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agematters

Issue 44 Spring 2017

Behind the scenes with the Visiting Scheme

Visiting Lorna

A touching tribute to a friend made through the Visiting Scheme

A Day in the Life

Behind the scenes of our Visiting Scheme

Regain Your Independence

With the help of our Home & Hospital Support Service

“Just Popping In!”

How our friends at Herts Independent Living can help you feel safer

Springtime Fun!

At our Baldock 10 – 3 Club

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Centre brings
people
together



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knows no
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Turn to
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our favourite
springtime
poetry!



Where to get your copy of *agematters*

All enquiries to Editor: Aoife O'Driscoll
Email: business.support@ageukherts.org.uk
Tel: 01707 323272

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You can get your copy of *agematters* from your local library, GP surgery, Age UK Shop, local Age Concern group, Age UK Hertfordshire 10 to 3 clubs and day centres, other Age UK Hertfordshire schemes, Wiltshire Farm Foods and selected outlets including some residential and sheltered housing schemes and local clubs or online at:
www.ageuk.org.uk/hertfordshire

Write to us at: The Editor, *agematters*, Age UK Hertfordshire, 1 Silver Court, Watchmead, Welwyn Garden City, Herts AL7 1LT

Age UK Hertfordshire Information and Advice Tel: 0300 345 3446

Email: info@ageukherts.org.uk www.ageuk.org.uk/hertfordshire Head Office Tel: 01707 323272



Registered charity number 1116662

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Information and Advice Tel: 0300 345 3446

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Help in the Home

Are you struggling with cleaning, shopping or household tasks?

We can help. Call:

South West Herts, St Albans City
and District

Tel: **01923 224472**

Mid, North and East Herts

Tel: **01707 386066**

Making life easier for you

www.ageuk.org.uk/hertfordshire

Available to older people in
the county of Hertfordshire

Registered charity number 1116662



Spring has sprung!



Hello and welcome to the Spring edition of Age UK Hertfordshire's *agematters* magazine.

I am pleased to share with you the fantastic articles so kindly written by our guest contributors at Herts Independent Living and Chiltern Music, as well as the various insights from our hardworking teams and volunteers at Age UK Hertfordshire.

In this issue, we are delighted to present you

with a close look at our Visiting Scheme from all three perspectives; on page 16, a touching tribute from a volunteer, on page 21 a service user's perspective, and on page 20 a look behind the scenes with our Visiting Scheme Coordinator.

I hope you enjoy catching up with our latest news and reading some of our favourite seasonal poetry.

On behalf of all of us at Age UK Hertfordshire, I wish you a very happy Spring.

**Jan Gough,
Chief Executive**



Our Information and Advice Line can help

0300 345 3446

**Monday – Friday 8am to 5pm
Saturday 8am – 12noon**

Email: info@ageukherts.org.uk

www.ageuk.org.uk/hertfordshire

We can provide support with:

- claiming benefits
- accessing local services
- community care queries
- housing options
- Lasting Powers of Attorney
- IT training...and much more.



Registered charity number 1116662



Chalmers Court Day Centre



New Beginnings – By Clients, Annie and Nora



Nora and Annie

Chalmers Court is a small and welcoming dementia day centre which is situated in a quiet corner of Rickmansworth. Friendly, professional staff members constantly strive to provide a high level of support to the individuals who attend. Many new friendships are formed between the clients and two of our lovely ladies, Annie and Nora, would like to share their experiences at the Centre with you.

Annie

I have been attending the Centre since March 2015. I moved from Devon to be near my lovely family as I needed a bit more support to enable me to maintain my independence. At one point, my circumstances changed and I contemplated moving into fulltime residential care but after much deliberation between my daughter, son-in-law and I, we decided this was not the best path for me to take at this time. The Centre, which I attend four days a week, means everything to me. I didn't realise that on my first day I would enjoy it so much and that it would be a new beginning and chapter in my life. I didn't expect new beginnings at 94 years old. I really enjoy the company and have met so many lovely people.

Let me tell you what my friendship with Nora means to me –

"She's my treasure. I sit next to Nora and we are great friends, we talk to each other all day and discuss the day's events. We have a lot in common as we both grew up on a farm. We enjoy the different things we do here and every day is a bonus in our lives. It is extra special, because I didn't think I would have this in my later life. The ladies are like angels showing us all sorts of very interesting things. So you see this came as an unexpected gift. Nora and I listen to everything and make every day great."

Nora

I started at Chalmers Court in August 2014 after moving house to be nearer to my family. Like Annie, although I need help to maintain my independence, I am still able to live on my own in a retirement flat supported by my lovely family, friends, carers and the Day Centre, which I attend five days a week. I worked until I was 82 years old and being independent is very important to me.

Let me tell you what my friendship with Annie means to me –

"Annie is a very nice person to know, always the same and a pleasure to meet with every day. We share memories of growing up on a farm and we share a joke every day."

We would be delighted to welcome you to our Centre so please pop in for a cup of tea or to join in with some of our activities.

Please call the Supervisor, Senga Lees, to arrange a visit. **Tel: 01923 774328**



Age UK Hertfordshire's Trading Team



Just in case you have not heard about us yet, I would like to introduce you to the Trading team: there is myself, Wendy Ronan – Trading Supervisor, Louise Errik – Insurance Arranger, and Amy Makewell – Insurance Arranger. We are all based in our Watford office and we all work part-time.

and services to the public is to raise money for the Charity, which can be used to support the services we provide free of charge to our service users. The Trading team would be happy to help you with:

- Quotations for Home/Travel/Car insurance;
- Funeral Plan information;
- Stairlift/Easy Bathing/Riser-Recliner Chairs information and estimates;
- Hearing Aid information and appointments, available in the comfort of your own home;
- Personal Alarm referrals.

The Trading office is open Monday to Friday 9am – 3.30pm. We can provide a face-to-face service or over the telephone. Our aim in providing products

Do please give us a call on **01923 252947**, if we can help you with any of the above.

Age UK Car, Home and Travel Insurance are administered by Ageas Retail Limited. Age UK Funeral Plans are provided by Dignity. Brought to you by Age UK Enterprises Limited. Age UK Personal Alarms are provided by Aid-Call Limited.

ACOE2714V1JAN17

Music knows no bounds



“The earth has music for those who listen” said William Shakespeare.

our choir members, told us: “If you feel a bit down, singing together makes you feel happy”.



At Chiltern Music Therapy, we know that music has no bounds and is accessible to everyone, which is why we provide fun, lively and energetic choirs for older people in the South East.

Rebecca Atkinson, a music researcher from Chiltern Music Therapy says; “Music has an incredible effect, it’s like a gym for the brain. It can help access memories, improve concentration, focus, and self-esteem. Even in some cases we’ve seen people who are unable to speak, start to sing”.

Chiltern Music Therapy are excited to be planning new music groups with Age UK Hertfordshire in ten new localities across the county.

Our groups get together weekly to sing their favourite songs and even have a go writing their own! You don’t have to be able to sing; you can enjoy tapping along to Judy Garland show tunes or singing your favourite hymns. Share your own memories and experiences of music and make new friends.

If you would like to register for our existing groups in Buckinghamshire or would be interested in future groups in Hertfordshire, please get in touch by calling **01442 780541** or e-mail **info@chilternmusictherapy.co.uk**.

Music can have powerful effects, such as alleviating anxiety and improving confidence. Barbara, one of

www.chilternmusictherapy.co.uk
Rebecca Atkinson 01442 780541
Rebecca@chilternmusictherapy.co.uk



Home and Hospital Support Service



How our Home and Hospital Support Service can help you regain your confidence and independence by Louise Casey

The Age UK Hertfordshire Home and Hospital Support Service offers practical and emotional support to help older people regain their confidence and remain independent in their homes. This vital service can be of assistance, particularly after a period of ill health or a stay in hospital. With the help of volunteers we offer a lifeline to people who may not know where to go for help or are unable to find solutions to the challenges they may face.

For many older people it can be difficult getting to the shops for essential items, which is an important aspect of staying independent. We can provide short term help and accompany the client on outings whilst also helping to find longer term solutions to help older people remain independent.

The following case study helps to illustrate the way in which this service can be of assistance.

Supporting Alice

Alice had fallen and fractured her shoulder. After spending weeks in hospital and a rehabilitation unit, Alice was keen to regain her strength. Alice had reduced mobility, made worse by the added complication of a fractured shoulder. The rehabilitation unit contacted us and asked if we could support her.

Alice's family were not local and she was going home alone to a house she had not been in for weeks. A Home and Hospital coordinator was able to meet Alice when she got home. They made her a cup of tea, switched the heating on, made sure her pendant alarm was working, removed old food from the fridge and completed a new food shop.



We can help you regain confidence and independence

The next day a coordinator visited Alice to ascertain what additional support was needed. During the visit it was established that Alice was struggling with cleaning and meal preparation. It was also noted that Alice felt lonely and isolated. With Alice's consent, a number of referrals were made to a range of appropriate services. The coordinator then arranged for a volunteer to support Alice, who assisted her to get to the bank, do her shopping and helped her get to various appointments.

On discharge from the service Alice was positive and feeling more in control of her life. Alice said that our support had enabled her to concentrate on her recovery and regain her independence.

If you or anyone you know requires input from our Home and Hospital Support Service, please do not hesitate to contact the team on **01707 386076** or **01483 285300**.

For more information about how this service could support you or someone you know please contact the Scheme Coordinator:

East and North Herts
Tel: 01438 285300

South and West Herts
Tel: 01923 436649

Getting people together



Its all fun and games at the Clitheroe Health and Wellbeing Centre by Vicky Kelly

At the Clitheroe Centre the focus is very much on getting people together, being active and more importantly having fun. The centre has a diverse range of activities taking place each week, as well as a daily friendship club which runs Monday to Friday 10am-2pm.

The incredible team of staff and volunteers create a warm, friendly and relaxed atmosphere. There is always something to do, from dance classes to coffee mornings - there really is something for everyone.

More recently club members have been enjoying Walking Cricket - or Clock Cricket as it is known. Clock Cricket is a format which is designed to be played from a sitting position. As well as keeping active, it's a great way of improving hand eye coordination and dexterity.

Andy and Richard from the Hertfordshire Disability Association have been providing the popular sessions at Clitheroe. The game can be played by all, it's completely accessible and no one is excluded. Everyone is keen to take part; the games are engaging, fun and are an opportunity to take part in some healthy competition.

Men in Sheds

The Men in Sheds project is a great opportunity for 'you' time.



From music to jewellery making, there's something for everyone at the Centre!

Taking place at the Clitheroe Centre on Monday and Thursday 10 - 12pm, the sessions are an opportunity to meet in a relaxed social space - share your knowledge, experience and skills (or perhaps learn some new ones!) The focus is very much on taking time out in a friendly, supportive environment.

The sessions are as practical as you want them to be, the members have control and decide on the activities that take place during the session.

Activities that have taken place in the past have included:

- Painting
- Modelling
- Woodwork
- Gardening

If you would like to get creative, meet new friends and give yourself time to relax, the Men in Sheds project at Clitheroe could be for you.

If you are interested in attending the Clitheroe Health and Wellbeing Centre, just pick up the phone and call our friendly team.

Contact the Clitheroe team on:
01923 256360



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rising funeral costs*

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Tel: 01923 605713
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Age UK Stairlifts



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Age UK Stairlifts are provided by Handicare Accessibility Ltd, in association with Age UK Trading CIC. Handicare will raise a minimum of £1.2 million during 2017/2018 for Age UK (registered charity no.1128267). Contact us for information.

“Just popping in!”



The new service helping you feel safer in Hertfordshire by Gemma Payne

All of us want to keep our independence later in life, and to remain healthy and happy in our own homes. Whether that's by getting meals on wheels, or having community alarms and telecare installed, there's lots of ways we can live longer, happier lives in Herts.

A new service is now available to help us remain independent, and it's as simple as sharing a chit chat over a cup of tea. Would you like the reassurance of someone popping in on you to make sure you're alright every now and then? That's just what Hertfordshire Independent Living Service (HILS) can offer!

HILS, the meals on wheels provider on behalf of Hertfordshire County Council, have recently launched a 'Pop-in Visit' service.

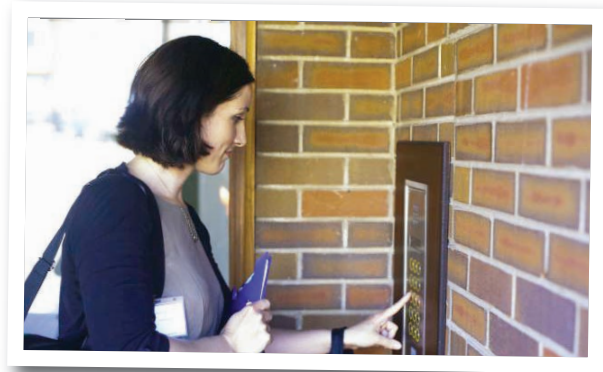
Our pop-in visits are short, five minute, lunch-time visits which help you to feel safer in your home.

Our pop-in visits include:

- regular contact with a friendly face
- making sure you're okay
- making you a drink
- contacting someone on your behalf if you're not feeling yourself
- checking on something specific, like if you are wearing your community alarm pendant
- medication reminders if required

Pop-in visits are perfect for those whose family may live far away, and aren't able to visit as often as they'd like, as one client's son explains: "I would like to pass on my sincere thanks to all concerned in the dealings with my mother, especially the delivery person who took the time to look after her, after a recent injury to her ankle. As I am too far away to oversee her welfare, it is nice to know that people do care."

We can come to your house, anywhere in Hertfordshire, 365 days a year. You can have a visit



HILS Team Member Annabelle, popping in on a HILS client.

each day, or as many days as you like – just let us know. These can be temporary visits, whilst you recover from an illness, or for as long as you would like.

We have a no-reply procedure, which means if you don't answer the door when we come to visit, we won't leave until we find out why, and will contact your family, friends, or neighbours to make sure you're okay. Last year, our teams found over 40 people who had fallen in their home, and we were the first people to find them. Many of our clients and families say that our service provides peace of mind, and should something happen in the home, they know that they or a loved one will be in safe hands.

The price of each visit is £3.50, and visits are made between 11am and 2:30pm. We can't give you an exact time, but generally we'll be with you at the same time each day.

To set up your pop-in visits, refer online at: www.hertsindependentliving.org/pop-in-visits/ where you can download the application form. We look forward to hearing from you, and popping by!

Visit the HILS website for more information about the pop-in service, and to find out about other services HILS provide: www.hertsindependentliving.org
Alternatively, you can email: info@hertsindependentliving.org
or telephone: **0330 2000 103** (local rate number).

Age UK Charity Shops

Age UK is the country's largest charity dedicated to helping everyone make the most of later life.

Age UK operates 14 charity shops in Hertfordshire offering a wide and ever-changing range of goods at very reasonable prices.

The shops don't just offer donated goods, they sell brand new products including gifts, homeware, food and many more great items. No two Age UK shops are the same and there's always something of interest.

Supporting people in later life

Age UK shops are all about supporting people in later life, both through the services and products they provide, and the funds they raise to support Age UK's work at a national and international level.

Free Information and Advice in every Age UK shop

Each Age UK shop is stocked with all Age UK's leaflets, giving you and your family easy access to much needed free information and advice. You can find information on health and well being, money and home and care. Age UK shops also have leaflets advertising our products including home and travel insurance and stairlifts, and of course, you can pick up your copy of *agematters* there too!

Please contact the shops direct for more information about opening times and access.

Your local Age UK Shops - quality goods at bargain prices	Telephone Numbers
128 Shenley Road, Borehamwood , Hertfordshire WD6 1EF	020 8381 5210
83 Turners Hill, Cheshunt , Hertfordshire EN8 9BD	01992 622360
6 Harding Parade, Harpenden , Hertfordshire AL5 4SW	01582 767021
14 Bridge Street, Hemel Hempstead , Hertfordshire HP1 1BF	01442 268711
8 Market Street, Hertford , Hertfordshire SG14 1BD	01992 553311
1 Sun Street, Hitchin , Hertfordshire SG5 1AE	01462 452082
98 High Street, Hoddesdon , Hertfordshire EN11 8HD	01992 443510
26 East Cheap, Letchworth , Hertfordshire SG6 3DA	01462 484812
110 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar , Hertfordshire EN6 1AE	01707 656904
171 High Street, Rickmansworth , Hertfordshire WD3 1AY	01923 711726
15 Church Lane, Royston , Hertfordshire SG8 9LG	01763 242893
46 Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth , Hertfordshire CM21 9AN	01279 600959
26 High Street, Ware , Hertfordshire SG12 9BY	01920 463051
233 St Albans Road, Watford , Hertfordshire WD24 5BQ	01923 235883

Staying Safe



A 21st Century Challenge



We can help you get peace of mind and feel safe in your home

Staying Safe

Helping older people get the most out of later life is our aim, and feeling safe and secure in your own home plays a big part in keeping well as we enter our later years. Unfortunately we live in an age where our emails, letterboxes and even homes are sometimes threatened by spam mail, scams, break-ins and theft. Every year thousands of older people find themselves the target of fraudsters and at Age UK Hertfordshire we feel it is our job to give you some information about how you can help to combat these situations.

The countywide Hertfordshire Home Safety Service helps and supports local residents by providing a range of free and low cost services, using proceeds of crime monies. This means money recovered from criminals will go directly to helping secure your home and make you feel safer. They can help with:

- Fitting a variety of locks on external doors, windows, gates and garages
- Offer advice on rogue trading
- Advice about registering with trusted utility providers
- Fitting prikka-strip panels to walls or fencing

You can contact the service by calling **01707 292344** or by email at: **HHSS@hertfordshire.gov.uk**.

As well as making your homes secure it is also a good idea to keep them safe.

- Do you regularly check your fire and smoke alarms?
- Have you had carbon monoxide sensors fitted?
- Have you planned your escape route in the event of a fire?

If you are unsure about any of the above then don't forget that you can contact your local fire service who can provide a free fire safety check of your property and leave you some suggestions about how you could improve the safety of your home.

Need some work completing on your home?

Hertfordshire Trading Standards have teamed up with Which? Trusted Traders to provide consumers with the reassurance of knowing the helping hand they turn to has been thoroughly assessed and checked. You can contact them on **020 3883 6185** or visit the Which? Trusted Traders website - <http://trustedtraders.which.co.uk/>

Hopefully the above suggestions may help to give you some ideas if you are thinking about securing your home. Don't forget, if you would like ANY help or advice in any aspects of your life then we are here to help. You can contact our team on **01438 285300** or alternatively speak to one of our information and advice team members on **0300 345 3446**.

For more information about how this service could support you or someone you know please contact the Scheme Coordinator:

East and North Herts
Tel: 01438 285300

South and West Herts
Tel: 01923 436649

The Help in the Home Service in the South West

An insight into the Help in the Home Service in the South West

Recently one of our clients from the Hertsmere area reminded us that she found out about our service when she accidentally came across a copy of our *agematters* magazine in a supermarket trolley. She was browsing through the pages when she saw our advert for “Help in the Home”. She called for some information and five years later is still receiving the service which she says has been an invaluable help to her over the years

Our service provides support to older people to help keep their homes clean and tidy. It is run by a team of dedicated staff whose sole aim is to make sure our clients get the right service to suit their needs. From the Human Resources team who carefully recruit the Home Helpers with their diligent vetting procedures, to the office and field based team who run the service, and the Finance department who are always happy to answer queries.

Our caring team of Home Helpers all share the same principle “to support older people in their community”. Some of the tasks they can help with include cleaning, making the bed, washing and ironing, preparing a meal, shopping and taking clients to appointments. They understand that everyone’s needs vary depending on their circumstances and that reliability, a caring attitude and high standards are the key elements in their role.

We recognise too that it is not just the client who needs our support but also their relatives and carers. We understand that with work commitments and families living out of area they cannot always be there. We hope it gives some reassurance to know that a trusted person is supporting their loved ones, so they can spend valuable social time with them when they visit without having to worry about doing the housework or shopping.



Donald and his Home Helper Claire

“We would like to say just how much the whole family has appreciated the kindness and care Anna gave to my Mother during the time she needed extra assistance to remain in her own home”.

Quote from a client’s relative

With over 700 clients in the South West we pride ourselves in knowing all our clients individually. Recently Donald, one of our Watford clients, called to tell us all about his holiday at the Blind Veterans UK Centre in Brighton. He commented that it was so nice to share his experience with a trusted Age UK Hertfordshire staff member, his Home Helper Claire.

South West Hertfordshire

Covering Watford, Three Rivers, Dacorum, St Albans and Hertsmere Tel: 01923 224472
Email: helpinthehome.sw@ageukherts.org.uk

Mid and North Herts, East Herts and Broxbourne

Tel: 01707 386066

For Welwyn Hatfield, North Herts and Stevenage

Email: helpinthehome.mn@ageukherts.org.uk
For East Herts and Broxbourne
Email: helpinthehome.eh@ageukherts.org.uk

Visiting Lorna

Lorna and Susan loved to talk about British garden birds.

Written by a visiting scheme volunteer, Susan Warren

In this edition, we are sharing the experience of Susan, a Visiting Scheme volunteer.

I was between jobs and thought I would like to make use of my time by volunteering for Age UK Hertfordshire on their visiting older people scheme. I got in touch and after filling out the relevant forms I was visited by a lady called Maureen. She co-ordinates volunteers and matches them with older people who would like to have a visitor to talk to for an hour a week.

Maureen introduced me to Lorna on our first visit and she was lovely. It was her birthday and we had cups of tea and a small birthday cake that Maureen had brought. Lorna chatted away and the time slipped away so fast. Her nephew Michael and a neighbour popped in regularly to see if she was ok, but we met every Wednesday and even when I got a job I carried on seeing her after work.

It was just like visiting the nan I never had. Lorna was such a happy, upbeat lady. She never complained about anything – she wanted to talk about our favourite TV programmes, what books we had been reading, and I would take her wool in for the squares she knitted constantly for blankets that she sent to charities she was supporting. She always wanted to know what was going on in my family and what I was doing with the planting in my garden. Our favourite subject was British garden birds. Lorna had a large garden with lots of bird feeders, as did I. We would look up all the unusual birds we had seen and I would show her pictures of a blue tit nesting in my camera box which was great seeing them as eggs, young chicks and then growing up and fledging.



Nearly 3 years on and the day Lorna was admitted to hospital her nephew Michael and I started visiting.

Lorna again hardly ever complained, she was just happy to see us.

I would encourage anyone to volunteer as it is always beneficial to both parties. I feel blessed to have known Lorna and had her in my life and she used to tell me how much she looked forward to my visits. I do miss her but I know I was a small part of the rich tapestry of her life and I was grateful to have known her.

Do think about how you can give and receive, it's the law of attraction....

Tel: 01707 386060

Email:

volunteering@ageukherts.org.uk

Visit:

www.ageuk.org.uk/hertfordshire/volunteer-for-us/



Join our team of volunteers helping local older people

To find out more and to apply online visit the 'Volunteer for us' pages on our website www.ageuk.org.uk/hertfordshire Email volunteering@ageukherts.org.uk or Tel: 01707 386060

Find us on Facebook  Age UK Hertfordshire Follow us on Twitter  @AgeUKHerts

Home and Hospital Support Scheme Volunteers

Provide short term, practical and emotional support to an older person coming home from hospital (not personal care)

1-2 hours or more a week

Weekdays and/or weekends

Urgently needed in North Herts, Stevenage, Welwyn Hatfield, East Herts, Broxbourne, St Albans, Watford and Three Rivers

Our Information and Advice Service is looking for Volunteers

to help older people access the information, advice and support they need

Benefits Outreach Volunteers

providing advice at home or in community surgeries in all parts of the county

Flexible weekday hours available

Telephone Advice Volunteers

Daytime Mon - Fri - hours variable.

Office based in Welwyn Garden City or Watford

Hertswise Volunteers

Hertswise is a service designed for people living with dementia, low level memory loss or mild cognitive impairment and their carers and loved ones. Our partnership of community and voluntary groups, and local volunteers helps us provide excellent support.

2 - 6 hours per week Countywide

Volunteers required for InTouch - Telephone Support Service

2-3 hours a week Mon-Fri based in our Cheshunt office

HR Volunteers

To support the friendly head office Human Resources team with general admin and HR tasks

3.5 hours or more p/w

Daytime Mon - Fri Welwyn Garden City

Do you speak Punjabi?

If so we need volunteers at our friendly and vibrant

Asian 10 to 3 Clubs

in Hitchin on Tuesdays from 9.30am - 3.30pm and Letchworth on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10am - 3pm

Clitheroe Health and Wellbeing Centre in South Oxhey needs Driver Assistants

Approx 6 hours a week (Mon - Fri)

Ideally based in

Abbots Langley/Garston area

Don't see the right vacancy or you?

We have enjoyed the help of volunteers with different talents, from photographers, to musicians, to university students building experience in their field!

If you have a special skill or interest and want to volunteer your time, please email our team to see whether we can find the right opportunity for you.

Day Centre Volunteers 4-5 hours a week weekdays

If you would like to help our members with dementia, why not volunteer at Chalmers Court Day Centre, Rickmansworth

10 to 3 Club Volunteers Urgently needed

4-5 hours each week between 10am to 3pm

To help deliver our programme of activities at the following clubs:

Ware and Letchworth Great Offley, Baldock, Codicote, Hitchin, Cheshunt, Royston, Whitwell

Spare an hour to share an hour!

Visiting Scheme Volunteers

You can make a huge difference to the lives of lonely older people by simply popping in for a chat

Approx 1-2 hours a week on a regular basis, Countywide



What makes an ideal care home?



A friendly, stimulating atmosphere for older people

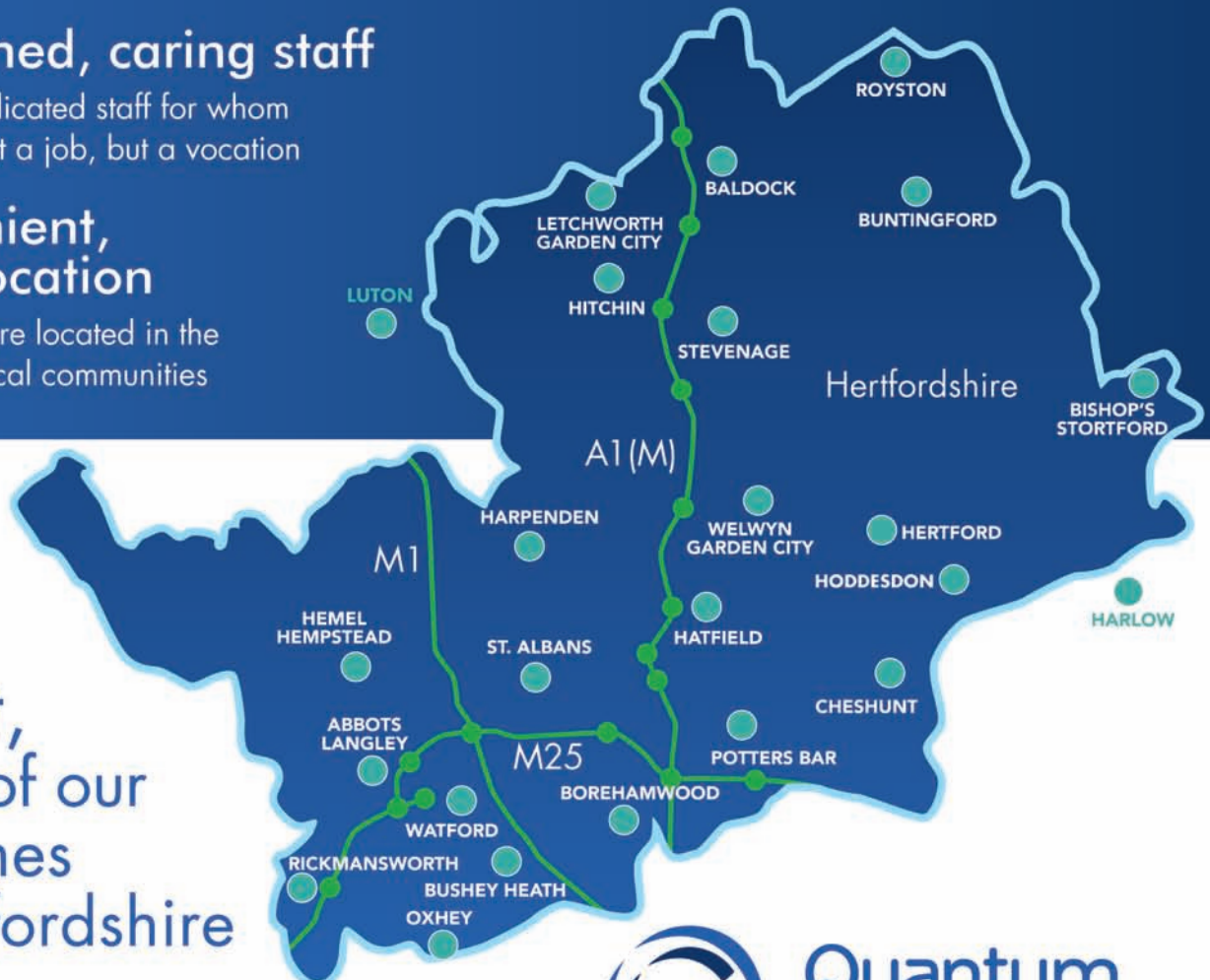
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Poetry Corner

Introducing a poem from
one of our own volunteers!

Granny

By Jan Rhys-Williams, Volunteer Visitor

To-day I'll see my Granny
and I will stay to tea.
We'll have scones and cherry cake
made especially for me.

She's very old, my granny.
Much older than the Queen.
She tells me ancient stories
of all the things she's seen.

Of trams, maids and milk carts
things that I don't know
She remembers very well
from days long ago.

She always wears a pretty hat
secured with a pin.
I wonder if it hurts her
when it goes into her skin.

I like to sit upon her lap
and smell her scent of rose
this is Granny's favourite one
I sniff it on her clothes.

She never uses make-up.
Well, sometimes red lipstick.
Not like my Mummy
She's always wearing it.

I haven't got a Grandad
which I thought very odd
"Gone to Heaven," Granny said
"Went to live with God."

When I am very old
let's say ninety three
I'd like to look like Granny
and have children on my knee.

Are you a budding poet like Jan?

We want to hear from you! If you would like to see your work here, please send it to:

Aoife O'Driscoll, 1 Silver Court, Welwyn Garden City, AL7 1LT

Or email: business.support@ageukherts.org.uk



A Day in the Life of a Visiting Scheme Coordinator



Never the Same Day Twice – by Jackie Noonan



I am the Visiting Scheme Coordinator for the Welwyn Hatfield area. One of the great pleasures of the job is the variety of every day. I am in the happy position of meeting several new people each week – each with their own unique circumstances and their own concerns. On any

given day I might be meeting a new user of our services, meeting a new volunteer or perhaps be dropping in to a local sheltered housing scheme to talk to a Scheme Manager.

My role requires a lot of multi-tasking, so it's lovely to get out to visit a service user in their own home and, for the period of time I'm with them, be totally focused on what they're saying. My role at a first meeting with a new service user is to assess whether the person is eligible for the service – and, most importantly, whether they're interested in having a regular visitor or phone call. Alongside that I ask more general questions like “how are you managing?”, “what are you struggling with?”, “is anything keeping you awake at night?” These open question are important as they often lead to problems being aired that I can help with. Sometimes an issue looms so large for a person that they're not able to consider anything peripheral – they just need help with the problem in hand. It's important to be able to tune in to this.

Often as a result of this first meeting I contact other teams within Age UK Hertfordshire or one of our partner organisations to seek help with resolving any issues raised.

As a standard I ask new service users whether they wear a pendant alarm for emergencies – and explain how they work and where to get them. If someone seems to be struggling significantly as a result of a health condition I'll ask them whether they receive Attendance Allowance (or equivalent) and whether they'd like our help in making a claim. I can also refer them for a more general benefits check.

Some people express an interest in getting out to a club so I might take them along to a drop in or Day Centre to see if they enjoy it. If they want to go back on a regular basis, I can tell them about transport options. Having no available transport is a big factor in people becoming isolated.

All in all it's refreshing spending this time talking with every new service user – learning a little about them and their perspective on life. I always come away from a visit with something new to chew on.

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Visiting Scheme – a Service User’s Perspective



As told to Jackie Noonan, Visiting Scheme Coordinator

Kath has been having a regular visitor from the Visiting Scheme for almost 2 years now. I first came to see her after she'd had a stay in hospital. Our Home and Hospital Support team referred her saying she might appreciate some more company through the winter period when she wasn't likely to be getting out much. Kath recalls my visit:

“Jackie came to see me to talk about having a visitor. I was lonely. I'd always been a person who loved being outdoors; getting out and about at will. I'm a keen walker and had been on several walking holidays. But I developed some health problems and it became difficult to get out under my own steam. Jackie said she could find me a regular visitor”.

A few weeks later I introduced Kath to Clare, who now visits every fortnight. Kath continues:

“We talk about lots of different things. Sometimes about our families, sometimes about past experiences. We often talk about things going on in the news, in politics and the state of the world.”

“Anyone that comes in here for a chat is very welcome. Life is quiet now. I'm originally from the north and I was surprised when I came down south that people locked their doors. Where I grew up friends and neighbours just knocked, shouted “hello” and came in for a chat.”

“During my working life I was a buyer for the building industry. It was a man's world when I started and at the corporate dos I attended I was

sometimes the only woman there. I particularly remember one trip up the Thames.”

“I got a scooter when I realised my mobility was so reduced and that's how I get out now. Luckily I'm not too far from town so I can get there to do some shopping – I can do 3 scooter runs to the supermarket before I have to recharge. Of course on days when I'm not feeling particularly well it can be an effort to get the scooter out. And some buildings aren't really designed to accommodate it – sometimes there's not enough room to turn a corner, so generally I just visit the supermarket and come home.”

I asked Kath what were important qualities in a volunteer visitor:

“First and foremost they need to be friendly. They need to be able to talk freely. It would be hard-going if the conversation was stilted. And it's important that the visitor is being themselves – no airs or graces. Clare's visits are always a pleasure – always interesting.”

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Springtime Fun At Our 10-3 Clubs



10-3 Clubs are in full swing this spring, says Team Leader Helen Grant

Spring is a wonderful time of the year. The sun is finally beginning to shine through the clouds, flowers are blooming and everything just seems a little more cheerful.

Our 10-3 Clubs have been getting into the springtime mood recently, with members enjoying lots of fun activities such as arts and crafts, flower arranging and even a spot of gardening!

Members of the Baldock 10-3 Club celebrated National Happiness Day and discussed some things that make them feel positive. Things that made members happy included phone calls from family, flowers on a balcony, birdsong, music and good company.

Westmill 10-3 Club Members recently enjoyed some spring flower arranging, with some wonderfully bright and cheerful daffodils, carnations and roses. Club member Katherine said: "Seeing the wonderful colour of these spring flowers always makes me feel so happy. Another reason why I love attending the 10-3 Club here at Westmill".

Members of the 10-3 Club in Woolmer Green have been enjoying painting wooden Easter eggs too, with members remarking that they love to create items that they can give as gifts to their family and friends. Club members enjoy getting involved in fun and engaging activities, along with regular outings and entertainment sessions. The Baldock 10-3 Club recently enjoyed a live singer, with many members even getting up and having a dance!

Our 10-3 Clubs are full of fun and vibrancy and are a great way to get out and meet new friends, whilst enjoying the benefits of a secure surrounding, organised transportation and a hot, nutritious lunch. Clubs run from different locations across North Hertfordshire and are currently looking for new members to join. All of our 10-3 Clubs cost £9 per session.

As a member of our clubs, you can look forward to a warm welcome from our fully trained staff and volunteers and really be a part of a supportive and social group.

If you are interested in joining a 10-3 Club in North Hertfordshire, please contact:
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Nichole Giddings, who runs the Older and Vulnerable Client Department in the Private Client team, is a member of the Alzheimer's Society, the Parkinson's Society and Solicitors for the Elderly. She is also a former trustee of Age UK Hertfordshire.

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