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We can support you at home

Let us help you claim benefits

Exciting competition on page 19



free
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Specsavers

Engage contents

Spring 2023

Foreword 5

From our Chief Executive

We can't wait for care 6-7

The current system is unsustainable

Enjoy your home and garden 8

We can provide the help you need

Social Prescribing 10

Improve your wellbeing and make new friends

Celebrating our volunteers 12-13

Give something back to your community

The Good Care Group 14-15

We work in partnership with an outstanding provider of live-in-care

Finding solutions to worries 16

Benefits, information, advice and support

Follow us on
social media...



Money Management Support and Appointeeship 16

We can step in and help

Hospital Discharge and Community Team 17

Help following a stay in hospital

Exciting news from our shops 18-19

Find out the latest

Our Day Centres 20-21

Meet friends in a warm, friendly environment

Care Support at Home 22-23

We can support you in your home

Fundraising and News 24-26

We're out and about in Northamptonshire



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Engage foreword

from the
Chief Executive

The new year is always a challenging time, financially, mentally and physically.

Money is tight, especially at the moment with inflation running high, there seem few reasons to be positive at this time of year and the weather can be cold and miserable, all making it more difficult to get out and stay fit. It is also a time of New Year resolutions, to try and take control and improve the situation we find ourselves in, grateful for the positives in our lives and mindful of what could be better.

The refurbishment of The William and Patricia Venton Centre is nearly complete. It is our main building, where our clients enjoy day care and all the good experiences associated with getting out, meeting friends, enjoying a good meal and being free to be entertained and “have a good time”. Many of our staff also work in the building too.

Our Charity, Age UK Northamptonshire, has not had money to spend on our centre and invest in new facilities for over 22 years, but at long last the building is enjoying a complete makeover. We will celebrate when the work is finished and thank you to all of you who have donated funds to make this renovation possible. Particular mention needs to be made of the Constance Travis Trust, The William and Patricia Venton Trust,

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the Clothmakers, the Florence Jessie Cleaver Trust and the Bernard Sunley Foundation who contributed substantial funds.

We also plan to invest in solar panels to help the environment, reduce our running costs and make the building more sustainable.

The very good news is that the building work has created more space for clients so that we can expand our day care provision. We hope to double the number of clients that we can accommodate, up to 50 per day. We will also be increasing the support we can give to clients who would like to be supported at home. This is exciting news for everyone who has waited for this and for the many new clients who will be able to enjoy its benefits.

All of us at Age UK Northamptonshire are determined to keep on improving the services the charity provides.

Please visit our website for more details:

www.ageuknorthants.org.uk

We would love to hear from you.

‘Helping you make informed choices.’

Chris Duff

Chief Executive

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We can't wait for care

The sight of ambulances queuing outside hospitals is a symptom of the lack of beds for patients in our hospitals. This is a direct result of our country's care crisis. It is estimated that in January this year there were some 13,000 patients in hospitals who were ready to leave but could not, due to a lack of social care provision. This number is more than one in ten NHS beds in England which are occupied by patients who no longer need hospital care. The majority of these were older patients living with frailty or long-term health problems.

These delays put those frail, elderly patients who have to stay longer in hospital at greater risk of harm. Periods of prolonged bed rest are associated with increased weakness, difficulty walking, risk of falls and risk of hospital-acquired infections. It is accepted that once people have been designated as being medically stable for discharge, the best place for them to be is at home and in the community.

The government has provided short-term funding over the Winter for care placements and beds so that people could be discharged from hospital but this did not deal with the underlying problem of there not being enough social care provision. Investment is also needed across home and community services, to increase the workforce and provide more support for family carers. Sustainable care and support can also prevent people from being hospitalised in the first place.

Age UK, the national charity, estimates that there are some 2.6 million people in England aged over 50 who are unable to get the care they need. This includes hundreds of thousands who are stuck on waiting lists for support or even just waiting to have their needs assessed. A survey in late 2022 found that more than nine in 10 social care directors did not believe their local area would have enough staff or funding to get

through this last winter. They called for more resources to avoid people dying early because their care needs were not being met.

There are also many more people providing unpaid care, often they are older and in poor health themselves, doing their best to keep their loved ones safe and well at home. They desperately need support from care services so that they can take a break from caring. Census data shows that some five million people provide unpaid care to people with long-term health conditions or problems related to old age. A further 1.5 million people provide more than 50 hours a week of unpaid care.

A major difficulty is that there are not enough care workers to look after those who need them. Skills for Care have estimated that there are around 165,000 roles in care that are currently vacant, which is about one in ten care jobs. Around 30% of the workforce leaves each year so there is a need to recruit, and retain, far more care workers than currently.

Dramatic rises in costs more recently have thrown savers' retirement plans into disarray. The average length of stay in a care home is two years. Care home charges have spiked recently, as providers have struggled to meet the rising cost of energy, food and carers' wages.

The government announced in February this year that means-testing thresholds were to be frozen for a 13th consecutive year. This means that more people face having to pay for their care. The upper capital limit, above which people must pay the full cost of their care will stay at £23,250 for 2023/24. The lower limit, below which

**Half a million
older people
are stuck
waiting for care.**

**You can join us
in supporting
Age UK's
national
campaign to tell
the Chancellor
that they
#CantWait
ForCare**



people are not charged for care from their assets, though are still liable to contribute from their income, will stay at £14,250. Both limits have been at those levels since 2010-11, dragging many more people into paying for care than would have been the case had the limits risen in line with inflation.

The current system of social care funding is widely acknowledged as being unsustainable. The Government has long faced calls to overhaul the care system. Chancellor Jeremy Hunt has delayed plans to introduce a cap on how much an individual has to spend on personal costs over their lifetime. The capital limits had been due to rise to £100,000 in October 2023 under the government's proposed adult social care charging reforms. However, last November the government announced a two-year delay to the reforms, until 2025.

This means that even more people will have to rely on their own savings and on the goodwill of family, loved ones and neighbours. Many more people will be going without the necessary funded care

Unpaid carers are **doing their best** to keep their loved ones safe.



The pressures in social care are affecting the lives of thousands of unpaid carers and the lives of their loved ones.

or having less of it than would have been the case had thresholds gone up in line with inflation.

It is clear that people will need to think carefully about saving for their own care. It is certain that personal funding for social care will make up the vast majority of how someone pays for the care they need. People need to think carefully about saving for social care at the same time they save for their retirement.

Age UK Northamptonshire has seen a big increase in calls for advice on navigating the care system. We are finding that many more people feel isolated and increasing numbers have no family able to help them. They are not sure where to go and they turn to us. We hope that the Chancellor will use the Spring Budget on 15th March to help the millions of older people who are waiting for good, reliable care and the support they need to live with dignity.

Chris Duff

Chief Executive
Age UK Northamptonshire



Handyperson and Gardening Service

Our friendly and reliable Handyperson and Gardening team are all DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checked and we check up on references before they begin employment with us.

Handyperson Service

Our handypersons work in all areas of Northamptonshire; they carry out general DIY tasks, including putting together flat-pack furniture, putting up grab rails, fitting a new doorbell, putting up a curtain pole or painting a wall. We offer an ideal solution for those jobs that many trades people often consider are too small.

We visit clients at a date and time to suit them. All our handypersons are fully insured, and you don't need to worry about a trip to the bank before they arrive as payment is always by invoice. If you struggle to get out and about our handypersons can source and supply items for you, such as banisters and doorbells or a tin of paint.

If you have a list of odd jobs that require fixing, a garage that needs tidying or even some items bringing down from your loft, our handyperson team are ready to assist.



Let us help you get your garden ready this Spring.



With a little help from us you can enjoy your home more.

Gardening Service

Spring is in the air and it's that time of year when we all start to think about our gardens. Last year our gardening service was extremely busy so this year we have recruited more gardeners and have several new faces who have joined our gardening team.

Our gardeners are available for one-off visits or regular gardening maintenance, pruning shrubs, tidying borders, or mowing the lawn. If you would like a regular gardening service, we try to ensure you get the same friendly face and smile for each visit.

For more information on our Handyperson and Gardening Service, please call Richard A'Court on 01604 611200 or 07824 321857; or email handypersons@ageuknorthants.org.uk

You can also see our website for more information www.ageuknorthants.org.uk

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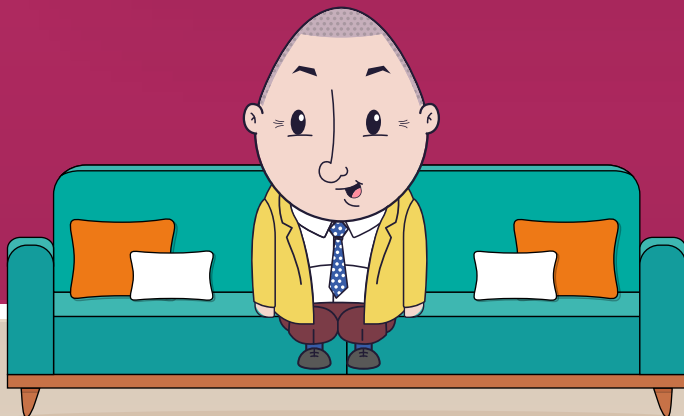


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SPRING

SPRING is a partnership of social sector organisations, commissioned by Integrated Care Northamptonshire.

Age UK Northamptonshire work with three other partners Mayday Trust, Northamptonshire Carers and General Practice Alliance (GPA) to improve the wellbeing of people in Northamptonshire using social prescribing.

We provide support for six to 12 months, enabling people to take steps to improve their health and wellbeing. We work with people aged 18 and over who have at least one long-term health condition and who are willing to make the changes that will improve their health and wellbeing.

SPRING is working hard to support provision in West Northamptonshire. We are meeting community groups, raising our profile, and creating partnerships with the aim to offer sustainable, enjoyable activities for all with a focus on wellbeing and connecting with others.

We recently attended the Dementia Café at Brook House in Towcester where we met residents and carers offering time to talk and information on “what’s on” locally. We are planning community drop-in sessions working with other organisations to provide information and support.

In the North of the county, we run a crafting group with Corby library and a coffee morning with the Cornerstone Church. We recently started a community café at Hazel Leys community centre. All of these offer free tea and coffee and everybody is welcome.



Our crafting group in Corby Library

Kettering drop-in coffee group at The Geek Retreat



SPRING is helping me slowly but constantly improve my confidence.

Our Link Workers are fully trained and will arrange to talk to you about how you are feeling, and what you think might help you to improve your health and wellbeing.

We use independent businesses to deliver some groups – we work with a local cookery tutor who delivers our six-week cookery courses in Kettering and Corby, a lady who has her own crafting business who delivers sessions, and we have an alternative therapist who will deliver a chronic pain course.

In Kettering we are delivering a Diabetes focus group – the aim of this has been to determine the clients’ views and experience as to what support might help them. At SPRING we can use funding to help people improve their health and wellbeing where money is a barrier.

We work with clients to identify what groups they feel they need which helps to connect people and reduce isolation. It has been very positive as people learn new skills and are happy to help each other.

To receive our newsletter or to find out more about SPRING, call 01604 974995 or email hello@springnorthamptonshire.org



Hermitage House Care Home



As a brand new care home, Hermitage House will provide the highest standards of family-led residential and dementia care. Our home is luxurious and beautifully furnished, whilst retaining a warm family atmosphere that will make Hermitage House feel extra special.

To find out more about life at Hermitage House contact our Senior Customer Relations Manager Hannah Mills on **07745 541 057** or email hannah.mills@countrycourtcare.com



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info@northamptonshiresport.org

Visit: www.northamptonshiresport.org/our-programmes

northamptonshire
sport

Celebrating our Volunteers



Caroline Roy, Volunteer Co-ordinator

Our volunteers tell us ***“It’s the best job I have ever had, and I don’t get paid!” “I enjoy every aspect of volunteering and I can’t believe how quickly the year has gone.”*** If you are over eighteen you can volunteer for us. Please give me a call, I would love to hear from you.

There are currently nine students on placement in our day centres and a regular group from Tresham College help at our Kettering day centre in Rockingham Road.

We have 118 volunteers in our eight shops, and they tell us they appreciate the sense of friendship, community, meeting and talking to people – maybe even encouraging a sale and would recommend volunteering with Age UK Northamptonshire.

Do you have any DIY skills because we are always looking for volunteers who can fit a grab rail or maybe a key safe, or perhaps dismantle a bed.

Take a look at our website to see how many roles we have throughout the county. You are bound to find something that could use your skills and experience and will make a difference to an older person in our community.

Sophie, Manager at Foxfields day centre says: “Elsie and Lydia are a pleasure to work with and have certainly made a positive impression on our clients.” Lydia, a student helping at our Foxfields day centre says “Every Monday morning I look forward to seeing all of the clients.”

Volunteers at our day centres enjoy chatting with clients and encouraging them to talk about their lives and share happy memories. They also make sure that clients don’t miss out in joining in any of the fun activities, especially the bingo, board and floor games.

Our day care client Jean says “They are getting on wonderfully and help me a lot.”



Students Lydia and Elsie with Jean at our Foxfields Day Centre

Join our
ever expanding
team of
207 volunteers.

Volunteers at our day centres enjoy chatting with clients and encouraging them to talk about their lives and share happy memories.



Jeanie, Margaret and Bethany in Kettering

Bethany says: “Since starting my placement at the end of November 2022, everyone has helped me to settle in, offering their support whenever it was needed. I really enjoy helping with the activities – it’s a lot of fun. Margaret our client says, “Bethany is always cheerful, smiling and happy to help.”

Tony has been volunteering in our shops for over 20 years, previously in Far Cotton, now in Kingsthorpe in Northampton. He is the regular volunteer on the till and enjoys a friendly chat and passing the time of day with many of our regular customers.



Rose in our Brackley shop says: "I started volunteering nine years ago and liked it so much I got my husband Rod to volunteer also, as he had retired. Volunteering with Age UK Northamptonshire has been very good for both of us socially, we have made good friends and we enjoy working there so much."

Amanda who volunteers at our St Giles Street shop

says: "I absolutely love working here and I have also been covering in Kingsthorpe as a keyholder. The volunteers here at St Giles Street are a great bunch to work with and I couldn't imagine not coming into work. Its great to give something back to the community."



Call Caroline Roy
on 07553 894931.



It's great to
give something
back to the
community.

Allan and Mary take on the trickiest tasks! Allan has been a volunteer for us for 19 years and has carried out hundreds of jobs that have helped older people feel safer and more comfortable in their own home. He and his wife Mary who also volunteers are happy to tackle all manner of small jobs, from tidying small garden patches to fitting stair rails and curtain rods. They have also cleared a loft before contractors came in to fit insulation. Allan and Mary normally manage to solve most situations that clients need help with.

If you would like to volunteer, please don't hesitate to contact me for more information on 01604 611200 or email **volunteers@ageuknorthants.org.uk**
You can also visit our website to find many exciting volunteering opportunities and an online application form **www.ageuknorthants.org.uk**



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L A M P O R T

Lamport Hall & Gardens opens for the 2023 season

Wednesday 5th April at 10am

The Hall and Gardens are open to the public on Wednesdays and Thursdays only, from April to October. Gardens: 10am-4pm. The Hall (guided tour only): 11am and 1pm.

Stableyard Cafe: 10am-3pm.
Wednesdays and Thursdays only.
Tea/coffee, light snacks, and home-made cakes.

Admission prices on the website.
All full-priced tickets incorporate a 12-month annual pass at no extra cost.

Group Bookings: The Hall is available for private group bookings on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays, from April to October. Groups can tour the Hall, visit the gardens and/or enjoy delicious refreshments.

Offsite Talks: We can deliver an interesting talk on the history of Lamport to your group or society at your usual meeting venue.

Volunteering: We have a variety of volunteering opportunities available at the Hall including guided tours, front of house, in our cafe and gardening.

Contact us on engagement@lamporthall.co.uk or 01604 686272 for more information.
www.lamporthall.co.uk

An outstanding provider of live-in care

The Good Care Group has been providing high-quality live-in care UK for over 10 years. Our care is focused on keeping people safely and happily in the comfort and familiarity of their own homes, whilst improving their overall health and well-being. Care is provided on a one-to-one basis by experienced and trained carers, using a 5 day trained programme endorsed by the national charity, Age UK. Our care is highly personalised reflecting not just an individual's care needs, but their choices, wishes and social preferences as well. This enables our clients to maintain as much independence as possible while enjoying the lifestyle they are accustomed to.



Call
Roger Harris
at Age UK
Northamptonshire.

For those living with specialist conditions like dementia, Parkinson's, or multiple sclerosis, our highly-trained live-in carers can provide care and support that positively enhances the quality of life.

The care and support we provide is regularly inspected. We are the only dedicated live-in home care services provider in England to achieve an 'Outstanding' rating by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). We have achieved this rating in all five measures – safe, effective, caring responsive and well-led. It has achieved the highest rating of a 6 (Excellent) for quality of care and support and 5 (very good) for staffing, management and leadership. We know this provides families with peace of mind that their loved one is receiving the best possible care.

Leading the Way in the Specialist Care of Conditions

For those living with specialist conditions like dementia, Parkinson's, or multiple

sclerosis, our highly-trained live-in carers can provide care and support that positively enhances the quality of life, enabling people to live well in their own homes.

Our nurse-led care for those living with ongoing or complex medical needs is led and supported by a dedicated Specialist Consultant Nurse, who works closely with our care teams to ensure we are consistently improving our clients' health outcomes.

We can provide care for conditions such as Dementia, Parkinson's, Multiple sclerosis (MS), Stroke after care, Cancer/Alzheimer's disease/Mobility and frailty/Palliative/End-of-life.

Whether you have mobility and frailty concerns, are recovering from an operation and need convalescent care or could simply benefit from companionship and emotional support, our comprehensive live-in care ensures you can live a fulfilled and meaningful life at home.

Our approach to delivering OT-led care at home, supported by our in-house Occupational Therapist, enables faster discharge from the hospital to those

coming into our care. Every client receives a comprehensive plan of care with all the equipment they need to live well at home, which significantly reduces the risk of falling.

Specialist Care Services

Specialist care from The Good Care Group combines the best of nursing and occupational therapy expertise to provide holistic home care-based services, enabling a cost-effective approach to high-quality care.

Why choose the Good Care Group?

Highest Standard of Carers

We employ and train carers to the very highest standards:

- Rigorous recruitment process – only 2% of carers who apply are successful
- Employed carers – staff are paid well, supported and rewarded for loyalty and performance
- Unrivalled training programme – Endorsed by Age UK
- On-going training and professional development
- No agency staff

Unrivalled Specialist Expertise

We are experts at specialist care that promotes health and wellbeing:

- Unrivalled expertise in medical conditions – including dementia, Parkinson's, MS, stroke rehabilitation, cancer and palliative care

For all
enquiries call
01604 631030.

Every client
receives a
comprehensive
plan of care
with all the
equipment they
need to live well
at home

- Holistic approach – person-centred and encompassing medical, emotional and social needs
- Responsive care – consistent monitoring and management of conditions to meet changing needs
- Best practice – drawing on expertise from leading health and social care professionals

Carers Continuity

We achieve care continuity through a dedicated, professional care team:

- Carer support – experienced care managers work with our carers
- In-depth knowledge – dedicated carers and experienced managers work closely to understand highly personal conditions and care needs

Fully Managed Services and 24/7 Support

We provide high levels of family support giving you peace of mind:

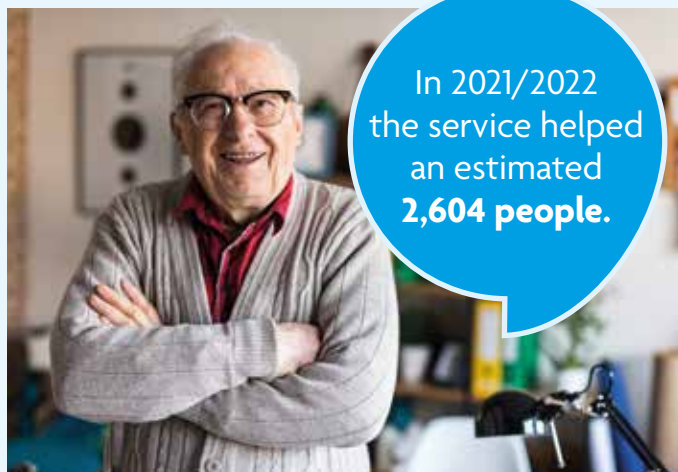
- Fully managed service – we manage and pay your care team, making the process as easy as possible
- Domestic responsibility – we take care of household administration and running of a home
- Close contact and support – regional care teams manage fewer clients than our competitors, so you get better levels of quality care
- 24/7 access to advice and experts – around the clock emergency support (not offered by introduction agencies)
- Continual control and monitoring – we are able to evaluate any concerns on an on-going basis to ensure the most appropriate level of care is provided at any time.

The Good Care Group are pleased and proud to be working closely with Age UK Northamptonshire, for further information, please call 0203 7287577 or 01604 631030.



the Good
Caregroup

THERE'S
NOWHERE
BETTER THAN
HOME



Money Management Support and Appointeeship

Information & Advice Service

Our Information & Advice Service provides free, confidential and independent information and advice to older people and their relatives, friends and carers.

Our small team of six advisers offer one-to-one support that enables older people to find solutions to matters that are worrying them or affecting their health and financial wellbeing. We can usually help directly, but if not, we can signpost you to someone who can. Our advisers help people claim benefits such as Attendance Allowance, Pension Credit and Carer's Allowance. We support people to make the best decision for themselves; this can involve little things or major life changes.

Age UK Northamptonshire provides this service free of charge, but we do welcome donations, as this helps us to provide the service to others in the county. Our advisers are always pleased when someone they have been helping makes a successful claim for a benefit and receives a back payment of several thousand pounds.

At the moment, many of our clients are struggling to cope with rocketing fuel bills caused by the energy crisis and we can supply information guides and factsheets on a wide range of topics such as energy advice and support, care homes, Wills, Power of Attorney and money management.

Visit www.ageuknorthants.org.uk to find out more or call us on 01604 611207.

These two services offer a range of expertise to help older and vulnerable people. This could be people with or without mental capacity who require assistance with their property and financial affairs. This could be tasks such as helping to open post and organising paperwork, cash collections or helping you to arrange the clearance and sale of your property if you have decided to move into full time care.

Age UK Northamptonshire can be legally appointed to manage your property and financial affairs if you have a temporary or permanent mental impairment that requires you to be assisted in this manner. This could either be under a DWP appointeeship, appointed under a Lasting Power of Attorney or applying to the Court of Protection to become a deputy.

We are also able to offer a consultation to help families and friends navigate the difficult area of funding care whether it be necessary now or in the future.

The aim of the Money Management Support and Appointeeship Service is to make sure that whether a person requires a small amount of help or complete management of their financial affairs, that they receive an excellent and attentive service.

For more information on this service call 01604 611200 or see our website

www.ageuknorthants.org.uk

Denise can help with setting up direct debits and cash collections



Our Hospital Discharge and Community Team

The HD&CT provides short-term support for people aged 55+, living with long-term health conditions, or after a stay in hospital. The team helps to access on-going services and aims to reduce the likelihood of hospital readmissions and enables people where possible to regain their independence.



Mr L aged 86 years contacted us asking for help with his cleaning. When we visited, during the conversation it became apparent that a cleaning service was not his only concern. Mr L told us that his wife for whom he had cared for over 25 years had recently passed away and he was struggling to come to terms with her death. Mr L had been her sole carer, supporting with personal care, shopping, cleaning, and cooking all their meals. He was finding it difficult having little contact with anyone during the day.

Before retiring Mr L had been a driving instructor and had enjoyed speaking to people of all ages and interests. His caring role had prevented him from socialising and joining any clubs. We suggested he might like coming to our day centre and asked if he would be interested in a telephone befriender to call him.

Mr L now has our cleaning service, he is pleased with this service and the bonus of seeing someone around the empty house! He attends the Kettering Day Centre, has

We help to
relieve pressure
on the NHS.

With support
from our
**Hospital
Discharge and
Community
Team he is now
a different
person, looks
forwards to
the day ahead
and feels he
has a purpose
to his life.**

made new friends, enjoys the activities and meals. A befriending volunteer has been matched with him who shares similar interests in sport and TV dramas.

Prior to the team becoming involved Mr L had been feeling low and isolated. His neighbours on both sides were out at work all day and he went for days without speaking to anyone. He felt he no longer had a purpose and was lost without his wife. This was having an impact on his physical and mental health. He had spoken to his GP on several occasions about feeling unwell and had also contacted the NHS 111 Medical Helpline. He spent time brooding about his health and this resulted in him not bothering to eat regularly or care about his appearance.

With the support from HD&CT he is now a different person, looks forwards to the day ahead and feels he has a purpose to his life.

For more information on our Hospital Discharge and Community Team call 01604 611200 or visit our website www.ageuknorthants.org.uk

Our shops

In January we were thrilled to open a brand new shop in Higham Ferrers in the former Colemans Stationers at 28 High Street. Yvette Prior and her team of staff and volunteers worked tirelessly to sort, clean, steam, price up stock to be able to open the doors on Friday 13th January. We were confident that we had a great shop in a great location, and we were right. The till didn't stop ringing all day and customers left with a smile on their face. The official opening, on 27th January, where The Mayor of Higham Ferrers Cllr Nigel Brown cut the ribbon, was attended by Joey Coleman and other special guests.

We are particularly pleased to be joining the thriving community of independent shops in this part of the county, and we are grateful for the goodwill that has been shown to us by local businesses and new customers at every stage of setting up the shop.

We already have a fabulous team of volunteers, including some students who are doing their Duke of Edinburgh Award.



Our new shop in Higham Ferrers

We have eight shops in Northamptonshire, please come and visit us.

With your support our shops raise vital income that enables us to help over 14,000 local older people and their families every year.

It's great to see them supporting a local charity. The volume of donations has been amazing so please keep them coming in so that we can carry on making a difference.

Income raised from selling items on ebay is important to us. Thank you for your donations.



Static donation collections make it easy for you to donate your unwanted items without the hassle



Cllr Nigel Brown cuts the ribbon at our new shop



of finding somewhere to park. We can register you for Gift Aid in just a couple of minutes. We are always keen to visit new locations in Northamptonshire and are happy to return to previous ones, please drop me an email if you would like us to come along and hold one of our collections yvette.prior@ageuknorthants.org.uk

Now that Spring is here watch out for our static donation collections:
28/03/23 in Oundle
18/04/23 in Moulton
30/05/23 in Brixworth
13/06/23 in Braunston

giftaid it

FANZONE

Are you an avid fan of Star Wars?
 Are you a Trekkie?
 Do you love Dr Who?



We need your expertise to help us to price unusual and collectable donations correctly. Please get in touch.

If your business has **excess stock** you want to move on, we welcome bulk donations to boost our income. If it is seasonal stock, it's not a problem, we can arrange suitable storage for us to sell later in the year.



Need a house clearance?

Call us for a quote.
We can help.

Follow
retail on

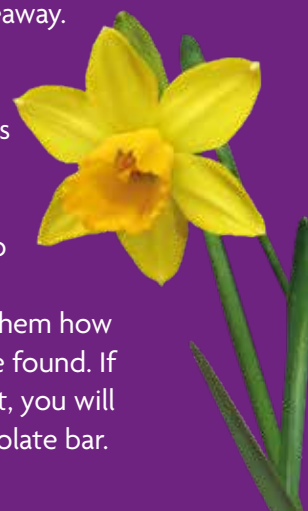


**Our shops
 welcome your
 donations.**

COMPETITION TIME

Many of you enjoyed our discount voucher in the Winter edition of Engage magazine. We hope you will take part in this issue's giveaway.

There are a number of Spring daffodils scattered within this issue. Please go into your local shop and tell them how many you have found. If you are correct, you will receive a chocolate bar. Good luck!





Clients at our Kettering Day Centre with activities purchased from the Stockburn Trust donation

Our Day Centres

Our day centres provide an environment that is warm, friendly, and safe for all. We provide a caring, comfortable, and enjoyable atmosphere for anyone who joins us, with the aim of being one big family with many friendships being formed along the way. Our staff are professional and fully trained and can put even the most anxious person at ease. We offer a range of activities across the day, which are both physically and mentally stimulating.

Our Kettering day centre in Rockingham Road is a smaller centre which caters for up to 20 clients per day. It has a homely feel and we have our own garden, which is used throughout the summer.

Our William and Patricia Venton Centre in Northampton is the largest of our three day centres and is currently undergoing refurbishment. We will soon be able to take more clients and will have improved facilities. Over Christmas our day care staff

**We are
expanding
and taking
new clients.**

**We provide a
safe, supportive
environment
where older
people can
meet up with
friends and
take part in
enjoyable,
stimulating
activities.**

took some clients to a party at Weston Favell School where they were treated to lovely sandwiches, mince pies and a choir. We would like to thank The Rotary Club Northampton Becket for the free tickets to see Jack & The Beanstalk at Royal & Derngate. Seven clients accompanied by three equally excited helpers had a fantastic time. Our clients enjoyed making Christmas decorations, and other festive crafts and were also visited by Mr and Mrs Santa who gave out gifts.

Our centre at Foxfields in Northampton is open Monday to Thursday and is currently benefiting from the enthusiastic input of local Health and Social Care students. They have introduced new activities such as Gingerbread decorating, Christmas bingo cards and sing-a-longs, which everyone has thoroughly enjoyed. Our manager and her team focus on supporting our clients' independence and ensure they enjoy their time with us. We are usually able to provide transport and welcome enquiries.

For more information on our Day Centres please call 01604 611200 or you can visit our website www.ageuknorthants.org.uk

Daughter of day centre client: “My late father started attending The William and Patricia Venton Centre in September 2017 following the loss of his wife and he sadly passed away on Boxing Day 2022.

He initially found coming to the day centre every Friday difficult, but with time and the patience and support of the staff and volunteers at the centre, he grew to enjoy it and made friends.

The day centre accommodated to meet his individual needs, offering him the opportunity to spend one to one time with another client to play dominoes. From this, Dad made a valued friend and it is something I treasure. In the last year he became frailer, however the staff were always there with open arms to greet him and once settled in his chair he would brighten up and make his jokes and enjoy the company of others. I could leave him knowing he was in safe, caring hands with people who valued him for the lovely individual he was.



“I could leave him knowing he was in safe, caring hands with people who valued him for the lovely individual he was.”

The manager and her team have gone above and beyond in giving him happy and fulfilling days at the centre. My thanks to them for treating him with such kindness, dignity and respect. It warmed my heart to witness the warmth and kindness shown to him. I have no doubt, as I have witnessed, that the staff and volunteers show such care and kindness to others at the centre. They are all special people.”

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Care support at home

This new service brings together our Day Care at Home and Carers Sitting Service. The service exists to support both carers, the person they look after and older people who do not have a carer but would like a little additional support.

Some older people do not want to attend a day centre but would benefit from a bit of company or need support to help them stay safe at home. A regular visit from our friendly staff can have a hugely positive effect on an older person's wellbeing.

We can do a jigsaw puzzle together or potter in the greenhouse or look through family photo albums and reminisce about happy times. You may simply want someone to sit and chat with you whilst you or your carer takes a break.

What our team do is largely up to you, but please be aware that although we can make a simple meal, we cannot provide personal care.

Currently the service is restricted to weekdays, but we are hoping to be able to offer weekend support in the future.

The service currently costs £16 per hour, set to increase from 1st April 2023.

68-year old Paul manages to stay independent thanks to the support of several agencies. He also has three helpful sisters who he sees regularly, although they do not live nearby. Sue and Fran from our Care Support at Home service visit five times a week to provide company and carry out everyday tasks that keep Paul on an even keel.

Paul says Sue's visits are "a chance to get things done." Sue will put on a load of



Paul is happy living in his own home

A friendly face to visit you safely in your home.

washing, change the bedding and check the use-by dates of items in the fridge. Most mornings Paul likes eggs for breakfast but this week, for the first time, Sue made porridge. Sue also prompts Paul to take his medication in the morning and prepares a sandwich for him to eat after she has gone.

"There's always a sandwich in the fridge although you never know where it's come from," says Paul.

Sue and Paul are both avid fans of Radio 2's Popmaster quiz and enjoy comparing how many points they manage to score. They feel particularly aggrieved that Ken Bruce will soon be leaving. Paul says Ken Bruce is one of those people who don't look like they sound. "He's actually completely bald," he says.



We have a small team so we try to ensure that **the same person visits each week.**

It may be that you wish someone to visit once a week or three times a week, it is up to you. We will do our best to provide the service you need.

and Stephen is wearing the wristband.

Eon will refer Stephen to their priority list for vulnerable customers too so that he gets priority service during any power cuts. This is free of charge. The indoor smart meter was a little more complicated and I did go through the operation and purpose again with Stephen when the person left, they have also left some literature. I think it will take time for Stephen to get to grips with both devices but hopefully he will get used to them.

I also cooked a cottage pie from scratch whilst I was there to use up ingredients from the fridge. Stephen had a portion for lunch today with some fresh vegetables, another is left in the fridge and one portion has been frozen. I used the rest of my time between the appointments to sort out and fold some washing and clothing, prepared a sandwich for tea and washed up.

We chatted throughout the visit as we usually do, mostly about the football and putting the world to rights!

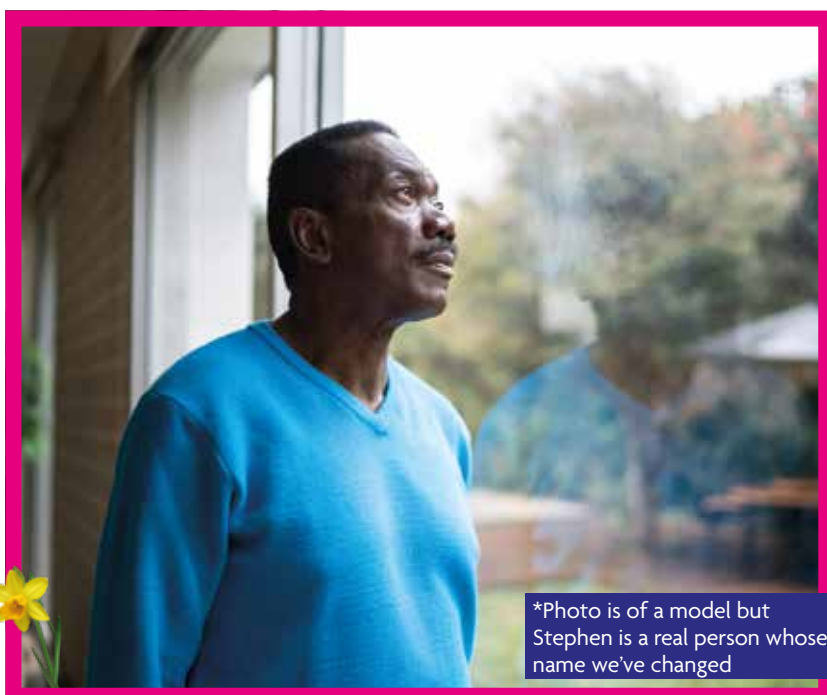
Stephen found the morning to be somewhat difficult and confusing, with people coming and going and being given lots of information. I offered reassurance throughout so that he wasn't too unsettled by the whole process. It was good though to get everything sorted in one morning.

Sue or Fran will accompany Paul to hospital or podiatry appointments when necessary. We also do his grocery shopping every Thursday and encourage him to take exercise every day.

Paul and Sue are looking forward to spring when the weather will improve and they will be able to go for walks in the local area "and not have to wear three layers," says Paul.

How does it work for our client, Stephen

I visited Stephen* this morning from 9am to 1pm to provide support with the EON smart meter installation and the falls monitor being set up. Both visits went well: the falls monitor box is plugged in behind the sofa



*Photo is of a model but Stephen is a real person whose name we've changed

Fundraising and news

Age UK Northamptonshire is a local, independent charity and all donations and fundraising for us is used to support older people in Northamptonshire. There are many ways you can help us make life for older people more enjoyable and less lonely.

Display one of our collecting goblets in your business – all that small change adds up! Call Jo Bird on 01604 611200.

Call us to arrange a talk about the services and support we provide in your local area – We can visit your club or group to tell you more about what we do and how we improve life for thousands of older people in Northamptonshire.

Please get in touch. Call us on 01604 611200 or email access@ageuknorthants.org.uk



Electric Blanket Testing Day in Daventry

Out and about in Northamptonshire

“With an electric blanket, safety is an absolute must,” said Colin (pictured above with wife Susanne). We held four electric blanket testing events in Finedon, Daventry, Northampton and Corby, thanks to funding from Northamptonshire Community Foundation.

Social Prescribing Lead Sam Watson met Avondale Grange resident Susan in Kettering on 14/10/22 at a workshop organised by North Northamptonshire Council's **Well Northants Programme**.



The Big Knit

A huge thank you to all our knitters for their amazing support again in the Big Knit. Hats have now been spotted in supermarkets around Northamptonshire, so keep your eye out for them!



Big Knit hats are in Sainsbury's in Northampton



We were delighted to attend West Northamptonshire Council and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities and East Midlands Council's civic welcome event for people settling in Northampton as Hong Kong British National (Overseas) Visa holders.

Pictured, left to right, Morcea Walker, the Vice-Lord Lieutenant of Northamptonshire, Cllr Andre Gonzalez De Savage and Deb Burns.

We are pleased to work in partnership with Hollowells Funeral Directors in Northampton to provide information at their “**Now I am One**” sessions.



Christine with Helen from Hollowells



Petrina Wright and Judith Warren represented Age UK Northamptonshire at the **Mascular Society's** sight loss awareness day at St Andrew's church hall in Kettering in October.

Thank you to...

Northampton Caritas and the Northampton Diocese of the Catholic Church whose 29 Christmas gift bags of festive goodies “let people know we are with them, and they are not alone.”



Len and dog Izzy were delighted with the bag from Caritas

Alex, Sarah, Jason, Jeff, Ron and Patrick who collected a fantastic £341.28 at the Northampton Saints v Newcastle Falcons game in October.



Four Tesco stores in Kettering and Rothwell who are supporting us through their Community Grants fund – **please use your blue token to vote for us by 31st March 2023.**

Kate at John Lewis & Partners in Northampton for an amazing £1,949.00 towards our www.justgiving.com/campaign/bathingequipment



Residents of Northampton who supported the Lions Club of Northampton's annual Can Collection in November. Groceries and festive treats were distributed to local older people to brighten up their Christmas.

Barclays Northampton for donating items of warm clothing to help older people during harder times with the cost of living crisis.

Lush Northampton who brought in special Christmas smellies for day centre clients at The William and Patricia Venton Centre.



Margaret Hughes for her Fab-YULE-us fundraising Christmas craft stall at the St Andrews Church Christmas Fayre in December in Kettering.

We were proud to support **Dementia Day** in Corby Cube on Wednesday 9th November, organised by Isobel Mann of Bray & Bray Solicitors to bring together local organisations who provide support to people with dementia.



Vicky, Petrina, Isobel and Bekki at Corby Dementia Day

Our **2022 AGM** was held on Wednesday 16th November. Visit our website to see copies of annual reports and accounts.



Giles West from Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Trust with Trustee Paul Bertin and Chief Executive Chris Duff at our AGM in November



Roger with Pindy Kaur at the Sikh Temple Open Day in November

Roger Harris our Sales and Marketing Manager was pleased to attend a networking event at the **Doddridge Centre** and the open day at the **Gurdwara Siri Guru Singh Sabha** in Northampton in November.

You can help...

Play the make a smile lottery. We were thrilled that one of our supporters was our first **£1,000 winner** in December.

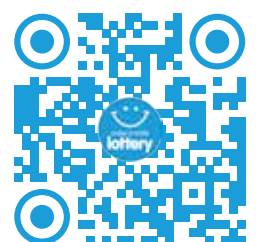
Why not support us by purchasing Single Tickets.

Choose when you want to play for **as little as £1 per play!**

Every £1 makes a **huge difference** to local older people.

www.ageuk.org.uk/northamptonshire/get-involved/make-a-smile-lottery

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