

# agematters

Issue 47

Summer 2019

## Celebrating 2 Years of Dementia Support

Countywide Hertswise services have been commissioned for a third year running!

## Men in Sheds

A local widower talks about finding comfort in new friendships

## “You saved my life!”

How one woman found solace and support from our I&A service

## Nutrition in Later Life

Advice from a local Nutrition Support Worker

## Bridging the Generation Gap

How we've been working with local schools and youth groups

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# Moving house?

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Tel: 01727 838 255

# Summertime



## Welcome, readers!

I am thrilled to present you with another summer issue of *agematters*, packed with useful information and insights into our services, as well as other support available to the people of Hertfordshire.

The promise of warmer weather isn't the only thing we're celebrating this summer. We've been working hard to develop stronger roots in our community so that we can better deliver services that reflect the needs of our local older people – and I'm delighted to see such a positive response to our efforts!

We've built relationships with local schools and youth

groups (page 8), meeting wonderful young people who were eager to support and learn from the generations who came before them. We've also seen our relationships with other local organisations go from strength to strength, most noticeably through our partnership work on the Hospital & Community Navigation Service (page 14 & 26) and the Hertswise Dementia Support Service (page 16 & 17).

Focusing on our community is becoming increasingly important – we want everyone to be aware of the challenges of later life because ageing is something that will affect each and every one of us!

If you would like to know how you can get involved, contact our Community Engagement Team (see page 06).

Wishing you all a bright and joyful summer!

Warm wishes,



*Deborah Pawiagua*  
Chief Executive

# Meet the Community Engagement Team

Over the past few years, our charity has undergone many changes intended to streamline and transform our services for local older people. We're here to improve later life in Hertfordshire, which is, after all, relevant to everyone in our community - we will all experience the challenges of ageing, and many of us will support loved ones or peers in their old age. That's why we've formed a Community Engagement Team (CET), to focus on reaching not just the older people we work with, but the communities around them.

Our Team Leader, Roz, is responsible for guiding all of CET's efforts as well as coordinating both prospective and existing volunteers.

Ellie, our Fundraising Officer, works with local supporters, raising money to help Age UK Hertfordshire deliver their services across the county. The Digital & Marketing Lead, Aoife, uses our website, social media and other



digital tools to ensure that information and news about our organisation is not only easily available, but reaching the relevant audiences. We've also recently welcomed Interim Marketing Assistant, Danni, who will provide invaluable support to the CET team over the next few months.

Though quite a new unit, the CET have been off to a flying start, working hard to get to know Hertfordshire's public and spreading information about the support that our charity can offer. One focus has been building relationships with local primary schools, inspiring children to think about the contributions of the older generations that have influenced their lives today, and encouraging them to consider what kind of support our local older people might need. The students, in turn, have made admirable fundraising efforts and even spent some time at our 10-3 Clubs getting to know some of the clients we support. *For more on intergenerational work, see page 8.*

The team have also been conscious of supporting the efforts of other organisations who help people in our community. For example, we've taken part in the annual Pancake Race in aid of Home-Start Herts, who provide emotional and practical support to local families in need. Our team have also spent their lunch breaks throughout March going on walks with the goal of reaching 10,000 steps total to raise money and awareness for Cancer Research UK.

This summer, CET look forward to celebrating National Picnic Month, held in July, by inviting clients and supporters alike to host picnics in aid of Age UK Hertfordshire to help us raise funds, awareness and a sense a community.

**If you would like to volunteer for Age UK Hertfordshire or participate in a fundraiser, please visit: [www.ageuk.org.uk/hertfordshire/get-involved/](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/hertfordshire/get-involved/)**

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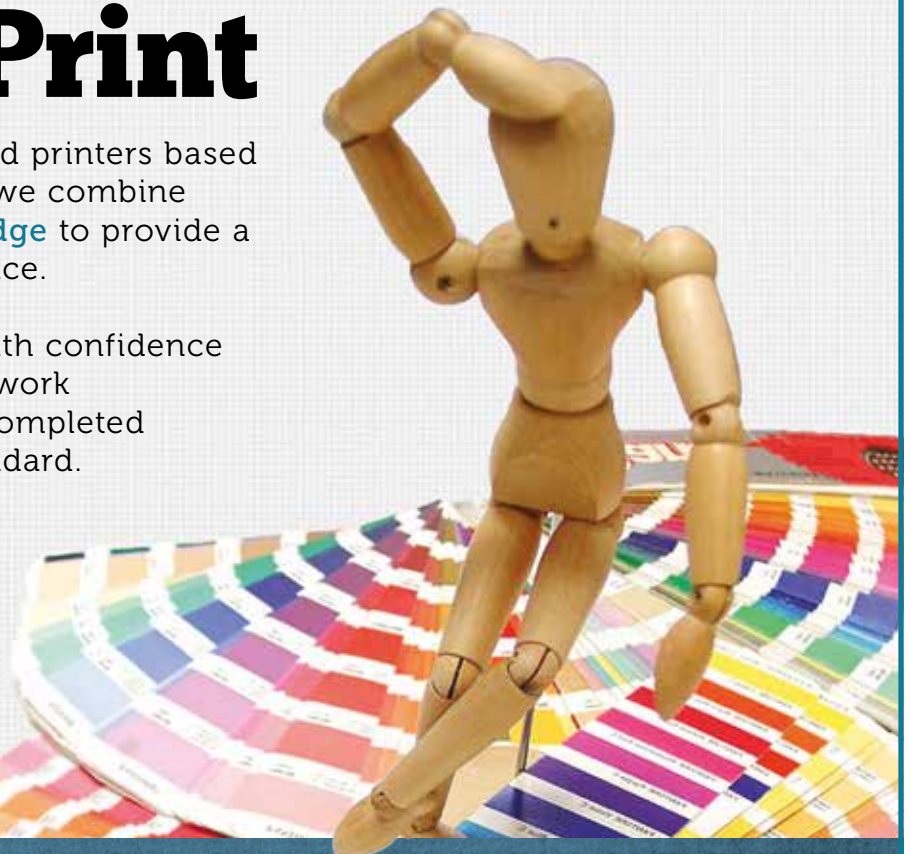
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# Bridging the Generation Gap

By Carla Johnson & Ellie Males

**W**e have been working hard to develop relationships with local schools and colleges in the hope of enriching the experiences of our clients through intergenerational work. We're thrilled by the positive response from our community so far!

**Broxbourne Church of England School** nominated Age UK Hertfordshire to be their focus charity for 2018/19.

The students have worked extremely hard on different fundraisers, including a 'Christmas Jumper and Cookie Day', an 'Elf Raffle', and participated in our 'Slip into Slippers' day. The group also attended Highgrove Court 10-3 Club so they could meet some of the older people that would benefit from their fundraising.

The students took part in a Junior Dragons' Apprentice Challenge which involved keeping notes about their fundraising

plans, designing a poster, and carrying out a presentation to the 'Super Dragons'. Broxbourne School were awarded 'Best Presentation' and 'Overall Winners' of the event, which was very well deserved – congratulations to the Fishing Kings!

**The National Citizen Service (NCS)** students conducted research into Age UK Hertfordshire and the services provided. They visited two of our 10-3 Clubs to interview clients and hear about their likes, dislikes, childhood memories, and changes that they have experienced during their lifetime. They also designed and delivered sessions to entertain clients at both clubs using their research as the basis for each session. The students created two films to showcase their work and delivered these to Age UK Hertfordshire Board members, and at our AGM.

**“The students have talked about anything and everything with us. We have had a good natter about all sorts.” (Club member)**





Queensway 10 to 3 club in Royston have enjoyed visits from a group of nine Year 4 pupils from **Therfield First School**. The pupils have joined our clients for games such as giant snakes and ladders, and have enjoyed discussing childhood experiences, favorite toys and favorite foods - a special learning experience for all ages! The clients are looking forward to a return visit, where they will play bingo and sing some of their favorite songs.

The Clitheroe Health and Wellbeing Centre have been busy working with the students at **Parkgate School**. The relationship between the Centre and the school has flourished throughout its 11 year history, and began when Kerry James (club supervisor) reached out to improve relationships between the local young people and the local older generation. Recent projects between the school and the Centre have included a Remembrance Project marking the 100th anniversary of the end of World War One. This culminated in a joint performance from the pupils and clients in November. The performance was a product of the two generations sharing and exchanging thoughts on War. It was a very special project for all involved, as reflected by Head Teacher Sarah Pipe: "The play with its mixture of acting, singing and dancing was one of the most life affirming activities we have ever taken part in. The pupils, parents, staff and clients came together and produced a

magical commemoration of the end of World War One. There wasn't a dry eye in the hall."

The most recent project has been an art project which included porcelain painting, decoupage and portrait paintings.

"The children love being part of the project," says Sarah. "They get a chance to really talk to older people, as they create art pieces at the same time. The children and adults build strong relationships over the weeks and look forward to seeing each other and having a good chat!"



**Westfield Academy** in Watford invited our clients from the Clitheroe Centre to a party to combat the January blues. The school put on an excellent afternoon tea with sandwiches, cakes and endless cups of tea. Students had lunch with the guests and were able to chat to them to find out more about their lives when they were younger and how Watford used to be years ago. After lunch, there were a range of entertainment activities from some fantastically talented students who sang solo or in the school choir, and musicians who played the drums and the violin. A game of bingo and a raffle rounded up the afternoon.

*“I enjoyed the arrangement of getting everybody together, the help that all the students gave and how they mixed in so well, the arrangement of the musical sessions made me realise how much schools have changed since I was there. Thank you for everything!”*  
(Club member)

One of the teachers who helped run the event said: "It was an absolute pleasure to support the afternoon tea and have an opportunity to meet, greet and foster links with members of the broader community. It was rewarding to hear our guests accounts and insights into Watford from across the times".

Chalmers Court are looking forward to continuing the relationship with the **Reach Free School** and are especially excited about the Afternoon Tea and Gymnastics display they are attending later in the year.

The Blackwood Court 10-3 Club are in the early stages of organizing a pen pal summer program with **Northaw Primary School**. This will be a great way of clients and pupils learning more about each other's generation via paper and pen!

**If you know of a school or youth group that would like to work with us to continue our intergenerational programme, please contact fundraising@ageukherts.org.uk.**



# Finding Friendship

By Danielle Smith

## *with Men in Sheds*



**L**osing a loved one is difficult – even more so when it leaves you living alone, and adjusting to a life without your partner.

John, 76, lost his wife in July 2018 and he started to become lonely living on his own. He had images of his wife on the walls of the house and her clothes scattered across the bed - everything just reminded him of her. A month had gone by since her passing and his daughter mentioned to him about the Men in Sheds that runs in the centre near him.

“The first day I came to Men in Sheds, I felt a bit uneasy as

I did not know what to expect. I then thought ‘Get yourself together!’ and I walked in”.

Since that first day, John has been amazed by the amount of support and the kind generosity of the staff and the clients that attend.

“On my first day at Men in Sheds I met Alan, who I didn’t even know, and we got a little model plane out, and he started to help me make it. Then I took it home to finish it”.

John has been coming to Men in Sheds twice a week since August 2018, and has enjoyed doing all sorts of activities such

as plane modelling, playing dominos and just sitting down with a cup of tea, having a chat with the other men and Clitheroe staff members, “When I came the second time, I felt like part of the group because everyone is just so welcoming, which has done me the world of good since my wife passed away.”

John explained that there is one important thing he will take away from the Men in Sheds project:

**“Every morning when I get up on a day that I have to come here I think ‘Oh I’m going to the Sheds today’, and I get all excited and look forward to it!”**

Men in Sheds is held at the Clitheroe Health and Wellbeing Centre in South Oxhey and runs on a Monday, Thursday and Friday 10am-12pm.

To find out more please visit:

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/hertfordshire/activities-and-events/clitheroe-health-and-wellbeing/>



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# Volunteers: Here for You

By Danielle Smith



**W**hen you have suffered from a fall or have recently been discharged from hospital, it's reassuring to know that there are caring people who will happily support you in your own home. We had a chat with \*Celia, one of our Hospital and Community Navigation Service volunteers, about her role and why she loves volunteering.

## Hi Celia. Tell us a bit about yourself!

I retired about 5 years ago from my job as a bookkeeper, and I told my husband that even before I retired I always wanted to continue doing something. I loved the idea of volunteering and helping out.

## What is your volunteering role?

I currently volunteer for the Hospital and Community Navigation Scheme and have been doing so for about three years.

## How long have you been volunteering with Age UK Hertfordshire?

Since I retired five years ago, I have been volunteering with Age UK Hertfordshire. I started my volunteering journey as part of the Visiting Scheme for two years, and then I moved to help in another department. I usually volunteer one day a week for one to two hours.

## What made you want to volunteer with Age UK Hertfordshire?

I really wanted to help older people in Hertfordshire. Before my mother-in-law got Alzheimer's I used to go out for walks with her, so this is probably where my urge to volunteer started.

## What have been some of the highlights of your role?

There are quite a few things that are great. I am currently working with a

lady who is very nervous and doesn't like going far from home. I usually go to a local coffee shop with her, as it is not too far. One day I asked her if she would like to go to a restaurant further away and she said: "Oh I don't know... If you go with me I think I can make it." When we then got back home she said: "I've done it, I've done it!" That made me so happy and pleased because I knew she couldn't have done it on her own.

## What has been one of the hardest parts of your role?

In my current volunteering role, I am always creating bonds with people, and although it is amazing, I am sometimes only with that person for three to four weeks. It is hard to leave that person at the end. Even though it is sad, I know that there is another person who also needs my help.

\*Name has been changed to protect privacy

For more information about how this service could support you, please contact our East and North Herts Team on: 01438 285300 OR West Herts Team on: 01932436649



# When Eleanor Met Lizzie.

## *A volunteering story*

By Rosalind Wyllie



**E**leanor started volunteering for Age UK Hertfordshire in her 70's. She joined our Visiting Scheme in North Herts and for fifteen years she visited older people in Royston "I met some lovely ladies through volunteering," she says. "My last match was with a man, and that was really interesting! Then when I decided to stop volunteering, my son suggested perhaps I should have a volunteer come and visit me - that way I could still enjoy being part of the scheme."

Trudie Harrington, the Team Leader for the Visiting Scheme, matched Eleanor with Lizzie. "I was very surprised when Lizzie turned up, as she didn't look like your usual volunteer," says Eleanor. "But we get on wonderfully, she's very entertaining and we often chat for hours."

"I love chatting with Eleanor," Lizzie agrees, "I'm always interested in hearing about her experiences and she has so many fascinating stories about her life, growing up on a farm in Dorset and working as a nurse in the 1940's when the NHS was first established. We talk about all kinds of things and we laugh all the time."

Eleanor has two children, and her son lives close by, so she does have support most days of the week, but says that the weekends can still sometimes be lonely. "I like my own company, but I also like knowing that I will have company again by Monday."

Lizzie decided to be a volunteer for the Visiting Scheme after seeing a poster and realising that she would be able to put her love

of people and ability to chat to anyone to good use. "I used to visit my elderly neighbour and chat with him and I worked for the Post Office for most of my life, so I'm used to talking to people from all different walks of life."

Eleanor also uses Age UK Hertfordshire's *Help in The Home* service, and has a Home Helper who visits her once a week. "At first I didn't think I needed anyone, but my Home Helper is a treasure - she's so nice, and she helps me so much. Trudie also helped me to organise my Attendance Allowance as well, so really Age UK Hertfordshire have made a massive difference to my life."

Lizzie agreed: "It's a wonderful scheme, it's indispensable to some people."

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# Happy 2nd Birthday, Hertswise!

By Aoife O'Driscoll-Leung

## Here's to a 3rd year of countywide dementia support

**The Hertfordshire partnership is celebrating the success of its second year, offering community dementia support services throughout Hertfordshire.**

On March 1st 2019, Hertswise celebrated not only its second birthday, but the secured agreement of a further year of funding from Hertfordshire County Council.

This additional funding allows Hertswise to continue helping many of the 14,000 people in Hertfordshire who are living with dementia. Hertswise is delivered by a partnership of nine local organisations including Carers in Herts, HILS, Hertfordshire MIND, Age UK Dacorum, Howard Cottage, North Herts Ethnic Minority Forum, POHWER, Herts Carelines and Herts Help. Together they are supporting more than 3,000 people per year in the community through group activities and 1-1 support in people's homes.

"We are ecstatic to be going into our third year," says Adam Thapar, Project Manager for Hertswise. "As a partnership of voluntary organisations and social enterprises, we have a lot of support, advice and information to offer the people of Hertfordshire – especially those living with dementia, memory loss, and mild cognitive impairments, as well as their loved ones and carers. As a team, we are looking to bring more innovative ideas and positive experiences

to our project, and will continue to work with other organisations across Hertfordshire to better reach people in need of our support."

Age UK Hertfordshire's CEO, Deborah Paniagua, says: "Being commissioned for a third year is a testament to our thriving partnership and brilliant team of staff and volunteers! On behalf of the Hertswise partners, I would like to thank Hertfordshire County Council for their invaluable support, giving the partnership another year to realise our mission – to improve the lives of local people affected by dementia."

**“We are proud of all that the Hertswise service has achieved over the past two year, ”**

**says Dr Sabrina Robinson, Head of Health & Wellbeing at Herts Mind Network.**

**“It has been wonderful to see the great work and commitment of all involved and the positive impact this service has on the community. We look forward to continuing this partnership into a third year and being part of its continued growth and success. ”**

HILS Community Service Manager, Samantha Hasset, says: "I'm delighted to be celebrating the two-year anniversary of this incredible service, which is helping to connect



communities and build their capacity to nurture people living with dementia. All credit goes to our wonderful team and the carers they work with for the everyday successes we have the privilege of seeing. It is fantastic to hear how everyday people can be empowered to develop something life-changing and, with a little help, sustain it themselves in the long-term. It has been a pleasure to work alongside our partners and colleagues, who are just as dedicated to changing people's lives for the better. We look forward to continuing this journey and exploring new ways to make a positive impact."

**For more information about availability in your area, please call HertsHelp on 0300 123 4044 or visit [www.hertswise.org.uk](http://www.hertswise.org.uk)**

**Hertswise also provide Dementia Awareness Training for businesses, organisations or individuals. Please contact us on the number above to find out more.**



# Inside Hertswise

By Danielle Smith

## Dementia Hubs



**L**earning that you have dementia is one thing but deciding how to approach your diagnosis is another. Many people deal with dementia in their own way, be it going to group activity sessions, staying close with family for support, or focusing on health and exercise. All of these approaches are helpful to keep the mind busy, and to turn dementia into a secondary concern albeit for a few hours or so.

Trying new things is something that can broaden your mind, and along the way you could discover new talents! This is something that the team at Hertswise hope to achieve at our Hertswise Hubs. The Hubs run Monday to Friday



in different locations all over Hertfordshire, led by a wonderful team of Locality Workers.

Victoria, a locality worker in North Hertfordshire, says: "I've been doing this job for about a year and a half now, and I feel very strongly about social care and giving back to the community. I hope that if my mum or dad are ever in that situation, or if I am in that position, that there will be someone there to help, like at the Hub."

Although they have a great team, the Hubs are really made into a community by the lovely people who attend them. Karina and Roy have been going to the Hertswise Hubs for just over a year now. Roy has been living with Dementia and Parkinson's disease since 2014, but unfortunately has seen a further decline in his health this year. Karina said: "One of the best things about coming to these sessions is the enthusiasm Victoria has when she runs them,

and of course meeting and talking to new people is great for Roy."

Janice and Roger are a couple that go to the Hubs every week and have been very grateful for these types of sessions. Janice has had dementia for three years now, since her fall, which left her with a fractured skull and forehead. One of her favourite things to do in these sessions is "drawing and using her brain." She said: "I don't tend to forget things often, only about once every 2 months but when I do forget it is really annoying." Even though she did have a few reservations about coming to the Hub for the first time, now she would not look back as it has helped her and her husband to enjoy a few hours together where dementia takes a back seat.

**For more information about Hertswise call HertsHelp on 0300 123 4044 (Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm) or visit [www.hertswise.org.uk](http://www.hertswise.org.uk)**

# United Against Dementia in Hertfordshire

## *Alzheimer's Society Services Manager Mel Herlihy discusses some of the support available in Hertfordshire*



### **What is dementia? Is it the same as Alzheimer's?**

Dementia is the 21st century's biggest killer, with someone developing it every three minutes, yet a few years ago we didn't talk about the condition with the frankness and openness that we do today.

Dementia is a condition which describes a set of symptoms that might include memory loss, mood changes or problems with communication and reasoning. The most common form of dementia is Alzheimer's Disease, which is a disease of the brain. However, there are dozens of other types of dementia. Alzheimer's Society is committed to ensuring the rights of people affected by dementia are recognised and until the day we find a cure, we will be here to support anyone affected by any type of the condition.

We've come a long way but too many are still facing dementia alone without adequate support. In Hertfordshire there are about 14000 people with dementia. We urgently need to find a cure, improve care and offer help and understanding for people affected.

### **How can I avoid getting dementia?**

Dementia is caused by diseases of the brain and it isn't an inevitable part of ageing. More than 40,000 people with dementia in the UK are under 65. However, there are steps we can all take to reduce our risk of developing the condition such as not smoking, having some regular exercise and eating plenty of fruit and vegetables.

### **What help is available to people with dementia and their carers?**

We want everyone affected by dementia to know that whoever you are, whatever you are going through, you can turn to Alzheimer's Society for support, help and advice. Locally, we work with a numbers of providers, including Hertswise and Admiral Nurses, as well as offering one to one Dementia Support for those that have just received their diagnosis as well as ongoing support.

You can contact the Hertfordshire office of Alzheimer's Society on 01707 378365, our national helpline on 0300 222 11 22, or get in touch via [alzheimers.org.uk](http://alzheimers.org.uk)

### **What difference does support make?**

We regularly receive positive feedback from people who have used Alzheimer's Society's local support. For example, one person said:

"Like many other carers, I was thrown into this role not having any experience whatsoever. To know someone was on the end of a phone to support me gave me the strength to carry on."

### **What can I do to help?**

Alzheimer's Society is urging everyone to unite against dementia. We rely on thousands of volunteers, who give their time to provide local support. We are always keen to hear from people who might be able to spare a few hours on a regular basis, join our Dementia Friends programme, or fundraise.

#### **For further information...**

Contact the Hertfordshire office of Alzheimer's Society on 01707 378365, our national helpline on 0300 222 11 22, or visit [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

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## A Hertfordshire Picnic

B	I	L	P	R	Y	L	I	M	A	F	H	F	M
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MEMORIES

GRASS

SHARING

SANDWICH

FAMILY

FRUIT

NAPKINS

LAUGHTER

BASKET

WOODS

LEMONADE

PARK

SUNSHINE

SUMMERTIME

TEACAKES

FRIENDS



4		9						5
				6			2	
6	2	1		3	7	8		9
7	5	4	1			3		6
2		8			9	5	1	4
3		2	6	9		4	7	1
	4			2				
1						2		8

## Quick Sudoku

*How to play*



Each **column** must contain all numbers 1 through 9, and no number can be repeated in the same column.

Each **row** must contain all numbers 1 through 9 and no number can be repeated in the same row.

Each **block** must contain all numbers 1 through 9 and no number can be repeated in the same block.

*To check your answers, see page 30.*

# Local Businesses Get Involved!

By Ellie Males

**W**e're always keen to work with businesses in Hertfordshire, and over the last year we've been lucky to have the support of a variety of local firms who want to give something back to the community as well as give their staff the opportunity to volunteer for us.

## Prestige Finance

**Prestige Finance**, who are based in Bushey, are supporting Age UK Hertfordshire and have recently organised an Easter fundraising day. They have also been volunteering at our Clitheroe Health and Wellbeing Centre. This has included participating in activities with the clients such as quizzes and exercise.



**“We all have thoroughly enjoyed our days there and want to go back again.”**  
- **Carlie Chandler, Collections Team Leader**



## ReAssure

**ReAssure**, a pension company in Hitchin, gave their time to support Hitchin's Girton Court 10-3 club. During a recent session, they made tea served with cake that they had baked. On a typical visit, they chat to the clients, play games and take part in activities such as seated yoga. ReAssure's knitting group have also been busy knitting hats for the Innocent 'Big Knit'.



**“It really is a lovely opportunity to engage with the older people. Simply being a new friendly face and someone new to talk to put a smile on their faces. It was such a rewarding experience.”**

- **Rachel Pautard, People and Engagement Team.**

“I did a quiz with them for Halloween, I'd certainly have them as my Phone-a-Friend! I've loved my Friday mornings there.”  
- Penny Taylor, ReAssure employee.



**Starbucks at the Harlequin Centre, Watford**, selected Age UK Hertfordshire to be their charity throughout December. They displayed our volunteering postcards and sold Age UK Hertfordshire pin badges.



**Cuffley Manor and Cooperscroft Care Homes** hosted a Community Christmas Gathering. The day was filled with activities including wreath and card making and a quiz for residents and visitors. Members of the U3A, Police, and Northaw Primary School also attended.

**“We supported Age UK Hertfordshire because we both work with older people and no matter where they are, older people sometimes need to be looked after. The event was to invite people from the community to tackle loneliness and to invite them to enjoy a day of activities.”**

- **Viktorija Stanciukaite, Community Development Manager**



# A Big Thanks!

By Ellie Males

## More Fundraising Thank You's!



**In the past year we have worked with many companies and individuals and would like to take this time to thank each of you for all your amazing dedicated hard work!**

Peter helped to raise funds by running a raffle. Lyn Wilkie, Activities Coordinator said: "Our residents and the other volunteers were so enthusiastic and put so much careful work into knitting the hats. The residents who took part (who are mostly in their eighties or older) wanted to contribute to supporting other older people in the local community."



**Santander** are long-time local supporters of our Blackwood Court 10-3 Club.

**“It’s heart breaking to hear how lonely the clients can feel. This may be the only social interaction that they have all week.”**

**- Suzie Ricotta, Santander Branch Director**



**Tesco** have supported Age UK Hertfordshire in many ways. The Bags of Help grant programme has funded a number of Active Ageing projects. Alongside this, Tesco Baldock, Potters Bar and Stevenage allowed us to visit their stores to carry out a bucket collection and raise awareness of our winter campaign during December and Tesco Hatfield donated a hamper to use in an Easter raffle.

Thank you to **Jan Flowers** who has used her crocheting skills to make some fantastic creations including dolls, llamas and dogs. These were raffled off to raise money for Active Ageing and the Clitheroe Health and Wellbeing Centre.

Thank you to **Louise Casey** and Angela Smith who ran a stall at the QEII during December selling toys and decorations knitted by Louise’s mum. They raised £111 for Age UK Hertfordshire.

Thank you to **Brighterkind’s Highfield Care Home** residents, staff and visitors for knitting 401 little hats for the Innocent ‘Big Knit’. Some of the residents haven’t knitted for years, so it was a great way to reintroduce them to one of their past hobbies. The sound of clicking knitting needles has been a regular feature in the home; resident Grace 95, has been knitting all hours, averaging 8 bobble hats a day! Twins Joan and Marie who used to work at Highfield Care Home also joined in, and even non-knitters like resident

Thank you to the Tuesdays @2 **Broxbourne Knitters** who have continued their support, knitting squares for crochet blankets, which will be distributed to vulnerable older people across Hertfordshire.

Finally, thank you to the **Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation** for their ‘Supporting Groups and Organisations Grant’ which continues to support our North Herts Asian Club to enjoy the Vaisakhi festival.

We’re so grateful to all the businesses that are helping us, and are always keen to make new connections, so if you’d like to chat more about how you can get involved then please get in touch by emailing **fundraising@ageukherts.org.uk** or calling **01707 497972**.

# Poetry Corner



## The Five Barred Gate

If I look over what shall I see –  
A field of earth, a meadow, a tree?

I looked through the bars  
as the gate was so high  
And a vision of wild flowers  
then met my eye  
Poppies so red, daisies so white,  
yellow of buttercups,  
cornflowers bright.

Among the tall grasses  
they flourish with ease  
The farmer had left them  
for nature to please  
And all of this I saw through  
the bars of a gate  
What made me look?  
I think it was fate!

*Mrs Susan Harnden, aged 100*



# Fonthill House short & long term stays

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Pictured above left to right Dr Louisa Waites GP, Caroline Bishop Director of Nursing and Mei McIvor Physiotherapist



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# Nutrition & Hydration in Later Life

By Aoife O'Driscoll-Leung

## An interview with Nutrition Support Worker Lin Dixey

**A**s we get older, many of us find that our lifestyles and even appetites start to change – but does this mean our diets should change too? We spoke to Age UK Hertfordshire's Nutrition Support Worker, Lin Dixey, for advice on maintaining a healthy diet in later life.

### What does 'Nutrition' mean and why is it important?

'Nutrition' is the process of consuming food and absorbing the nutrients. Good nutrition remains just as important as we get older as it is throughout our lives. A healthy balanced diet can give us energy, help maintain a healthy weight, help with our balance and assist our bodies in healing processes.

### What does 'Hydration' mean and why is it important?

'Hydration' is the process of consuming and absorbing water, which is essential to the proper functioning of our bodies. Becoming dehydrated puts you at risk of health problems such as constipation, dry skin, urine infections, tiredness, dizziness and headaches. To

stay adequately hydrated, it's recommended that you drink about 8 glasses of fluid a day, which can include not just water but juice, tea, coffee and other drinks.

### What small changes can be made to improve nutrition and hydration?

If you're underweight you can try 'food fortification' to add calories and nutrients to your diet. This could mean adding skimmed milk powder on top of your regular milk, or introducing a side of fruit to your morning meal. You could also get into the habit of keeping a bottle of water or juice on hand throughout the day; one small change like this can make a huge difference to your wellbeing.

### What are the most common misconceptions about nutrition and hydration?

One common misconception is that diet matters less as we age, but really it's as important as ever - good nutrition can alleviate many health issues associated with ageing. Some people also limit drinking throughout the day

to avoid constant bathroom trips, but this puts you at high risk of dehydration which can cause a number of unpleasant side effects like headaches and constipation.

### How do our nutritional needs change as we get older?

As we get older we may become less active, and it's common for our appetites to decrease - in which case, it can be useful to eat little and often rather than three large meals. Other factors associated with ageing (such as isolation and dementia) can affect our motivation or ability to prepare daily meals. If you or a loved one are struggling, look out for solutions like lunch clubs, community meals on wheels, or home care services.

*Lin works with the Hertfordshire Community Trust, who provide practical and emotional support to people in Hertfordshire who need help managing their health. If you'd like to learn more about the service, visit: [www.ageuk.org.uk/hertfordshire/our-services/home-and-hospital-support/](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/hertfordshire/our-services/home-and-hospital-support/)*



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today  
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 Hertfordshire  
ageUK

# “You saved my life!”

*One woman’s high praise for our Information & Advice team*

**M**ary called Age UK Hertfordshire looking for advice on her finances. She was employed, but was signed off sick due to ongoing health issues. She had received her last sickness payment and was surviving on £30 per week. She had no other income, no savings and lived alone with no additional support.

Emma Wood, one of our Information and Advice Coordinators, checked Mary’s details and advised her that she was entitled to her state pension and had been for a number of years. Mary was shocked, as she had not realized. Emma also advised her that given her health issues and disabilities, she may also be entitled to Attendance Allowance, a disability benefit for people of state pension age and over. Emma then arranged to meet with Mary to support her with the forms that she needed to complete.

Once they met, Mary opened up and admitted that she was in arrears of nearly £31,000 on her home and that she was living without heating or hot water. Her boiler had broken down several years before, and she had no money to pay for repairs. Due to this, her whole house had damp and mould throughout. Her health had suffered, and she became so ill the previous year that her friend had taken her in and let her live with her for a few months while she recovered. Her mental health had also been affected, but she was at

a loss as to what to do. Mary felt as though no one would understand how things ended up this way for her and that she would be judged.

Emma advised her to confide in her GP for further support. Emma spoke to Mary about making a referral to Adult Care Services, and advised that due to her age, health and vulnerability, Mary could meet the criteria for Adult Care Services support. Emma also spoke to Mary about Age UK Hertfordshire’s InTouch service – a telephone support service that provides emotional support to older people going through difficult times.

**“Emma saved my life. Without her I don’t know where I’d be.”**

Emma supported Mary with her application for Attendance Allowance and made the referral to Adult Care Services; meanwhile, Mary had an open and honest conversation with her GP. Mary also informed Emma that she was spending a lot each week on public transport attending appointments, and having an already low income, this cost was impacting on her as well. Emma immediately applied for an older persons bus pass for Mary.

## What happened next?

Since meeting Emma, Mary has received the back payment of her state pension and is receiving her weekly state pension payments. She was also awarded the higher rate of Attendance Allowance.

Adult Care Services visited Mary and provided her with the practical and emotional support she needed to move forward with her current housing situation.

Mary’s GP is now fully aware of her situation and has been able to adjust her medication to help her, and the mental health team are now working to support her.

Mary has also received her bus pass, which she says has made such a difference to her life and her ability to go out to places without having to worry about the cost implications. It has also meant that Mary can continue to attend her appointments with the mental health team and to see her GP when she needs to.

With the right support, Mary has been able to take back control of her life. She has started to get her finances under control and feels independent. She has now put her house on the market, and is hoping to move into a smaller flat where she will be able to live safely in the warmth.

Mary continues to receive regular calls from Age UK Hertfordshire’s InTouch Service. She enjoys these calls and says they too have played their part in her recovery. Emma has also kept in touch with Mary and speaks to her often.

Mary says that calling Age UK Hertfordshire and asking for their help was the best thing that she has ever done. Mary believes that everyone should be aware of what Age UK Hertfordshire can do to help, as she feels not enough people know about the support and services they provide.

# You could be in the Algarve, relaxing in the sun...

[www.algarve-retreats.com/  
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It has a twin bedroom, open plan kitchen and lounge. The kitchen has a 4-ring hob, oven, microwave, toaster and washing machine. There is a family sized bathroom. The lounge has a sofa (which converts into two more single beds) and a table to seat four. A TV, DVD and CD player are also available. Both the lounge and Bedroom have Patio doors which open onto the balcony offering views over the swimming pool and across Lagos. There is ample car parking space in front of the building.

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## Puzzle Corner Answers

B	I	L	P	R	Y	L	I	M	A	F	H	F	M
I	A	H	C	I	W	D	N	A	S	M	S	R	M
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3	8	2	6	9	5	4	7	1
5	4	7	8	2	1	9	6	3
1	9	6	7	4	3	2	5	8

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with a range of services for older people



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