

Engage

Age UK Northamptonshire **Spring 2025**



**Changing the way we
live in later life**

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Timeline extended for Digital Switchover

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"I am 96 and live alone. My carers collect my groceries every Friday, and on other days, they help keep my home clean and tidy. They also iron my laundry and post letters for me. With their support, I am able to live comfortably and according to my wishes. I am eternally grateful for their help."

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Good



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Care from the heart

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Our care home is located in the historic market town of Towcester, just a short drive west of Northampton. Our community offers the very best for those needing that extra bit of support in later life, as well as those to live well with dementia.

Life at Brook House begins with a warm welcome the minute you walk through the door into the bistro and lounge. Our stunning purpose-built home features a hair salon, cinema, private dining room, as well as a library. There are comfortable lounges for relaxation and entertainment, and plenty of spaces to receive visiting family and friends. Our beautiful accessible patio gardens enjoy a lovely sunny aspect, and for those keen to venture out there are regular trips to the local shops, cafés and nearby places of interest.

Types of care | Residential • Dementia

Types of stay | Permanent • Respite • Day Care



“

One of the best things about my job is knowing that our residents are living their best

life, seeing their

smiles, and knowing we are looking after them. Everything we do at Brook House is from the heart and it is not a job, but a passion. We are building a home together - team and residents.

”

Rhannon

Rhannon Crofts, Home Manager

ACH1115



Engage foreword

from the
Chief Executive

Spring is on its way and temperatures are rising. This is a hopeful time although this financial year 2025/26 will be one of the most challenging for our charity, Age UK Northamptonshire. We will have a large deficit in our budget in this coming year.

The rise in the needs of the older population means that we support more and more clients with more and more services every year. This has been especially the case in recent years given the challenges of loneliness and ill health from Covid and its aftermath, together with inflation and the rising costs of heating.

We have recently completed a really big effort to make sure that those who are eligible will receive pension credit (and winter fuel payments). This was one of several services that is free and that depends entirely on the generosity of donors. Other free services include telephone befriending, benefits assessment and claims and information and advice. We are also planning to launch a bereavement counselling service soon.

Our services are cost effective and we have many volunteers who are the essential backbone of what we provide. We have services that we must charge for but we

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try to keep the costs as low as possible. Unfortunately, our wages costs are rising due to the increases in costs of National Insurance and the National Living Wage. We are sorry that we will have to put our prices up this year as a result.

This Engage magazine has many positive articles about what we do. My appeal to all of you who read it, is that you consider making a donation to us so that we can keep our free services and that those services we provide for a charge can be as affordable as possible.

Thank you for your understanding and generosity.

Telephone (main reception): **01604 611200**
and website **www.ageuknorthants.org.uk**

Kindest regards,
Chris Duff
Chief Executive

Editors

Jo Bird 01604 611200
jo.bird@ageuknorthants.org.uk

Christopher Duff 01604 611200
christopher.duff@ageuknorthants.org.uk

The William and Patricia Venton Centre
York Road, Northampton NN1 5QJ

www.ageuknorthants.org.uk

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Advertising

Jayne, Steph, Amy and Fern
hello@typestartcrest.co.uk
01536 418181

TypeStart Crest

12 Brooklands Court, Kettering Venture
Park, Kettering, Northants NN15 6FD

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The costs of care – value for money

Paying for care in your later years can be a huge cost. Nobody knows for sure whether or not they will need care, either for themselves or their loved ones.

The average cost of a bed in a residential care home in the UK is now as much as £70,000 a year in some areas. Care home fees have risen by nearly 20% in the last two years, according to healthcare data provider Laing Buisson. Paying for care has become a huge financial commitment and a worry for all those trying to plan ahead.

Around 2.5% of the population aged 65 years and over were living in care homes in 2021 in England and Wales, according to the Office for National Statistics. The likelihood of needing residential care increases with age. Less than 1% of people aged 65 to 69 reside in care homes but that figure rises to 10.8% for those aged 85 and over.

Caroline Abrahams, Director at our sister charity, Age UK, said: “If you need social care for any length of time the bills really do add up, far beyond what most people could ever comfortably afford.

The belief that social care is part of the NHS and so available to all for free remains quite prevalent, but sadly this is far from the truth. Unless you have pronounced care needs and very few assets it will be down to you or your family to meet the costs.”

It is not an easy subject to discuss with people. In a survey of over a thousand Which members in March 2024, 56% of respondents said they hadn't discussed the planning of later life care with their loved ones.

The ‘affordability problem’ with social care has been getting steadily worse, leaving many older people who would never consider themselves particularly well off having to pay large bills.

Care Homes are **not** the only option.



You will need to pay the full cost if you have more than £23,250 in savings and assets.

In England, you will need to pay the full cost of your in-home or residential care if you have more than £23,250 in savings and assets. In certain circumstances, the NHS will cover the cost of a care home if you have complex health needs but the rules are themselves complex and it's not at all easy to qualify.

The cost of a care home varies substantially: £1,383 per week in London compared with £1,088 in the East Midlands. Care homes are not the only option, however. According to Lottie, a care home comparison website, the most expensive form of care is live-in care, in which a carer lives with you full-time. This costs an average of £1,596 a week.

The alternative is to pay for at-home care. For someone with extensive care needs, live-in care costs an average of £228 per day in England, or £82,992 annually. But it is important to note that, unlike care homes, the cost of care at home will depend on the number of hours the carer works. According to Lottie, domiciliary care – when you receive care at home on an hourly basis – costs an average of £28 an hour.

The challenge for most of us who are thinking about the future and how to fund it, is how to live independently in our own home for as long as possible. We will want to keep ourselves interested and happy at home whilst feeling safe with sufficient support networks. Many of us nowadays are not able to enjoy the company and support of our children and family, those having moved, often a long way away. Depending on the level of care needed, there are various living arrangements and support services that could help us live at home for as long as possible.

When you're finding it difficult to carry out personal care routines – such



as washing or dressing – home care can provide the support you need to stay safe and independent in your own home. Are you looking for help with tasks like eating and dressing for a few hours a week, or do you need 24-hour live-in care? For example, you may need some help to stay independent but don't feel you need regular professional care at home. You may only need temporary care if someone has just come out of hospital or may only need a few jobs done.

Organising home care comes with its own challenges. You will want to work out what type of support is needed, choosing the right company or individual to provide the care, and getting to grips with often complex fees and charges. Would a private carer or personal assistant suit you better? You may want to begin your search through a domiciliary care agency who will provide professional care staff.

Before deciding how much professional

Some **help at home** can keep you independent.



Our Care Support at Home Service starts at £25 per hour.

care is needed, think about whether this could be supplemented with support from family or friends, or with other less expensive kinds of help around the home, such as a cleaner, gardener or companion. Consider exploring home adaptations or assistive technologies that could enhance your independence or that of a loved one.

Do feel free to talk to Age UK Northamptonshire. Our Care Support at Home Service is CQC registered and can provide a variety of services for you, tailored to what you need and can afford. We are also happy to recommend or signpost you to many other providers who operate in your area. Whatever you choose to do, it is important to consider the challenge sooner rather than later.

Kindest regards,

Chris Duff

Chief Executive,
Age UK Northamptonshire



Coffee Mornings

Every other Wednesday 10am - 12pm

*Starting from 15th January 2025

We welcome our local community to join us for a delightful coffee morning. We look forward to getting to know our neighbours and local groups over a cup of tea and cake.

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Age Concern Middleton Cheney

We meet on the first Wednesday of each month 2-4pm in the village hall, and welcome all who are over 55. Most of our members are from Middleton Cheney, but some are from outlying villages. We have around 50 people attending each month and offer company, refreshments and entertainment. It brings people out of their homes to meet friends and make new ones,



and it is great to hear the sheer volume of voices talking together. We also organise a monthly luncheon at a local pub-restaurant.

We have strong links with Age UK Northamptonshire and they provide information about the support and services available in our area.

Susanne Allen
Secretary

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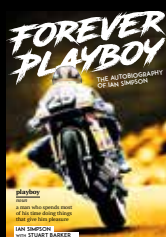
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and who we are...

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Digital Switchover – date change

A few months ago, we reported that some vulnerable clients would start to encounter problems as BT escalated its Digital Switchover plan for telephone lines across the country.

This would mean that some people would start to see interference for their devices such as personal alarms, also known as lifelines.

We were pleased to see that BT has significantly delayed their plans to force customers to switch from physical copper-based landlines to internet-based services following concerns from vulnerable people.

BT has now abandoned the timeline of completing the national switchover by the end of 2025.

The switch was paused at the end of last year after several incidents where telecare devices stopped working.

Nearly two million people in the UK use personal alarms which rely on landlines.

BT has now abandoned the timeline of completing the national switchover by the end of 2025, and will instead aim to complete the move by the end of January 2027.

Some might see this as a token concession. In reality, it gives just over a year to ensure that existing companies have time to help replace equipment, or supply adaptors to existing clients, to ensure they are never without the peace of mind which a personal alarm gives.

BT says its new timetable followed the introduction of a series of improvements to better protect vulnerable customers and those with additional needs.

The urgency for switching customers to digital services grows by the day because the 40-year-old analogue landline technology is increasingly fragile.

Age UK Northamptonshire has been working with personal alarm company Careline365 for a few years now. Recently, Careline365 launched a digital standalone device which does not need a telephone line or a Wi-Fi connection. This means that clients will not have to worry when their telephone line is switched over as their digital personal alarm will keep working 24 hours a day, giving peace of mind not only to clients but also their family and loved ones who may worry about them being left in a vulnerable situation.

For more information on this Careline365 service please visit our trading website **www.agenorthamptonshire.co.uk** or call our Sales and Marketing Manager Roger Harris on **01604 631030**.



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Age UK Northamptonshire and Careline365 have partnered to offer local residents a 24/7 personal alarm monitoring service from as little as £2.67 per week.

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When talking to the Manager of Cloudy2Clear Northampton & Oxford Trevor Skidmore it became evident that the value of saving their customers money has been held dear for a number of years. Since buying the franchise in 2006, Trevor & Wendy now have their 2 sons Lloyd & Ross and daughter in law Lori involved along with Dan, Tom & Jo and have committed to supporting the local community by providing a service that saves the public both time and money.

The Cloudy2Clear service only requires the glass to be replaced and not the whole window once the unit has failed. Trevor commented "By doing this we make the customer considerable savings and there is much less upheaval in the family home. Also, whether communities find themselves in a financial crisis or not, saving money when you don't need to waste it is always the sensible option, and our truly family service does just that"

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Our Day Centres

If you are looking for a day out of fun, companionship and stimulating activities, with likeminded people, or maybe you are a carer who requires respite, we run three friendly day centres in Northamptonshire. You can join us in Towcester, Northampton or Kettering from villages and towns across the county.

Huge thank you to the Rotary Club Northampton Beckett for the tickets to see Cinderella at the Royal & Derngate. Everyone enjoyed a fantastic performance.



Eddie enjoys decorating the Christmas tree at Leeson Court



In Towcester May is giving some useful dating advice



John with his Chinese lantern in Northampton



Coming to our day centre gives Maggie the opportunity to make Christmas crafts

We are increasing our transport capacity for people living in Wellingborough, so if you'd like to come to our Northampton or Kettering day centres on a Friday, there are spaces available on our minibuses. Please do get in touch.

Over the last few months our clients have enjoyed activities of crafts, games, live entertainment and even visits from therapy dogs, from Pets as Therapy.

Christmas was indeed a busy month, with all three centres holding festive parties with turkey dinners, with all the trimmings. We were visited by school choirs and enjoyed the carol singing, several visits from Father Christmas with gifts for all. A big thank you to local businesses for generously donating the gifts for our clients.



Are you a qualified hairdresser looking for premises in central Northampton? We may have just what you need at The William and Patricia Venton Centre. The hairdressing salon is available to rent Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm, and includes sinks, hairdressing chairs, electricity, hot water and a friendly, accommodating environment.

Please get in touch for an informal chat or if you have any questions about our bathing or salon facilities on 01604 611200.



Martin and Tony sing along to Boogey Wonderland in Kettering



Bob and Andy are all shook up in Kettering!



Mary has been coming to Leeson Court since we opened in August 2024. She enjoys the company of familiar faces from Towcester and likes joining in the activities. Her favourites are balloon tennis and the parachute games.

We were thrilled to learn that Mary is a talented opera singer who studied violin at The Royal Academy and voice at The Guildhall in London. Mary's husband Will kindly played a recording of her singing and we were all star struck.



The William and Patricia Venton Centre in Northampton offers bathing and showering facilities. The ergonomic bath can be used by anyone who can transfer into the seat. There is an additional charge for this service. We provide towels, toiletries and support from care assistants.



Having a great time at the Glow Party in Towcester



Tim enjoyed meeting Bella who visited our Kettering day centre

A day in the life... of our Sales and Marketing Manager **Roger Harris**

Here at Age UK Northamptonshire it is easy to say that no one day is ever the same for any staff member, and this is certainly the case for myself. My role is varied, looking after a couple of teams within the charity; our wonderful Reception team and the Sales and Marketing team, as well as ensuring customer enquiries for our products and services are responded to in a timely manner.

Recently I went out to see a client in Thrapston to provide information on making a Will and also give her a guide to Lasting Power of Attorney. The client opened the door in a very distressed state as her boiler had stopped working the night before, which meant she had no hot water or heating.

She was really concerned that she did not have a plumber to call. My first thought was to point her towards our Business and Trades Directory, knowing that she would find a trusted tradesperson listed for her to call. But, the need was more urgent and really needed looking at straight away as the house was freezing.

When I looked at the boiler, I could see the water pressure was way down. I showed the client how she could open the valves underneath and increase the pressure and “bingo” the boiler kicked in.

Within half an hour we were sat at the kitchen table, with a cup of tea and the radiator warmed the room almost instantly. We laughed and chatted and went through the paperwork I had originally called out to see her about.

From there, I paid a visit to a client who was unsure how our Careline365 personal

It is rewarding and I really believe not only myself but all staff provide the very best to their ability to help all clients.

alarm worked. I took our demo unit with me, which enabled me to plug it into her electric socket and speak to the call centre. The lady was impressed that it set up so quickly and was confident that she could wear the wristband 24 hours a day, giving her peace of mind and also her son who was concerned about his mother's welfare.

Just after lunch, I made it back to the office, to meet with a day care client who needed a witness to sign his Lasting Power of Attorney documents arranged by our paralegal partner Maureen Evans. This meant that his paperwork could now be registered with the Office of the Public Guardian, as the current waiting time is eight to ten weeks.

Once I was at my desk, there were many emails from both staff and clients with various enquiries. My next task was to confirm two more personal alarm enquiries and then assist our Hospital Discharge & Community Team as they had a client recently discharged to his home but he urgently needed a deep clean in his bedroom and bathroom. A quick call to our partner company HCS Deep Cleaning Services meant that the client was in touch with another reputable business for a quote and a time frame to get the job done.

Now then where did I leave my cup of coffee...

I can honestly say working for Age UK Northamptonshire is the best role I have had. It is rewarding and I really believe not only myself but all staff provide the very best to their ability to help all clients in any situation and I sleep really well every night!



A photograph of a young Black woman with curly hair, wearing a green polo shirt, smiling and assisting an elderly white woman with short hair and glasses, who is wearing a blue sweater. They are sitting on a couch in a bright, indoor setting.

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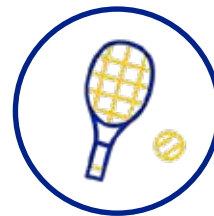
► Housekeeping

► Community Support



► Activities

► Grocery Shopping



A great way to connect with nature

If you are fortunate enough to have access to a garden, then you will be aware of its benefits. Gardens are a great way to connect with nature and experience a sense of wellbeing.

By simply planting the right kind of plants you can attract all sorts of insects. For example, butterflies, such as Peacocks, Comma, Small Tortoiseshells and the Painted Lady, are attracted to plants like buddleia and verberna to feed on the nectar.

Other plants, such as nasturtiums, will attract butterflies such as the Large White, for the purpose of egg-laying. Even on ivy you may see the tiny Holly Blue butterfly and the Red Admiral.

Alternatively, you may want to leave a part of your garden as a 'wild space' to allow plants to seed themselves. It is often these plants that are the most attractive to butterflies, moths and other insects. For example, Ragwort is the larval foodplant of the Cinnabar moth and you may find their distinctive black and yellow caterpillars feeding on them in the summer months.

Whatever style of garden appeals to you our friendly, reliable gardeners will help you look after it. All our staff are fully insured and DBS checked. In addition to general gardening, they can also help with planting or encouraging areas for wildlife.

For more information please call Richard A'Court on **01604 210587** or email **access@ageuknorthants.org.uk**. Visit our website **www.ageuknorthants.org.uk**.



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Tai Chi and Qigong

These classes of low-intensity physical activity are especially beneficial to older people. Qigong involves coordinating slow-flowing movement and a calm, meditative state of mind. Instructor Dominic who also teaches the Tai Chi classes says "What you think you are doing and what you are doing should be the same. Every move should be easy, we're aiming for good posture and a comfortable spine."

The first class starts promptly at 10.30am with a ten minute break between the two 55-minute sessions.

- Improves core strength
- Improves balance-enhancing stability
- Improves cognitive functions and memory
- Improves flexibility
- Increase in function
- Increase in strength
- Effective in reducing pain from some conditions
- Effective at lowering blood pressure
- Can be done seated
- You can practice at home

Tai Chi and Qigong with Dominic Rushmore at The Pastures Community Centre, Welford Road, Kingsthorpe, Northampton NN2 8PN.

Every Tuesday 10.30am - 11.30am & 11.30am - 12.30pm (for all levels of mobility and chair friendly)

Cost: £7 per session, paid monthly in advance to Age UK Northamptonshire (not the instructor).

For further information regarding a FREE taster session and how to join please visit www.ageuknorthants.org.uk where you can complete the enrolment forms online. Or call 01604 611200 or email lifetimeaukn@ageuknorthants.org.uk

Home Care Cleaning Service

Age UK Northamptonshire's Home Care Cleaning service offers help with light housework in your home. Whatever your reason for wanting help with the housework, we are here to help you and make your life a little easier. We charge £23 per hour.

All clients will be visited by a member of staff from one of our community based teams to assess their needs and find out what support they would like. We will organise payment arrangements with you and set up a regular visit by one of our Domestic Care Workers. This can be on a weekly or fortnightly basis and will always be with the same person.

All our cleaners are DBS checked and we have checked their references for your own peace of mind. We know that many of our clients look forward to their regular visits with a friendly face helping to support them.

If you would like more information, please contact Dave Haynes or Debbie O'Sullivan on **01604 611211**.



WORK FOR US

We are recruiting new cleaning staff. If you would be interested in joining our team, please give Dave or Debbie a call and they will be happy to give you more details about the role. Tel: **01604 611211** or visit www.ageuknorthants.org.uk for further information and apply online.

Celebrating our volunteers



Caroline Roy,
Volunteers Co-ordinator

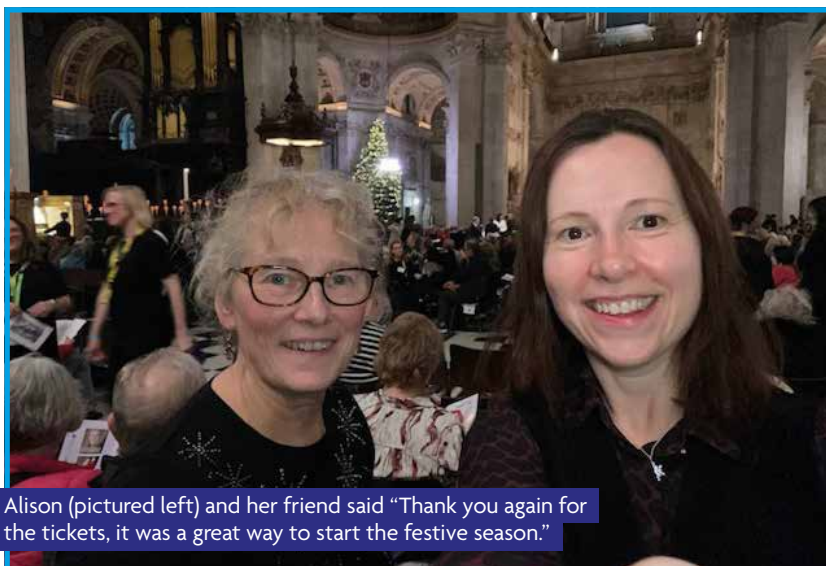
Volunteers are incredible. We simply could not reach as many local older people and make such a difference without them.

In volunteering you'll have the chance to meet some truly inspiring people, with stories you'll never forget. You'll also gain new skills and experiences whilst making new friends, but most importantly, you'll make a difference to the lives of so many.

We have many volunteering opportunities, from providing friendly weekly phone calls to helping out in one of our shops. You can also support clients to enjoy a fun filled day in one of our day centres or carry out an administrative role. Whatever your preference there's something for everyone.

By volunteering with us, you can help reduce loneliness, provide essential support and bring a smile to the faces of local older people, whilst you are supported by a great team.

For more information simply contact me on **01604 210625** or email **volunteers@ageuknorthants.org.uk**. Or visit our website **www.ageuknorthants.org.uk**.



Alison (pictured left) and her friend said "Thank you again for the tickets, it was a great way to start the festive season."

Festive fun

We celebrated our volunteers in a variety of ways over the Christmas period to say a huge thank you to them all.

Alison (pictured left), who volunteers at our Higham Ferrers shop, was thrilled to win two tickets to the Age UK Love Christmas Carol Concert at St. Paul's Cathedral.

Alison and her friend had a very enjoyable time. She said "I have just got back from a lovely evening at St Paul's Cathedral - singing carols, listening to the choir and Ella Henderson, and passages read by others. Sir Tony Robinson read out a fantastic 12 Days of Christmas, so funny."

Rosie, Terry, Eunice and Eileen tell us why they enjoy volunteering at our Northampton day centre.

Rosie - "I love to volunteer at the day centre, I love to see the clients' smiling faces and the warm atmosphere."

Terry - "I love the clients and enjoy the puddings."

Eunice - "I get as much out of being here as the clients do and wouldn't want to be anywhere else."

Eileen - "I love the people, staff, and the great atmosphere."



Our volunteers are vital to the success of our charity and it is lovely for us to be able to give something back.



Our Kettering shop volunteers enjoy a meal out



Our Rothwell shop volunteers enjoy celebrating together

Liz (pictured centre) has volunteered at our Kettering day centre for nearly six years.

She says "Many of the clients who come to spend the day with us would be on their own at home, so to see them interacting with one another, having a laugh, enjoying the activities and lunch is lovely to see. To feel I contribute to this makes me happy."



Linda (left) loves volunteering at our Kettering day centre. She says "I've enjoyed my time volunteering over the past 18 months. It's interesting helping and meeting new people. We have so many laughs along the way."



Wendie Hutton, Day Care Coordinator Northampton says "It's lovely to show how much of a difference our volunteers make."



Our St. Giles shop retail team celebrated their volunteers with festive nibbles at the shop. Amanda (left) has enjoyed working at the shop for a few years now and Caroline (right) has been with us for 11 years! They all lend a hand to serving the customers, operating the till, sorting donations and much more.

Patricia says "I love volunteering for Age UK Northamptonshire and feel very appreciated. The clients and staff make me feel so happy and welcome. It puts a smile on my face every time I visit."



If you have an hour to spare a week, why not become a Volunteer Telephone Befriender.

Our Telephone Befriending Service has helped create hundreds of new friendships, and clients tell us their call, from their Volunteer Telephone Befriender, is the highlight of their week.

Our service is here for people in later life who'd like to talk to someone on a regular weekly basis to eliminate loneliness or the isolation they may be feeling.

If you're over 18 and can give one hour of your time each week to chat with an older person, volunteering with the Telephone Befriending Service could be right for you.

All we ask is you have access to a smart phone, iPad or PC in order to access an app we use to facilitate this service.

What your help means to our clients.



Robert Telephone Befriending client

"Gill has been a good friend, and I enjoy talking to her every week - we share each other's thoughts. Age UK Northamptonshire has been really good to me over the past few years. I thank you all."



Telephone Befriending client Patricia and dog Sparky

"I didn't think I'd like the service, but I actually do very much. It's nice to have Sammy call me, she feels like a friend. We talk about dogs a lot, as we both have them. Sammy is lovely to talk with."



Susan Telephone Befriending client

"Becky means the world to me. She has a great listening ear and has helped me no end as I've been through a lot. I really appreciate her calls, she's so lovely to me."



Michael Telephone Befriending client

"Janet is a lovely lady to speak to, she's very caring and understanding, and I look forward to her calls – it's one of the highlights of my week."



Janett Telephone Befriending client

"Janet always leaves me a message if I'm not available and over time we have shared more and more together. I love that and really enjoy her calls."



Marion Telephone Befriending client

"I thank Becki very much. I enjoy her calls and am so touched to receive a gift from you all."



We welcomed Kelly to the Telephone Befriending Service in September 2024 and she calls three of our lovely clients on a weekly basis. Here's why she enjoys her volunteering role as a Volunteer Telephone Befriender:

"Since becoming a Volunteer Telephone Befriender I have realised just how much I missed this type of work. Being able to sit and listen to stories of the clients and share some precious memories with them is so rewarding. I find myself looking forward to the following week as much as I feel they do."

I have a sense of purpose in my life once more and truly would love to get stuck in and help more and any training or development available, I'm the first to say yes please.

I thank you for accepting me as part of the team and I look forward to many months ahead."

For more information, please contact Caroline Roy on **01604 210625**, email **volunteers@ageuknorthants.org.uk** or visit our website where you can find the volunteer application form **www.ageuknorthants.org.uk**.

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Thrapston Triplets

Identical triplets Jan, Migs and Cathy were born in Essex 74 years ago but are so happy to have ended up living not far from each other in Northamptonshire.

Six years ago Cathy decided she wanted to help her local community. She got in contact with Age UK Northamptonshire and arranged to volunteer at their shop in Thrapston. Cathy had only been helping out a few weeks when Jan called into the shop to see how it was going. She was so impressed by how busy and friendly everyone was, that she decided to volunteer too.

The two sisters say they love being useful. They each work the equivalent of a morning a week, sorting the donations and helping manager Tracy keep everything running smoothly. Jan says she is always amazed by the variety of items people donate and loves to chat to customers. Tracy says she couldn't manage without them.



If you have a diagnosis of dementia

Every year Age UK Northamptonshire's Information & Advice Team helps hundreds of older people with a diagnosis of dementia claim Attendance Allowance. It is an important benefit to claim from the Department of Work and Pensions because it is not means tested or taxable. It is paid to people over pension age who are disabled, or need supervision or have difficulties with personal care.

If you are living with dementia, or caring for a person with dementia, and they are awarded Attendance Allowance, it may affect how much council tax you pay. Anyone can be disregarded if they are classed as "severely mentally impaired". This does not depend on your income or savings. If you think this might apply to you, contact either West Northamptonshire Council or North Northamptonshire Council to ask for a severe mental impairment exemption or discount form. You can also apply online at the councils' websites.

Toenail Cutting

Several of our day centre clients benefitted from a free toenail-cutting service on Monday 4th November by kindly volunteering to be "a client" at a training day for our staff. The mandatory training, organised by Toenail Service Administrator Lynsey Jenkins, is provided by Helen Linden DPodM, BSc (Hons), RCPod, of Rockingham Podiatry, and ensures that our staff are fully-trained and continue to provide an excellent service. Adele said she especially enjoyed the unexpected foot massage!



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Yvette,
Retail Development Manager

Our shops

Spring is here and the weather is slowly improving, one of our charity shops may just have what you are looking for to refresh your wardrobe. Whatever it is pop along to one of our shops and the staff and volunteers will be on hand to help you find what you are looking for.



Our Home Store in Higham Ferrers is open Thursday to Saturday

November 2024 saw the launch of our first Age UK Northamptonshire Home Store, which is located at 12 High Street in Higham Ferrers. It's growing in popularity with new stock arriving daily. The Deputy Managers Sally Hunt and Linda Fish are on hand to help you choose what you are looking for. We even have a 'wanted list', if there

...it is an
Aladdin's cave
full of curios,
just waiting to
be re-loved in
your home.

is a particular item you want, just tell the staff, they can take your details and if one becomes available, we can let you know with no obligation to purchase. Our Home Store may not be big, but it is an Aladdin's cave full of curios, just waiting to be re-loved in your home.

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The Home Store has been exceptionally lucky to have on display a metal work of art created by local industrial artist, Chris Hanlon. Chris has worked on Find it, Fix it, Flog it and has created this horse made from a horse's head from a Wicksteed Park ride, a gas tank, truck springs and horse shoes. It's an amazing creation that customers are willing to give a donation to have their photo taken sitting on and is for sale.



A one-off piece of art that can only be found in our Home Store



Gwyneth hasn't looked back since volunteering for us

Gwyneth Westbrook celebrates 21 years of volunteering in our charity shop in Rothwell. Gwyneth, known to her friends as Gif, moved to Rushton back in 2003. She popped along to our charity shop to donate some curtains and she was so struck by the friendliness of the people working there, she asked about volunteering and she hasn't looked back. Gif has built up long lasting friendships, one for over 15 years and she has found that volunteering has provided a good support network especially when she lost her partner in 2023. Gif sees the staff and volunteers as her family. Retail has various volunteering opportunities so why not pop into your local Age UK Northamptonshire shop or visit our website www.ageuknorthants.org.uk.

Age UK Northamptonshire is always in need of donations, so we have created 'donation stations'. Currently we have six in place, two within the charity, two at Myton Food Group (Morrisons Manufacturing Division) in Rushden and Thrapston, one at Alimak Group UK Ltd in Rushden. Finedon Cricket & Golf Club also has one and they are being emptied regularly, so we know there is a need for it.

We are looking to have these placed around the county in large businesses. This will encourage people to donate during business hours, they pop it in the bin, we empty it when full, it couldn't be easier. This is a win win situation - we receive more donations, the customer can just drop it off and it also reduces the carbon footprint. Over the next few months our target is to get another ten out into large corporate businesses. If you have any suggestions or contacts then please email yvette.prior@ageuknorthants.org.uk or give her a call on **01604 636736**.



Helping you, your way

As we age it is natural to want to maintain the independence and comfort of living in our own home, however managing daily tasks, staying both physically and emotionally well, can become more challenging. That is where we come in. Our Care Support at Home Service is designed to assist older people with both practical and emotional needs, enabling you to stay in your familiar surroundings whilst you receive the attention you deserve.

We understand that each person's needs are unique, so we offer a range of flexible services. This can be tailored to fit your individual situation, whether it's help with light household tasks such as making the bed, cooking a healthy meal or shopping. Or if you would like someone to chat with and provide companionship we can do that too. We also offer meal and fluid monitoring, respite care and assistance with managing and attending medical appointments. We support you in receiving the care you need to stay well. We hope our service will enhance your daily life and keep you connected to your community whilst enjoying a greater sense of independence.

For your family we provide peace of mind, knowing that you are getting the support required, reducing the worry and stress they can feel when managing your needs at a distance. Our charges range from £25 - £35 an hour dependent on your needs. We believe it offers great value for those who want to remain at home but need some extra help. We understand it can be difficult to ask for assistance, but we are here to offer caring and respectful support to make your life more manageable. Our team is friendly, professional, and ready to work with you to ensure you feel comfortable and well cared for.



Our service is **not limited** to one hour.



We provide support and company at home for people age 55+.

Looking ahead, we will be expanding our services to include personal care. This means we will be able to assist with tasks such as mobility support, bathing, dressing and more, ensuring that your personal care needs are met with dignity and compassion. We are excited to offer this expanded service to provide a more complete solution to help you live independently at home. If you would like to learn more about our current services or hear about the upcoming personal care options, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Keep an eye out for updates - we are here to support you and your family every step of the way.

Stay independent, stay comfortable, let us help you to continue living "your" well at home.

"Everyone who works for this service likes making a difference to people's lives. We are always delighted when family members contact us to say they have noticed a positive



change in their loved one since we have been visiting. The families of our clients tell us they feel reassured, knowing that someone is visiting regularly. We build up a good rapport with all our clients and get to know them," says Sam.

For more information on our Care Support at Home Service please call **01604 611210** or email **CSH@ageuknorthants.org.uk**. You can find more information on our website **www.ageuknorthants.org.uk**.

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Business and Trades Directory

Age UK Northamptonshire's Business and Trades Directory has been running for over 13 years now. It is a valuable resource that can be used by anyone, not just older people and their families, to connect them with trusted local businesses. All traders listed in our directory have been checked by us. We hold details of references, copies of relevant insurance and public liability information to ensure their services are up to the standard we would expect.

Nowadays, we hear about so many rogue traders causing distress to older people, so by choosing traders on our directory we know that you will get a good service, from a trustworthy company at a reasonable cost.

Our directory is easy to access on our website www.ageuknorthants.org.uk. If you do not have access to the internet, please call Jo Bird on **01604 213086** and she will point you in the right direction. All our staff are aware of our list of traders and are happy to help you find what you need from it, wherever you are in the county.

People who have used our directory tell us that they appreciate being put in touch with a business that is local to them.

CG Property Maintenance has been on our Business and Trades Directory for over a year. They specialise in fascias, soffits, gutters and roofing for your property.



You can find Connor of CG Property Maintenance in all three areas of our Business and Trades Directory



Our directory is divided into North, South and Central areas.

When we asked Connor from CG Property Maintenance why he likes to be listed in our directory he said "It helps me, it helps you and helps put older people's minds at rest that they are getting a tradesman that can be trusted and will do a good job. I like to think I am helping protect people against rogue traders. I base my company on good reviews and take pride in my work."



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Fundraising and news

Join us to improve later life in Northamptonshire.

Support us in 2025!

Let's change how we age and work together to improve later life in Northamptonshire.

Your small change can help us change someone's life for the better – Vickie says "Call Jo Bird on **01604 213086** if you'd like to display one of our collecting goblets at your place of work."



Please keep knitting and help us reach our target of 20,000 little woolly hats for the Big Knit! Reaching our target will raise £6,000 to help support older people in the county. See our website for more details

www.ageuknorthants.org.uk.

Post your little hats to us by Tuesday 1st July 2025 at The William and Patricia Venton Centre, York Road, Northampton NN1 5QJ or drop them off at any of our nine shops in Northamptonshire.

Scan me to play



By playing make a smile lottery you can help us raise vital funds. For just £1 a week you could be in with a chance of winning a rollover jackpot of £25,000! **There are over 270 weekly prizes to be won**, could you be a lucky winner? The next Super Draw will be in June 2025. www.ageuk.org.uk/northamptonshire/get-involved/make-a-smile-lottery/ 18+ Begambleaware T&Cs apply

Our supporter Michael from Wellingborough plays make a smile lottery and was the lucky winner of the Super Draw in December, winning an amazing £5,000.

Michael said "There is a little bit for me, a little bit for my family and I was able to sort out my pre-paid funeral plan. Thank you so much."



Paul and Pete have **cycled the full length of Portugal** and raised a magnificent **£1,454** for us. We can't thank them enough!



Thank you to customers of **Dunelm Wellingborough** for their generous **Delivering Joy Christmas** gifts.



We are grateful to **Barratt Developments South Midlands Division** and **The Barratt Foundation** for the generous donation of **£1,500** which will help us support older people in Northamptonshire.

We rely on your support to help older people in Northamptonshire. You can scan to donate to **Age UK Northamptonshire**. Use our QR code to make a quick donation to us and help us to help older people in the county. Every penny makes a huge difference.



Thank you to Rhianna, Ben and Sam (pictured with Eddie and Jan) from **Arnold Thomson Solicitors** for calling into our day centre at **Leeson Court in Towcester** with some fabulous Christmas gifts.



A huge thank you to residents of Northampton for supporting the **Northampton Lions Club's** annual **Can Collection** at the end of November.



There is always a warm welcome at the **Roade Monday coffee morning** where Sales and Marketing Manager Roger met Karin, Peter and Pauline. Roger always takes information about personal alarms, Wills and Lasting Power of Attorney.



Roger also called into the **Blisworth Baptist Church** coffee morning.



Age UK Northamptonshire is delighted to support **Caritas Northampton's Love Christmas** campaign by distributing their generous gifts to local older people.

Thank you also to **Harwoods Estate Agents Wellingborough**, **Hi-Force Ltd Daventry**, **Sainsbury's in Kettering** and **Preston Hedges School** for kind and thoughtful Christmas gifts for our clients.

Jamie Christie
[pictured at
Wellingborough
Library's Money
Matters event
in November]



can help if you, your partner or a family member is having capacity issues.

Age UK Northamptonshire Trust Corporation can be appointed to manage financial affairs under an LPA or deputyship.

We have been working with Northamptonshire MPs to ensure that older people affected by the changes to the Winter Fuel Payment check their entitlement to Pension Credit and other benefits.



Information & Advice Team Leader Lorraine Booty with Cllr Winston Strachan and Lucy Rigby MP in Northampton



Cllr Emma Roberts with Lorraine and Information & Advice Officer Emma Swann in Far Cotton.



Natalie Kinson from our Collaborative Care Team with Wellingborough MP Gen Kitchen at the Swansgate Shopping Centre.

Our trustee **Joanna Marovitch** was pleased to meet **Cllr Jon Paul Carr**, Mayor of Wellingborough, and **Cllr Tom Partridge-Underwood** from Bozeat at our 28th AGM in November.



Sophie Ingall of our CCT with Allie and Ruth of the Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Service at their Health and Wellbeing Event at Chester House in November.



Christopher Duff represented Age UK Northamptonshire at a roundtable meeting in December, with Mike Reader MP for Northampton South and the Minister of State for Women and Equalities Anneliese Dodds MP. The event at Delapre Abbey aimed to discuss and highlight equality based issues in the constituency, and was a chance for the MPs to hear about the work and priorities of local voluntary organisations.

We are always pleased to give talks about our services at sheltered housing schemes in the county. In December we were delighted to meet Roger and Claire in Rothwell.



Make a difference every day



Tina works at our shop in Burton Latimer

Shop Manager Tina says: "I love working in the small community and meeting both regular and new customers. It's rewarding to know that all the money raised in my shop stays within the county, helping local older people."

Why you should work at Age UK Northamptonshire.

If you're looking for a job that is more than just a pay cheque – one where you can truly make a difference in people's lives, then Age UK Northamptonshire might be the perfect place for you. As a local independent charity, Age UK Northamptonshire is dedicated to improving the lives of older people across the county, offering a rewarding career that is both fulfilling and impactful.

A variety of roles

With a wide range of roles available, there's something for everyone at Age UK Northamptonshire. Whether you're interested in frontline care work, administrative support, charity shop roles, or hands-on positions such as gardening or handyman services, the organisation offers opportunities to match different skills and interests.

One of the most rewarding aspects of

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working at Age UK Northamptonshire is seeing firsthand the impact of your efforts. Employees frequently express how much they enjoy the meaningful connections they build with clients and the gratitude they receive from those they help.

Get involved today!

Whether you're looking for a full-time role, a flexible position, or a way to give back to your community, there's a place for you here. Find all our job vacancies and applications forms on our website www.ageuknorthants.org.uk. Start your journey towards a truly rewarding career with us.



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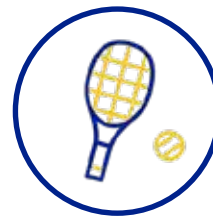
► Community
Support



► Activities



► Routine &
Wellness



► Grocery
Shopping

Hospital Discharge & Community Team

We received an East Midland Ambulance Service (EMAS) referral about Jenny who had been admitted to Kettering General Hospital. Julie our HD&CT Administrator contacted the hospital ward for updates, and then when Jenny was home from hospital, I (Sue, Coordinator for Wellingborough and East Northants) arranged to visit her and go through what support she required. Jenny was grateful for the visit, although she was still feeling poorly. I thought she might be entitled to Attendance Allowance, so we had a chat about it; she said she had not heard about it before. I also mentioned that she would benefit from being on the National Grid Priority Services Register. I referred Jenny to our Information & Advice Team (I&A) who supported Jenny with claiming Attendance Allowance. I registered Jenny on the National Grid Priority Services Register online and I also showed her our Guide to Services leaflet and left her a copy for future reference.

Jenny and I both felt that she would benefit from regular telephone calls to talk about how she was getting on with her treatment and how she was managing. In one telephone call, Jenny asked me about the gardening service, so I was able to refer her to Richard A'Court, Team Leader for the Handyperson Service.

Jenny is happy to share her experience for this article. It was great to catch up and see Jenny looking so well and starting to feel so much better. Having a face-to-face conversation with someone and seeing how our input has made a difference is so rewarding.

Sue Edwards

HD&CT Coordinator for Wellingborough and East Northants.



Sue and Julie work together covering Wellingborough and East Northamptonshire

Jenny's experience with Age UK Northamptonshire.

"I was in hospital for two weeks diagnosed with breast and bone cancer. Once I had been discharged from hospital Sue telephoned me to see if there was any support I needed. We arranged for Sue to do a home visit and while she was here she went through all the different services, and she said about Attendance Allowance. I had never heard of it and didn't know I was entitled to any financial support. Sue referred me to Age UK Northamptonshire's Information and Advice and with their help I was granted the full amount for Attendance Allowance which has been a great help.

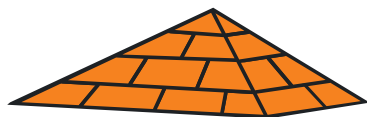
Sue also registered me with the National Grid Priority Service which was something else I didn't know about. Since November I have also had Age UK Northamptonshire's Gardening Service and the gardener has cut all our hedges. I was very happy with this, as was my husband.

Sue continues to telephone me every month for an update on how I am, and I enjoy chatting with her, I was glad she was there, and I know I could contact her if I needed any support with anything."



Sue has been supporting Jenny during her recent health difficulties

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Age Well and Collaborative Care Teams

Working in partnership to support our older community.

Age Well gives older people the support they need to look after their own health and wellbeing. We are working to improve the quality of care provided to older people in Northamptonshire. Age Well provides emotional and practical support to people age 65+ who have one or more long-term health conditions, enabling them to live independently.

Our services provide a person-centred approach, as we understand that people's needs are unique to them. Our community teams work holistically, ensuring that we provide the best possible experience to people who access our services.

Age Well is a service that was designed to refresh the way health and wellbeing support is delivered across Northamptonshire. It promotes collaboration between health, social care, and voluntary sector agencies. It provides a wraparound support system for older people who need help to live well and stay well. We have seen a hugely positive difference in how local older people are living and feeling which our Age Well and Collaborative Care Teams have made.

We support GP practices across the county and an Age Well Team is made up of staff representing each of the organisations involved in the service, including NHS/ NHFT, Northamptonshire's Adult Social Care Services, Northamptonshire Carers, Alzheimer's Society and Support Northamptonshire. Each team member brings a different skill set and expertise to the table, ensuring that people receive holistic and personalised support for their

Our teams provide **planned support** in the **community**.

Example of support include:

- Accessing assistive technology
- Benefits checks and support to claim Attendance Allowance
- Mobility and low-level equipment provision
- Help to reduce social isolation and loneliness
- Medication support
- Health condition management

For more information, please contact Amy Shelton – Wellbeing Integration Lead on **01604 611200**, amy.shelton@ageuknorthants.org.uk



Amy Shelton Wellbeing Integration Lead, Angela Moles Collaborative Care Team and Christine Goodwin Age Well Northampton.

specific needs. Our Collaborative Care Team supports GP practices in the North of the county alongside Age Well colleagues.

Our teams provide planned support in the community to reduce escalation and crisis. We help older people maintain their independence for as long as possible, to prevent hospital admission and to help them to remain living where they want to be, for as long as possible.

People who are referred to Age Well and the Collaborative Care Team receive an initial home assessment and then, if needed, are offered a 45-minute appointment in their own home, via a Microsoft Teams call on a laptop. The Age Well Coordinator enables the Microsoft Teams call, where a GP Frailty Lead and others will be waiting. Everyone can then discuss what is happening in one conversation. All areas are explored, and actions are agreed together at that time. We continue to work with the person to ensure that all possible support is accessed and put in place.



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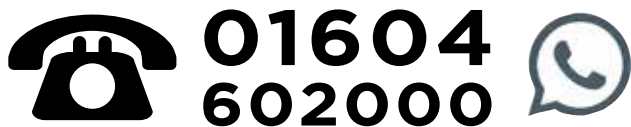
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