK County Durham Board of Trustees in 2022



Denise has worked in Health and Social Care for over 43 years.

Through her membership in a variety

of strategic groups, Denise has influenced policy and service development on a local, regional and national level. She has developed and delivered services to support older people in County Durham. Before retiring, Denise was the Head of Commissioning Services at Durham County Council. She was appointed as our Deputy Chair in October 2022. David works as the Strategic Director (South of Tyne) for the charity, Rise North



East which is passionate about improving lives through physical activity.

Born and raised in County Durham, David has worked in the leisure sector for 20 years and has played a key role in helping thousands of people to become more physically active.

Emma has a 30 year career in the UK media industry and divides her time between her PR and media consultancy and a voice over business (she is the voice of London's new Elizabeth Line). She is currently Chair of Governors for St Mary's RC Primary in Barnard Castle.



She brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise in media, public relations and social media and is keen to work with us to ensure that our Charity's news

reaches those who need to know everything about us.



Our **Superstore** and **Hidden Boutique** shops are **bursting** at the seams all year round with fantastic bargains

Are your usual charity shops charging too much? At our **Superstore** we are dedicated to keeping our prices low. So, if you are looking for a Christmas

party outfit for under £10.00? Come and see us.

We have clothing from £2.50, shoes and bags from £2.00 and accessories from just £1.00! You can even treat



yourself to 3 paperback books for £1.00 with the change! We also have bargain stands where all

items are £1.00 and winter coats from only £5.00!

The **Hidden Boutique** really is a hidden gem in our shop at 68 North Road in Durham City.

Prices may be a little bit more, but we have a fantastic range of vintage items that can't be bought anywhere else.

We price to sell, with



something for every budget!

Coming Soon to our Shops ...

- A special area in our Hidden Boutique for children's toys, clothing and accessories
- Pop-up Artisan Stalls in our Superstore and Hidden Boutique for the sale of handmade items.



If you would like to showcase your handmade items, call us on **0191 384 5098**

We've been busy decorating our Christmas windows All items on display are for sale too! Pop in to see us, we'd love to see you



All money raised in our shops stays local, supporting people of County Durham, For more information call us on **0191 384 5098**

Contact us for more information about all our services and activities t 0191 386 3856

e info@ageukcountydurham.org.uk w ageuk.org.uk/countydurham/



Information and Advice

Help to claim welfare entitlements. t 0191 374 6367 e your.rights@ageukcountydurham.org.uk

Help at Home



Staying safe and well at home with friendly and helpful support t 0191 374 6363

e info@ageukcountydurham.org.uk

All donations, legacies etc given directly to Age UK County Durham (not Age UK) are used for the sole purpose of improving and supporting the lives of older people living in County Durham



Visit us on Facebook @ageukcountydurham @ageukCDSuperstore and @ageukCDhiddenboutique

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