

EngAGE

Age UK Dacorum's
Quartely Magazine



Highlights:

*The Flowers Allotment Project
A Year of Zoom!
Good Neighbours Picnic*





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Message from our Chief Executive



WELCOME TO OUR FIRST EDITION OF ENGAGE!

Our aim is to produce a quarterly magazine to keep everyone informed of activities being provided by Age UK Dacorum and many of the voluntary organisations we work with.

It has been a tough year for us all, particularly with us losing many of our friends and clients to Covid -19. With the regulations now easing we hope to get back to a more normal life, although we realise this will take some time. For regular updates, please visit our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram social media pages, or visit our website. Alternatively, you can call one of the telephone numbers found inside this newsletter and we can inform you when activities and clubs are re-opening.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported Age UK Dacorum during the pandemic.



LOCKDOWN UPDATES

Clubs

During the lockdown, we had to close all our clubs. For previous attendees we have kept in contact via regular telephone calls, zoom meetings, garden visits (when possible) and offering a range of activity packs to keep people busy. However, there is nothing better than meeting up with friends for a chat. We are therefore delighted to be in the process of re-opening our clubs. This is going to take us some time as we are working closely with our partners, Dacorum Borough Council and Hertfordshire County Council, to put in place plans to open these in a controlled and safe way.

We are in the process of compiling lists of people who are interested in joining one of our clubs and will contact them when clubs re-open. To register your interest and be informed when a club near you is opening.

Please contact: clubmanager@ageukdacorum.org.uk or call 01442 259049.

Befriending

During the lockdown loneliness and social isolation increased, particularly as we were unable to make face to face visits. As we were unable to make these visits, people were contacted by regular telephone calls or Zoom meetings to have a chat. As lockdown eases our befriending home visits will recommence. However, we have also seen the importance of telephone calls and Zoom meetings, especially for people who are housebound. We will continue to provide these services.

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/dacorum/our-services/telephone-club/>

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/dacorum/our-services/befriending/>



Carers

Carers have required extra support during lockdown because they have had to care for their loved ones without the normal support networks and respite which was previously available. As a result, we are now supporting many carers who are in crisis. We are currently supporting carers with the following activities: phone calls, Zoom meetings, garden visits and activity packs. However, plans are in place to begin some small gatherings.

For more information, please contact Rachel on:
[**carers@ageukdacorum.org.uk**](mailto:carers@ageukdacorum.org.uk)



Volunteering

Without the help of our amazing volunteers, we could not provide the vital support that older people and their carers need. This has been made even more evident during the pandemic as volunteers helped deliver shopping, emergency food parcels, prescriptions, made regular phone calls and helped transport people to their vaccination appointments. As we re-open, the need for volunteers has never been greater. Click the link below to see a range of volunteering opportunities which we hope will be of interest to you.

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/dacorum/getinvolved/volunteering>

Fundraising and how we aim to use these donations

We are grateful to the many organisations who have supported us during the pandemic donating PPE equipment, lemon trees, blenders and Easter eggs. Financial donations from many individuals and businesses have helped us sustain many of our current services whilst also developing new ones. We are always looking for ways to improve our current services and to expand the ways in which we can help.

During the past year and a half we have developed many new services, including: Bereavement and Covid-19 Support Service, Flowers allotment project, Information, Equipment and Technology Centre, Chat Tables, Keep In Touch Online Club, Nutrition Club, Technology Home Support Services, Walking Football, Walking Netball and Healthy Living Walks!



A Year of ZOOM!

Ruth Wright, Hertwise Locality Worker and Memory Loss Coordinator, shares with us her year on Zoom with clients from our Memory Loss Support Group.

Our club, for those with memory loss and their carers, went online during lockdown and we have now completed our 52nd session – a whole year of Zoom. It has been challenging, especially in the early days with helping clients connect to Zoom, getting their sound and cameras on, only for dogs to bark, phones to ring and the Sainsbury or Amazon delivery person to arrive! But we persevered! Along the way, we've had a lot of fun and the clients are very supportive of each other.

We have done quizzes, singing, played bingo, and enjoyed chair-based exercise routines. A few times, clients even got up and danced together – it was lovely to watch. There was a game we played every week. Each week we had a letter and clients brought 2 items beginning with that letter to show – from an Apple for A to a Zebra for Z.

Now that face-to-face clubs are opening, we are putting down our iPad's and giving ZOOM up. It worked, we had fun, but we are all definitely ZOOMED out. A cup of tea together in the same room is so much nicer. See you at the Clubs!
Ruth Wright - Hertwise Locality Worker and Memory Loss Coordinator Age UK Dacorum





The Big Knit is back! We need your help to knit or crochet as many little hats as possible! Your creations will adorn bottles of Innocent Smoothies and best of all, help fund the fantastic work we do at Age UK Dacorum. For each of our be-hatted smoothies sold, we receive a 25p donation. Our target is 4,500 hats!

Visit <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/dacorum/activities-and-events/the-big-knit/>



OUR CARERS WEEK

On Monday 7th June, to celebrate Carers Week Age UK Dacorum and Hertwise Carers Support provided a joint session for some of our Memory Support Carers Group members.

With recent relaxations in rules, it was wonderful for some of our Memory Support Carers Group members to visit a local Scout Camp Site, in celebration of Carers Week. Providing an opportunity to meet face to face once again.

The chance to enjoy a walk with friends whilst experiencing the beautiful woodland was great fun, with the bonus of some glorious weather on the day. And for some, finishing with a nice cuppa.

It was a real pleasure seeing everyone and a big thank you to the team at Phasels Wood for making it happen.

Accessing the natural outdoors environment has benefits for everyone, including those living with memory loss.





We also held an Entertainment session on Tuesday in celebration of Carers Week. We gathered online to enjoy a music session led by one of our members. We went through the decades with some well-known songs, had a fun quiz, and laughed along to some poetry. Zoom wouldn't be zoom without a few hitches and the words "You are on mute!" none of which affected our fun. Thank you to Margaret who played and led the singing.

Many of our unpaid carers have been on call all day and night without a break during the Coronavirus pandemic, isolated from support. Unsurprisingly, they are now exhausted and separated further from our community. This year it is important that we recognise and mark the incredible work that family, friends, and neighbours do as carers.

For more information of our current services supporting those living with memory loss please contact Ruth on MLCoOrdinator@ageukdacorum.org.uk 01442 259049.

For information on how we can support carers please contact Rachel on carers@ageukdacorum.org.uk or 01442 259049.



New! Bereavement & Covid-19 Support Service

Age UK Dacorum now offers a Bereavement & Covid-19 Support Service.

At present, the Bereavement and Covid-19 Support Service is a telephone service due to social distancing restrictions. In the future, we hope to provide one-to-one consultations and group sessions in a local venue.

This free telephone service provides a local support network for those who need emotional and practical help. This resource is available to all, gives you the opportunity to talk to someone, express your feelings and be given guidance.

When someone dies, particularly someone close to us, it can be devastating and life changing. Grief is often conflicting and can bring an overwhelming mixture of emotions.

Understanding these emotions can be difficult.

Turning to a listening ear can provide a helpful and meaningful pathway towards getting the right support.

Direct line: 01442 507880

Available from 10 am - midday

• Monday • Tuesday • Wednesday • Thursday
Free & Confidential



Age UK Dacorum have teamed up with England Netball to bring Walking Netball to those who live in Dacorum.

Walking Netball is a lower impact version of the game we all love. It has been designed so that everyone can take part and maintain an active lifestyle, regardless of age, fitness level or if you are recovering from an injury.

The sessions are designed to be fun and flexible; they will include playing mini-games and drills, warm up and cool down sessions and friendly matches. This club also gives people the opportunity to socialise, meet new people and give those who feel isolated an outlet. Sessions are held every Monday evening at the Knox-Johnston Sports Centre, Berkhamsted HP4 3BG courtesy of The Berkhamsted School.

Click the link to find out more:

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/dacorum/our-services/walking-netball/>

The Flowers Allotment Project

Sunnyside
Rural Trust

Age UK Dacorum have partnered up with Sunnyside Rural Trust, who have kindly donated an allotment plot in Northchurch.

We are in the process of clearing and organising the area, building a summer house, growing seedlings in our polytunnel and making the area accessible to everyone!

Our aim is to offer our clients a range of outdoor activities and experiences, including: the opportunity to grow and pick a variety of fruit, vegetables and flowers, art classes, gardening clubs, or relax and chat in the summer house.



A big thank you to all the volunteers who are helping us with this project, and we'd also like to thank everybody who has kindly donated gardening equipment, furniture, flowers and seeds. We'd also like to thank The Berkhamsted School for the kind donation of benches, the gardeners in Gadebridge Park for the hyacinth bulbs and to Rayden Solicitors for our plaque.

We are working hard to prepare the site, we hope to open soon!



Photos...



Pride Month: Healthcare for older LGBTQ+ people

Healthcare services have a duty to provide care that is fair and equal. However, due to past encounters many older members of the LGBTQ+ community fear discrimination and poor treatment, this in turn jeopardises their health and they are more at risk.

Health and public services are increasingly used to supporting LGBTQ+ people of all ages and backgrounds. Every surgery should have a policy on equality and diversity and any information shared with an NHS staff member should be kept confidential. There are strict laws on privacy and confidentiality, as well as the Equality Act's protection against discrimination.

Healthcare workers will sometimes ask you about your sexuality or gender identity, which can feel intrusive and personal, but they are only asking so that they can provide a better service for you. It is still your choice whether you disclose this information but if you do not, you might not receive the full service you require.

If you feel like you have not been treated fairly and equally and that you have not received good quality service from the NHS, then you can make a complaint. There will always be a complaints procedure in place, this will explain who to contact and they will investigate and inform you of their conclusion.

If you are not happy with the way in which your complaint was dealt with, you can ask the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) to investigate it further, this needs to be within a year of the incident. For support in making a complaint you can receive guidance from the Independent Health Complaints Advocacy to help with letters and meetings. Every council must make this service available.



The NHS have increased efforts to address LGBTQ+ health inequalities. The “Pride in Practice” programme, created by the LGBT Foundation, works with GP practices, dental surgeries and pharmacies to ensure LGBTQ+ people have access to inclusive healthcare.

A recent Stonewall survey (published November 2018) stated that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT+) patients face inequalities in their experience of NHS healthcare. The survey estimates that one in five LGBT+ people are not out to any healthcare professional about their sexual orientation when seeking general medical care, and one in seven LGBT+ people have avoided treatment for fear of discrimination. This is why the NHS Rainbow badge initiative was created, the badge is a reminder that you can talk to staff about who you are, be open about your identity and how you feel.



Trans people who disclosed their trans status to their GP, dental practice and optical practice were **18% more likely to say these services met their needs.**

LGB people who disclosed their sexual orientation to primary care services were **18% more likely to say those services met their needs.**

To help ensure complaints about mistreatment, discrimination and misunderstandings do not happen, Age UK have created a booklet called “Safe to be me”. This booklet is for anyone working or volunteering in health and social care or the voluntary sector who would like to support older people who are part of the LGBTQ+ community feel safe.

To read the booklet click on the link [“Safe to be me”](#).

Sources: Age UK, NHS & LGBT Foundation



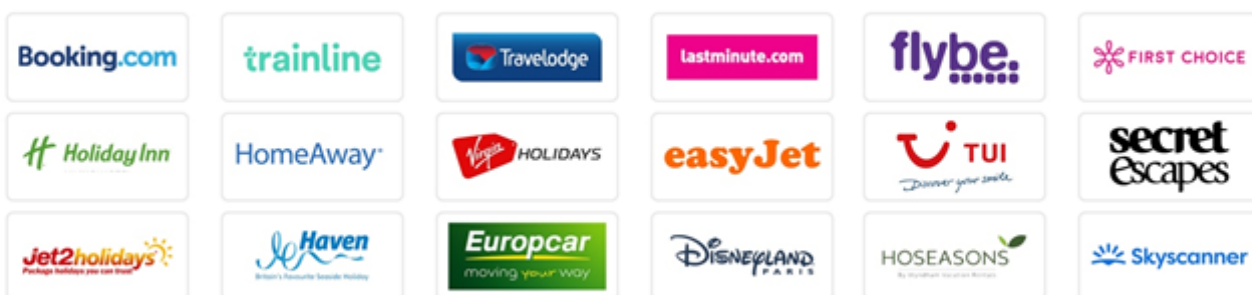


Help us raise FREE donations

if you're planning any
getaways this year

AGE UK DACORUM

You **Shop**. 4,400 sites will **Donate** to us. For **Free**.



Find us on [easyfundraising.org.uk](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk)
or get the App



Volunteer Spotlight

"When the first lockdown down hit us in March 2020, I fell in the group Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) so I was trapped within my property alone! It all of a sudden dawned on me that this is how some 'more mature people' must feel day in and day out, especially if they don't have family members or friends that are hands on.

As you get older, lots of elderly people lose loved ones and friends. This prompted me to contact Age UK Dacorum to see if there was a possibility to befriend a person living on their own, as all I could offer due to the pandemic was a phone call. The process went through quite quickly as for my professional role I have to have an enhanced DBS check regularly.

I was paired up with a 92-year-old lady, who is as sharp a knife. She has all her faculties about her, in fact she socialises more than me, due to living in sheltered accommodation within one of Dacorum's schemes. Over the past 6 months, we have built a close friendship and talk at least once a week, for roughly 30 mins to an hour. We are hoping in the near future to both meet up face-to-face, as we've both had our two vaccinations weeks ago.

This pandemic has highlighted how damaging being socially isolated can be and how it impacts your mental health and wellbeing. It's good to give back to the community, so if you have a spare few minutes to make yourself and someone else happy - befriend a person as it brings you so much joy and companionship."





Hospital Aftercare Service

Age UK Dacorum are working in partnership with local NHS trusts to support patients when they are discharged from hospital.

This new service contacts recently discharged patients to find out if they would benefit from a range of support services.

They are then triaged by Community Navigators and referred to frontline providers who can support with meals on wheels, cleaning, key safes and benefit checks.

This pilot service, which was due to cease at the end of March, has been re-commissioned and extended to cover both Watford and Lister Hospitals.

Good Neighbours Picnic Lunch

Boxmoor Good Neighbours is a scheme launched by residents of Boxmoor to support older neighbours in the community.

The scheme aims to help older Boxmoor residents who are unwell, lonely, disabled, facing a crisis, or need temporary support and do not have family or a good neighbour to turn to.

As part of the Good Neighbours Scheme, Boxmoor Good Neighbours and The Boxmoor Trust held a picnic lunch at the barn on Thursday 10th June.

The neighbours were served lunchboxes, teas and coffees and enjoyed socialising in the warm weather whilst overlooking the beautiful views of Bourne Valley.

They also enjoyed guest speaker Dennis Furnell a trustee, naturalist, and broadcaster, who talked about the valuable ecological work undertaken by the Box Moor Trust.



A close-up photograph of an older woman with short, wavy grey hair, wearing glasses and a teal patterned top. She is smiling and holding a dark smartphone to her ear with her right hand. The background is a soft-focus indoor setting with light-colored walls and a window.

We need your support

If you'd like to help us support older people living in Dacorum, please make a contribution today.

DONATE NOW WITH
JustGiving™

 **Thank you for** 
your generosity.

A close-up photograph of an older woman with short, curly white hair, smiling warmly and looking slightly to the right. She is wearing a gold hoop earring. The background is softly blurred, showing another person in a white top.

Leaving a Legacy of kindness

A gift in your will could help give older people in Dacorum someone to turn to. You can make sure we are always there for those who need us for years to come.

*To find out more please call **01442 259049** or email **adminofficer@ageukdacorum.org.uk**. Alternatively visit our website **<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/dacorum/get-involved/donate/leave-a-legacy/>***