

Newsletter

Welcome from our CEO - Nicky Flynn

Times are really challenging for the charity sector. With reduced funding across Devon County Council and Exeter City Council, we are maximising all opportunities to raise income, to make sure we are still here to support the over 50s in Exeter in the years ahead.

We want to help you prepare for getting older, to plan for this next exciting chapter. Don't forget, Age UK Exeter is for *younger* older people too! We completely appreciate that getting older can often be a time of stress and worry, having to deal with caring responsibilities or a reduction in independence but that's not always the case. It can sometimes be a time of increased freedom, emancipation, and an opportunity to take up hobbies or travel.

We are totally reliant on donations and fundraising. Last quarter we had over 10,000 contacts with older people, and demand for our services has doubled in the last year. There are lots of ways you can help us make a difference to older people across Exeter.

Volunteering: Your time can make a real difference. From regular weekly activities to one-off events, we have lots of rewarding opportunities for volunteers.

Donate: Over 50% of our funds are directly raised from donors, sponsorship, and fundraising. Please visit our website to discover more ways to get involved. www.ageuk.org.uk/exeter

Enabling and Home Support Service - By Karen Brooks

Our enabling service provides visits to over 200 clients in Exeter and the surrounding villages, Monday to Fridays, delivering around 1500 hours support a month.

If you need help, or know someone who does, we can help with a variety of tasks including shopping, housework, light gardening, getting to appointments, carer respite, social outings, decluttering, and lots more!

All our Home Support Workers are paid members of staff, who are dependable, caring, and sensitive to clients' needs. We can offer 1:1 support to people over the age of 50, in their own homes, helping them to remain living independently by providing visits on a regular or ad-hoc basis.

Enabling Outings for those in Residential Care - we can offer an outing or companionship for those living in a care home. Visits can be arranged on a regular or ad-hoc basis, Monday to Friday.

If this service might be of help to you or someone you know, or if you would like more information, please contact us on 01392 455606.





Respite Day Care: Sycamore Days

- By Nuala Gear

I run the Sycamore Day Centre with my colleagues Julie and Sally (above!). **This service provides flexible respite options to support those who care for someone or for those living on their own who would like company and additional support to enhance their days.** Sally is our newest team member but has been a volunteer with us for many years.

The Day Centre is open every Tuesday and Friday. Due to the success of the service, we are opening on Mondays after Christmas, as there is such a need for this type of service in our community.

We start at 10am, have tea/coffee and biscuits, enjoy a good chat then either complete a group crossword puzzle, do drawing, or a jigsaw puzzle. Table tennis is popular too! We then have a very tasty lunch; fish and chips on Fridays! Then in the afternoon we usually have a good singalong.

We also have exciting regular guest visits. For example, a singer with his guitar and a local museum curator who brings artefacts for us to look at and talk about. We also have a couple of llamas coming to visit us early next year, from a local farm!

Hospital to Home Service

- By Debbie Palmer

Our Hospital to Home service, provided by Debbie and Jules, is part of the Acute Care of the Elderly team, in the Royal Devon hospital. They have had a busy couple of months, picking up 99% of patients leaving the acute care ward. That's 350 patients who were offered follow on support by our service!

Debbie and Jules support people and their carers following a short stay in hospital and offer advice on a variety of topics, or just have a listen to any complaints or concerns. From getting care and support at home to getting out and about and meeting new friends. Debbie said, 'It is good to finally be having conversations with people about new groups and activities starting up in their local area. Being able to work with people to better their lives is very rewarding'.

Handyperson Service

- By Andy the Handyman

It can often be difficult and expensive to find someone to do those small jobs that you used to do yourself, such as hanging a curtain rail or fixing a dripping tap. Our Handyperson service can help with these jobs. **These services offer older people extra help with small practical jobs to make their lives easier and safer around the home.**

All work is carried out with safety in mind. You'll be greeted with a smile, a personal approach and understanding and the time to understand how this service can make things easier for you.

If you have some jobs in mind, or even a list however big or small, give us a call on 01392 202092.

**Could YOU be a
Handyperson
volunteer? Call
01392 202092**

Information and Advice Service: FAQs - By Chris Gage

Q. What is Age UK Exeter's Information and Advice service?

A. A free of charge service providing information on advice on a range of topics including benefit checks and applications, advice on social care, tradespeople, local services and many more.

Q. What kind of advice can Age UK Exeter *not* advise on?

A. Age UK Exeter cannot give legal or financial advice as these are regulated; we can however signpost to agencies who can help.

Q. How is the information and advice given?

A. We can provide information and advice via the telephone, email, or face to face with an arranged office appointment. We also can post out or email our AUK information guides which cover a range of topics.

Q. When is Age UK Exeter's information and Advice service open?

A. Mon - Wednesday (8am to 4pm) & Thursday (8am to Midday) - Office appointments here at the Sycamore Centre can be arranged for Monday to Wednesday

Q. How many people have accessed the information & advice service?

A. In the last 12 months Age UK Exeter Information & Advice service have helped over 600 clients. In this period, we have identified and help apply for DWP benefits totalling 75k.

Dementia Support Services: Budding Friends - By Penny Unitt

Budding Friends is our social gardening and art therapy group for people living with a dementia and their carers This service continues to thrive with up to 20 members attending each week. We have been meeting indoors since October and are currently working with Ellie from Photobook Project. In this project, the group take photos on a disposable camera, documenting their shared experiences at the group such as colour, movement, light, and nature. A couple of the sessions include creative activities such as flower pressing and making a 'box' of thoughts - ideas and flower pressings to send to the children in the Freefall group at the Phoenix. They, in turn, have made a box for us, bringing a wonderful intergenerational element to the experience. In December, we made Christmas wreaths, visited Killerton House dressed for Christmas, and had our annual Christmas party.



Volunteer Visitors Required

Voluntary visiting is a lovely opportunity to get to know an isolated older person for around an hour a week. **We would love to recruit some more volunteers.**

Time for you supports carers by providing a volunteer to sit with and chat to the cared for person, so the carer can pop out for a coffee with a friend or read a book for an hour or so having peace of mind. Please contact 01392 455611 for more information.

New Staff Member! Ellen Holmes

Just to say 'Hello' to everyone and a massive thank you to you all for an amazingly friendly welcome to the team and Age UK Exeter!!

My roles are: Carers Support Officer, Volunteers Coordinator and Service Assistant.

My priorities will be to support carers, and recruit volunteers - as well as working with all of you amazing existing volunteers. I really look forward to meeting and working with you all.

Christmas Events 2023

Age UK Exeter and Exeter Foodbank Christmas Church Service



Christmas Wreath Making with Leaf Street



The Big Noise Choir chose us as their charity this year. Thank you to our craft group for selling their amazing creations alongside our bake sale.



Thank you to Watermeadow Grange Care Home for the delicious mince pies!

Coming up at Age UK Exeter:

Venue: The Sycamores, Mount Pleasant Road, EX4 7AE

Over 50s Forum

Have your say and help shape services for those 50+ across Exeter.

Next session 25th January 12-1pm.

Digital Workshop

Age UK Exeter, in collaboration with Sky, is offering a digital tech support workshop. The Sky team can support you with any questions about emails, Wi-Fi, new devices and more!

Next session 31st January, 10am-12pm.

Sycamores Lunch Club

Come along and meet new people or catch up with old friends and enjoy a lovely lunch. Lunch served at 1pm.

Fortnightly Thursdays from 11th January 2024.

Sycamore Singalongs

Join our singing group with songs from the 40s - 80s.

Fortnightly Wednesdays from 3rd January 2-3:30pm.

Tai Chi and Chi Gong

Feeling Stressed? Seeking calm? Join us in our gentle exercise classes, seated or standing.

Every Wednesday 10:30-11:15am.



We hope to raise £10,000 from our gala event, to go towards our free services such as volunteer visiting, dementia and carers support and information and advice. Tickets out now on Eventbrite or call 01392 202092.



Follow us on social media @AgeUKExeter or call us on 01392 202092 for more updates on forthcoming events.