

# Newsletter

## Living life later, longer, stronger

### Creative crafting

Crafting sessions at our Betjeman Resource Centre are very popular and are enjoyed by everyone who takes part. We've been painting



'we're like  
a family'

on silk and glass, candle making, felting, quilling and most recently rag rugging a panel to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Everyone gets on really well discovering new ideas and ways to be

creative. All are welcome and you don't need to have done any crafting before, we provide all materials and instruction. If you'd like to join in, give Janet a call on 0191 374 6561



**WE ARE**  
the 'go to' organisation  
for YOU

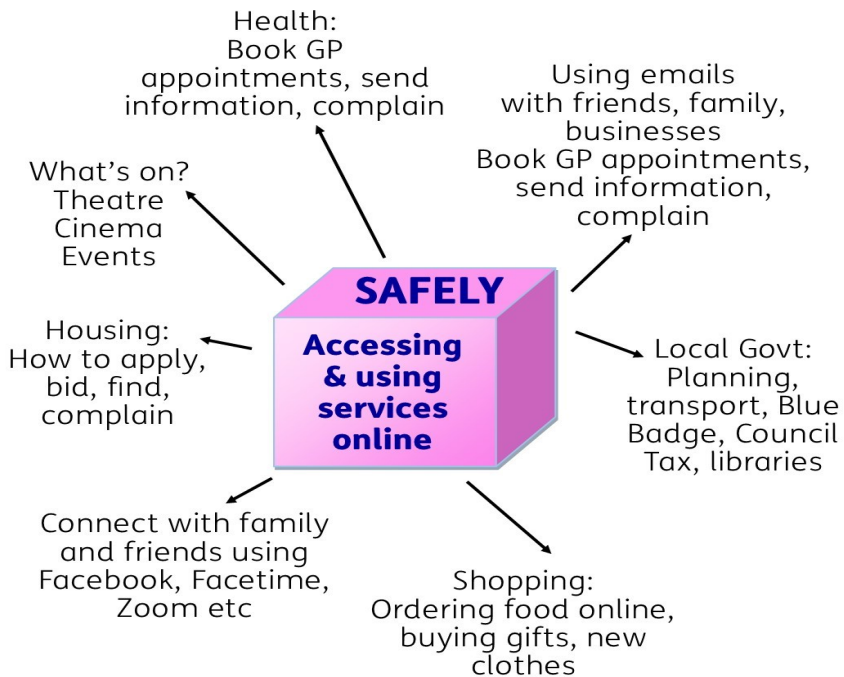


## How to use the internet ... coming to you soon

Our new digital inclusion project will be coming soon to your village hall.

We'll be able to help you learn how to use the internet safely and with confidence. You'll be able to find out how to access services, bank online, order your shopping and get it delivered, keep in touch with family and friends, search for activities using the internet in a safe and secure way.

You'll be able to borrow a laptop, tablet or iPad from us to help you get started



**For more information call us NOW!**  
**0191 374 6568**

## **Age UK County Durham's information & advice service is County Durham's 'go to' advice centre for older people**

We recently helped a 77 year old gentleman who didn't know he could apply for Attendance Allowance. Sadly, he was widowed last year and lives on his own (with support from family living nearby). He has Parkinson's disease and other health issues, which makes managing daily tasks difficult, but he tries to be as independent as possible.

Our information and advice team made a home visit to do a benefit check and complete his Attendance Allowance application. We discovered that his monthly payment for gas and electricity was a massive £206 per month!

We referred him to the Warm Homes Team for a review of his energy costs; they found that he was in credit by over £800 and arranged for £600 of this to be refunded, leaving the remaining amount in credit to offset future energy price rises. They were also able to get his direct debt amount reduced to a more manageable amount. His Attendance Allowance application was also successful (and it was awarded on the Higher rate).

The success of these outcomes have made a massive impact on the clients income overall.

*'The help provided has made a big difference - I am not worried about fuel costs as much and I can spend more*

### **Have you had a recent benefit check?**

Our information and advice service can help you to check your benefit entitlements

**Contact us on 0191 374 6367 or email us at [your.rights@ageukcountydurham.org.uk](mailto:your.rights@ageukcountydurham.org.uk)**

You can also use Age UK's benefit calculator to check your benefit entitlements, go to [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk) and search for their benefits calculator

## Fond farewells to long serving staff

Miriam first joined Age UK County Durham back in 2003 as our finance assistant and over the years has taken on more and more challenges and responsibilities for us.

For the last 3 years, she has been our **Deputy Chief Executive Officer** and now looks forward to retiring at the end of June. Over the last few months Miriam has worked tirelessly to ensure a smooth handover to new and existing staff.



We are really going to miss her and it's going to be strange not having her around, especially when we need someone to sort out cables under desks!!! Miriam has helped steer Age UK County Durham through good times and sometimes some sad and difficult times and has been our mainstay for some time.

We promise we'll keep working as hard as she did to keep Age UK County Durham 'THE' place to come to for anyone aged over 50 living in County Durham who needs help, advice, support, access to activities and services and a friendly warm welcome.



After working for us for 24 years, **Veronica** retired in March this year and was our longest serving member of staff.

Her experience and vast knowledge is greatly missed but more importantly, we miss her smiles, support and kindness.

**Happy retirement Miriam and Veronica  
we wish you both all the very best**

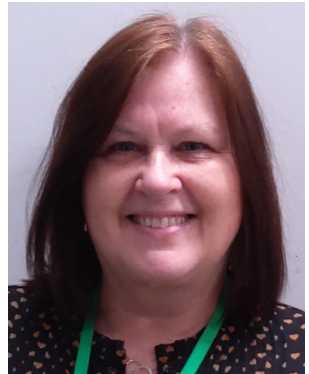
## Welcome to our new staff

During COVID many organisations were not able to carry out their normal activities. Here at Age UK County Durham, we had some experience of this, but we were also very successful in developing new and exiting ways of working and recruited a lot of new staff to continue and develop access to our activities, services and support.

Sara joined our Retail team as a team leader in March this year and she is enjoying her new role with us.

She told us that it's totally different to any other retail work that she has done before but is absolutely loving it.

*'No day is ever the same and time just flies by'*



Hilary joins us in July as our new Programme Manager.

She has a wealth of experience, knowledge and skills in community development and is looking forward to joining us to develop and expand our innovative activities and services.

*'I can't wait to get started and am really excited '*

**Our staff and 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**

## Our volunteers

We celebrated Volunteer Week in June this year by sharing stories and information on our Facebook site and taking part in Durham Community Action's volunteer event in Durham City. Although volunteers week is only once a year, we are always celebrating the wonderful work of our volunteers.

Alan and Ros volunteer at our monthly lunch club and prize bingo at our building in Stanley. They keep busy helping with everything from setting up the room, getting cutlery and plates ready, serving fresh hot tea and coffee, to tidying away after everyone has been fed. Alan told us he enjoys meeting people, *'the volunteering gets me out and about—I enjoy it and feel like I am really making a difference'*.

Ros also helps with our volunteer shopping service and said, *'I like talking and listening to stories from people's lives. I feel like I am helping people who can't get out of the house. I enjoy it as much as the people who use the service. I have made more friends through volunteering than anything else I've ever done.'*



Thank you once again to them and our many other fantastic volunteers, their help is invaluable.

**If you would like to offer  
some of your free time and  
support our amazing local  
charity, we would love to  
hear from you  
You can call us on  
0191 374 6560**



## Help at Home



Our Help at Home provides a reliable and tailored service to support you or your loved one to remain safe and happy at home

We can help with small gardening & DIY tasks\*:

- Changing light bulbs
- Putting up curtain poles
- Hanging pictures and mirrors
- Putting up shelves
- Weeding and clearing
- Pruning
- Hedge trimming
- Planting
- Grass cutting
- Shopping (£5.00 per shop)

**Give us a call to see how we can help you  
us to discuss your requirements on  
0191 374 6363**

We offer a trusted service that will go the extra mile to make sure you are not taken advantage of

(\* DIY & Gardening tasks charged at £15 per hour)

## You are not forgotten, we are here for you

Times are still very tough, but you are not forgotten, your health and wellbeing matters to us at Age UK County Durham.

Whether you're feeling worried, low or just a bit 'out of sorts', we can help you to feel better.

Call us on 0191 386 3856 and ask for our wellbeing team or send an email to

[wellbeing@ageukcountydurham.org.uk](mailto:wellbeing@ageukcountydurham.org.uk)



## Activities

Woodworking production at our Community Shed increases

Due to the success of the community shed woodwork group at the Age UK County Durham Superstore, we added another session on Thursday afternoons and the places were snapped up immediately.



*Volunteer Tony with Jean and Bob building a Bee Hotel*

The Community Shed group provides a friendly meeting place for people to meet, chat and make a variety of woodwork items such as planters, bird feeders, bee hotels, hedgehog boxes, log sheds etc. We then display them for sale in our Charity Superstore, which is right next to the shed.

The new group got on with each other immediately and are now working together as a great addition to our morning sessions.

**If you would like more information about our community shed, call us on 0191 374 6568**

## Tea Dance for the Queen

At the beginning of June a Tea Dance was held by the City of Durham Parish Council in Durham Town Hall to honour of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The funds raised were donated to Age UK County Durham. Our Chief Executive Robyn Holmes



attended the event, *'It felt wonderful to see everyone coming together in such a warm and welcoming environment. I thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon and our charity is very grateful for the continued support of the local council and residents alike.'*



## Platinum Jubilee Celebration

On Wednesday 1 June 2022, Age UK County Durham celebrated the Queens Platinum Jubilee with our lunch club at Stanley. We shared a lovely afternoon tea together, made our own crowns, enjoyed a fun quiz and played some traditional games, such as shove ha'penny and bagatelle.



Everyone had a great time and we had a special guest who brought her crown along

If you know anyone in the Stanley area who might enjoy our monthly lunch club, please contact us on 0191 374 6577



*'The spread was pretty good, I enjoyed it, it was something a bit different. It was so nice to enjoy a couple of hours our and have a laugh. It was very good.'*



# Mental Health Week 9-15 May 2022

For Mental Health Week we set up pop-up Natter Benches in Barnard Castle, Chester le Street, Seaham and Stanhope. Staff were on hand to listen, chat, natter and laugh with members of the public who stopped by to see us. It was lovely to meet people face to face and to be able to offer our companionship, support and advice.



Even though the weather was a bit chilly (and sometimes wet), everyone had a great time and came back to work feeling that just by being 'there' they had made a huge difference to others.

We were warmly welcomed at all our Natter Benches. A local café in Seaham gave staff a hot drink, which was very much appreciated and we chatted with local people who stopped to see what we were up to and we were able to share more about our work and what we can do to help others.

**At some point in our lives all of us will experience a sense of loneliness (and for some this has been exacerbated by the pandemic), yet there is still a stigma around loneliness. We are here to help and we are just a phone call away on 0191 386 3856**



## Lifestyle Matters

We are holding informal weekly sessions to improve your health and lifestyle. They can help you to discover new and different ways to boost your confidence and wellbeing



Being more aware of yourself and your surroundings can make a huge difference to your health and wellbeing. We're planning a wide variety of activities, including, walks, seated exercise, access to information and advice, friendly talks and discussions

**Starting on Friday 15 July 2022 at our  
Betjeman Resource Centre, 16D Betjeman Close,  
East Stanley DH9 6UD every week between  
10.00am and 12.00 noon**

If you'd like to join in, please call us on  
0191 374 6569  
or send an email to us at  
[wellbeing@ageukcountydurham.org.uk](mailto:wellbeing@ageukcountydurham.org.uk)

**Bereavement support** If you would like more information please email at [wellbeing@ageukcountydurham.org.uk](mailto:wellbeing@ageukcountydurham.org.uk) or ring Amanda at **0191 374 6570** for a friendly chat.

**Dementia support** If you would like more information please email at [wellbeing@ageukcountydurham.org.uk](mailto:wellbeing@ageukcountydurham.org.uk) or call for more information on **0191 374 6562**

**Mobility support** If you would like more information please email at [wellbeing@ageukcountydurham.org.uk](mailto:wellbeing@ageukcountydurham.org.uk) or call Paula and Laura on **0191 374 6569**

# Emergency Aid Project

We are deeply concerned about the dramatic increase in the cost of living and the all too familiar phrase of 'heating or eating'



Forecasts suggest many older people are going to struggle in the forthcoming months, in particular bouts of extreme weather, where they have the dilemma of affording to keep warm and eating well. Our project will help older people get through these difficult months and we need help in achieving this.

Many thanks to Jeanette and Kelly at Tesco Durham City who provided us space to help kick start our project.



Jeanette got in touch and offered us a space in the foyer of Tesco to launch our campaign of collecting donated non-perishable foods and long-life items, as well as providing useful information on the services and activities we provide. The donated goods will be included in our emergency

aid packs ready to be delivered to older people in the county who need our help.

The event was a huge success, which was only made possible by the kind donations made by the general public who never fail to surprise us with their generosity. Thank you also to the other stores who have been in touch to help and we'll update our progress in following newsletters.

## Falls Prevention—strength and balance

Our strength and balance sessions in residential care homes are a great success. Residents take part in weekly exercise activities which are designed to improve their mobility and confidence. Our tutors use music and a variety of exercises that are suitable for all abilities and ages.

*‘I feel good and have managed to lose some weight too’*

*‘The music made me feel young’*

*‘Really good today, the 60’s music made me energized’*

**Help reduce waste and support Age UK County Durham. Funds raised in our superstore are used for the benefit of older people living in County Durham**

**Reduce Recycle Reuse**

## Staying cool when it’s hot

It’s lovely when summer gets into full swing, the days get warmer and sitting out in the sun is a good way to boost your vitamin D levels. But remember to keep cool and, drink water, wear a hat, use suncream—or sit in the shade.



If it gets really hot indoors, keep your curtains closed during the day and wear lightweight clothing so you don’t overheat

## Hidden Boutique

At the Hidden Boutique, we focus on selling only the best of our donations, we have limited space so quality over quantity is our goal. If you're looking for a designer bargain, we are the place to go. We have a great selection of Ladies vintage and designer clothes, jewellery, shoes and bags, a dedicated Men's Emporium selling designer clothes, vinyl, artwork and man cave items.

We also sell quirky, rare and antique items. This is not your average charity shop; we aim to stand out from the crowd on North Road by focusing on purely higher end stock and provide a boutique feel to charity shopping.

**We're open Monday to Saturday  
9.00am to 5.00pm  
at 68 North Road, Durham DH1 4SQ**

You can follow us on Instagram and Facebook, simply search [ageukcdhiddenboutique](#) for Instagram and Age UK County Durham Charity Hidden Boutique for Facebook

**For more information you can contact us on  
0191 814 3973**



# Charity Superstore

Our Superstore is an Aladdin's Cave of bargains for all the family with proceeds going to help older people in our own community. Our store is packed with treasures that are priced to sell. We have a massive selection of homewares including:

- Kitchenware, bric-a-brac
- PAT tested electrical items
- Bedding, curtains and cushions, nursery/baby items
- Furniture for every room
- Children's clothing (including 3 items for £1 baskets)
- Footwear and accessories
- Vinyl records with hundreds to choose from (all priced at 2-for £1) Paperback books and all children's books are 3-for £1
- Soft toys, boxed games and playsets are priced from 50p!
- Ladies and Men's clothing with prices starting from just £1



We regularly refresh our stock constantly so there's always new bargains to be found! Delivery is available for a charge on request for large items



The Superstore is run with the help of our team of fantastic volunteers. We accept donations during opening hours. Please call before bringing items especially if you have a large donation or are unsure if it's something we accept, we don't like turning donations away but due to our convenient location we are often at capacity so it's best to ring before driving to our store. We also offer a local collection service for larger items at a small charge.

**Pop into the store or call us on 0191 384 5098**

**We're open Monday to Saturday**

**9.30am to 5.00pm at Unit 26A Calder House, Mandale Park,  
Belmont Industrial Estate, Durham DH1 1TH**

You can follow us on Instagram and Facebook, simply search **ageukcountydurhamsuperstore** for Instagram and **Age UK County Durham Charity Superstore** for Facebook

## **We provide a wide range of services and activities designed to meet the needs of older people in the community**

- **Arts & crafts**
- **Bereavement** support groups
- **Bike Library** FREE bike loan service
- **Dementia** therapies & activities
- **Digital inclusion** access online services safely
- **Exercise classes** for all abilities
- **Falls Prevention** for strength & balance
- **Gents breakfast** clubs
- **Healthy lifestyle** support
- **Help at Home** Gardening & DIY tasks
- **Information and Advice** – free & impartial advice from qualified workers



- **Intergenerational work**
- **IT courses** using iPads, tablets and laptops
- **Lunch clubs** across the County
- **Mental health** & wellbeing support
- **Occupational therapy** to improve mobility
- **Mindfulness** sessions in extra care settings
- **Pre-frailty** support
- **Scam awareness**
- **Volunteering opportunities**
- **Woodcrafts** in our Community Shed

We are an independent local charity and have been working with communities throughout the County, for over 45 years, helping and supporting people aged 50+

We have a dedicated team of staff and volunteers helping us to deliver our services and activities

# Could you benefit from Homeshare?



**Together, Householders and Homesharers share home life, time, skills and experience.**

Homeshare organisations bring together people with spare rooms with people who are happy to chat and lend a hand around the house in return for affordable, sociable accommodation.

**“It’s given me a new perspective on life and even though I hate to admit it I do need a bit of extra help round the house - I’m not getting any younger!”**

Householder, London

**Homeshare UK** is a vibrant network of likeminded individuals who are passionate about delivering Homeshare in a safe and effective way. We also help anyone who wants to start a Homeshare service with bespoke advice, training and consultancy. We are partners with Homeshare International, supporting a network of professionals worldwide.

All of the organisations in our network carefully vet, match and oversee each unique Homeshare arrangement and work within the Homeshare UK Good Practice Guide and Quality Assurance Framework.

**“It’s just really reassuring knowing that someone is looking out for mum.”**

Daughter of a householder

**Find out more about Homeshare at the Homeshare UK website or contact our friendly team:**

- 📞 0151 227 3499
- 🌐 [www.homeshareuk.org](http://www.homeshareuk.org)
- ✉ [contact@homeshareuk.org](mailto:contact@homeshareuk.org)
- 🌐 HomeshareUKNetwork
- 📧 @homeshare\_UK



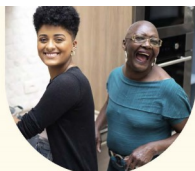
Registered Charity Number (England and Wales): 1095562  
Registered Charity Number (Scotland): SC042743  
Company Number: 4511426  
VAT number: 302 6201 63



## If you would like to find out more about Homeshare contact them on 0151 227 3499

**“Homeshare with Wendy has been a transformation decision for me. It has enhanced my independence and gave me the opportunity to live in a city that I didn’t think I’d be able to stay in after graduating.”**

Homesharer, Oxford



**As a householder**, you could need a bit of help around the house or garden, a lift to the shops or just someone to have a meal with and chat to.



**Homesharers** might be new to a city, or studying and looking for a safe and affordable home.

### Homeshare Support

Each Homeshare match has the back up of their local Homeshare organisation, which selects and approves them and individually matches their interests, lifestyle and hobbies. They complete security and householder checks and provide ongoing support to both people in the match.

Homesharing is not a rental service so a Homesharer doesn’t pay rent. Instead household bills are split fairly. The Homesharer and Householder will both pay a fee to their local Homeshare organisation to cover the costs of their service and support.

Every Homeshare organisation is a member of Homeshare UK, the UK network for Homeshare, supported by Shared Lives Plus, the UK network for shared living.

### Homeshare is coming to the North East & North West

There are currently no Homeshare schemes in the North East/ North West, however with the award of £1.2 million of funding, we are now in a position to develop services within the area. If you would like to find out more, please contact:

**Catherine Ambrose** – Homeshare UK Service Manager:

- 📞 07478 450 060
- ✉ [catherine.ambrose@sharedlivesplus.org.uk](mailto:catherine.ambrose@sharedlivesplus.org.uk)

**Emily Cutter** – Homeshare UK Service Coordinator NE:

- 📞 07585 536 138
- ✉ [emily@sharedlivesplus.org.uk](mailto:emily@sharedlivesplus.org.uk)

### Why choose Homeshare?

- For householders, it helps you stay independently at home for longer
- For sharers, it offers affordable accommodation at a time of high rent and record housing shortages
- It gives you and your loved ones peace of mind, with an overnight presence and a safe and friendly home for both people

## Care Connect

Durham County Council's Care Connect Scheme has a special summer offer available from 1 June 2022 to 31 July 2022. If you quote the code SUMMER 22 when applying for Care Connect, the installation cost is free (saving you £33.99), this does not include any weekly charges in relation to the service.

For more information, contact the Care Connect Team on 03000 262 [195/](tel:03000262195) [care.connect@durham.gov.uk](mailto:care.connect@durham.gov.uk) or via their website [www.durham.gov.uk/careconnect](http://www.durham.gov.uk/careconnect)



The flyer features the Care Connect logo at the top left. The main headline reads '24/7 support at the press of a button'. Below this, two bullet points list the services: 'Monitoring and response across County Durham' and 'Support for vulnerable people of all ages to stay independent at home'. A yellow starburst graphic on the right contains the text: 'Summer offer quote code SUMMER22 for free installation, worth £33.99\*'. A small note below the starburst states: '\* Offer runs from 1st June - 31st July, weekly charge still applies.' The bottom section, titled 'Contact us:', provides the phone number 03000 262 195, the website [www.durham.gov.uk/careconnect](http://www.durham.gov.uk/careconnect), and the email [care.connect@durham.gov.uk](mailto:care.connect@durham.gov.uk). It also includes social media links for Facebook and LinkedIn. The bottom right corner features the Durham County Council logo.

## Curious Arts Festival 1-24 July 2022



Curious Festival is an award-winning LGBTQIA+ Arts Festival, and they are really excited about this year's programme! They have events based in locations across the North East of England, in venues including BALTIC, Northern Stage, Sage Gateshead, Queen's Hall Arts (Hexham) and Live Theatre, for varying age groups.

If you would like to know a little more about the Festival, contact them via their Facebook page or their website [www.curiousarts.org.uk](http://www.curiousarts.org.uk)

## Don't give up ... keep on trying

We know it may be difficult getting through to your GP sometimes, but please do keep trying. Your health and wellbeing is important. Don't put off calling for an appointment, the quicker you can talk to your GP the better it is for you, treatment and peace of mind will help you to feel more in control. Our digital inclusion project will be able to help you register and book appointments online via your GP's website



# Contact us for more information about all our services and activities

t 0191 386 3856

e [info@ageukcountydurham.org.uk](mailto:info@ageukcountydurham.org.uk)

w [ageuk.org.uk/countydurham/](http://ageuk.org.uk/countydurham/)

## Information and Advice

Help to claim welfare entitlements.

t 0191 374 6367

e [your.rights@ageukcountydurham.org.uk](mailto: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](mailto: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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