



**Our Day Centres are
up and running**

**Social Care must
be reformed**

**We're supporting the NHS
at Moulton Park**

**Volunteer Walking
Befrienders are needed**

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For more information contact Mark Bates Ltd

T :01476 512190

Or contact Age UK Northamptonshire

T :01604 631030

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Engage Foreword

From the Chief Executive



Meet the team.

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This last year has been catastrophic for so many older people in Northamptonshire.

We have had an eventful story of crisis, enforced isolation, fear and restriction, dominated by Covid-19 pandemic risks. There has also been a tragic loss of life, particularly among people living in care homes.

Age UK Northamptonshire's work to support our clients has been stopped and started and we have faced a great deal of uncertainty and disruption.

Between Lockdown in March 2020 through to the end of September 2020 Age UK Northamptonshire made nearly 9,500 welfare calls and 1,300 befriending telephone calls to vulnerable older people. We also delivered 4,850 hot meals, carried out 2,200 shopping trips and 1,300 other helpful tasks. All this was over and above our normal services which we are proud to have maintained.

We have learned a lot from this difficult year. We believe we are now a stronger organisation, more resilient and capable of managing in a crisis. We can work effectively during a lockdown and keep our clients safe and supported.

There is, undoubtedly, a need for our services – more than ever. The loneliness felt by older people in Northamptonshire, and the loss of confidence and independence they have experienced, has never been so great. This has contributed directly to an increase in ill-health and frailty.

Whilst this crisis and its devastating effects will continue for a long time, we are looking forward to a more normal year and doing our very best to "right the wrongs" that the Covid pandemic has wrought.

Thank you everyone, our staff and volunteers, our partners in health and social care, the other voluntary organisations we work alongside, and everyone who supported us with a donation of money or 'in kind'. Your thoughtful generosity has helped us to get through last year and makes our work to support older people in Northamptonshire possible.

Chris

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Social Care Reform

The Queen's Speech on 11th May outlined 25 bills: the Government's legislative agenda for action. But it was criticised widely, including by many of its own MPs, because it did not outline specific measures for the overhaul and reform of social care in this country. There was simply a promise to bring forward proposals for later in the year, but the lack of detail and the vagueness of the promise is a huge disappointment for millions of people in Britain who are facing uncertainty over the cost of their care bills in future.

Over the years there have been many White Papers, Select Committees and independent reviews to tackle the issue of how social care can be accessed and funded, but only small progress. The current Prime Minister had previously said in July 2019 there was

“a clear plan that is prepared.”

Since then, the Covid-19 pandemic has horribly affected the UK care sector.

Going back to 1997, when the Prime Minister was Tony Blair, there was a Royal Commission to consider the reform of the funding system, but the proposals for free care were rejected by the Government at the time.

It is evidently unfair for anyone to be financially ruined by long term care bills. Under the current system, people with assets over £14,250 have to pay for some of their care costs and those with assets over £23,250 have to pay for all of their costs. Previous analysis has shown that at least 40 per cent of those who are in private and voluntary sector care homes paid for their own care, and around a third of those had to sell their home's to pay for the cost. Approximately one in five people ultimately need long term care. The current system is heavily criticised for unfairness.

In 2012 the then Government ministers supported the economist Andrew Dilnot who suggested a limit, in principle, of between £25,000 and £50,000 on the amount any individual would pay for their care. But the Government delayed a decision at the time. There was a furious debate, in particular from charities, many of whom were concerned that the cap might be raised to £100,000. However, this is not the only unfairness in how care operates today, and it would be an unjust and lopsided outcome if the government gave more protection to home owners while leaving those with fewer assets to the current underfunded system.

Over the years, the demand for care has increased much faster than the funding available – as provided by local councils. Between 2012 and 2019 spending per person on adult social care fell by around 12 percent in real terms. The number of older people receiving local authority long term care has also decreased year-on-year, from 599,680 in 2014/15 to 548,435 in 2018/19. This is an 8.5 per cent reduction over the five-year period.

The cost of funding the social care system sustainably is a problem that has blighted a generation and has not been addressed properly by successive governments. It is a situation that the coronavirus pandemic has exacerbated, heightening and increasing the issues of loneliness, ill health and poverty that older people face, together with their many unmet and unfunded needs. Research by the national charity Age UK showed that 23 per cent of people aged 60 and over found their ability to carry out everyday activities without support has worsened since the first lockdown.

At the same time as The Queen's Speech, the Department of Health announced an additional £1.4 billion for adult social care, on top of the £4.6 billion that local authorities receive to address additional pressures. That additional funding will not, however, be anywhere near enough. The Health and Social Care Select Committee recommended last year that the sector needed an additional £7 billion per year by 2023/24, or an extra 34 per cent on the budget. Funding social care is so huge an issue that it is likely to need significant tax rises or a dedicated tax of its own if it is to be funded sustainably.

The cross-party Commons Health and Social Care Committee said that

“without secure, long term funding, the problems that have bedevilled the care sector of the last two decades will not be solved.”

Jeremy Hunt, the Chair of the Committee said that

“the government has an opportunity to deliver a post pandemic watershed 1948 moment for the health and care system.”

He also said that politicians needed

“a boldness of vision to make Britain a place where people could grow old with dignity.”

For over twenty years we have had speeches and promises from prime ministers and others in government sympathising with the challenge and committing personally to much needed reform of social care and its funding. Given the trauma faced by so many older people because of the Covid-19 pandemic let us hope that those in power will finally grasp this nettle, find this funding and provide relief and re-assurance to our older generations. They need to bring in a more generous means-testing cap or threshold, increase the funding available, especially to help those who have no assets, and reduce the "postcode lottery" for care services.





WIN £25,000



Age UK Northamptonshire asks for support and gives you the chance to win big with Make a Smile Lottery.

From **£1** you can help older people of Northamptonshire gain access to vital services, improving quality of life and preventing loneliness.

Mrs Richards found that arthritis was making it difficult for her to manage daily.

After calling our Information and Advice Service, Mrs Richard said

“It was like someone was taking the weight off my shoulders.”

The allowance has enabled her to get the help she needs to carry on living independently. She feels part of the outside world again having a mobility scooter to get out and about .

This example shows how income received can help fund services which bring help and support.

To sign up call Age UK Northamptonshire on **01604 631030**, the lottery team on **0300 3034500** or go online at **www.ageuknorthants.org.uk**

Prizes are **£10**, **£250** and **£1,000**.

The jackpot increases by **£500** each week, to a maximum **£25,000**.

Play & Save reward cards are available, which give discounts at local retailers.

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Walking Befriending Service

A short walk with a supportive volunteer in Northampton – what could be better?

Raj Shah moved to Northampton in November last year to be nearer to family, but he says he has not been able to visit them much because of the coronavirus pandemic. As he is partially sighted and new to the area he was thrilled to be told about Age UK Northamptonshire's Walking Befriending Service.

This free service aims to help older people living in Northampton who would like to benefit from regular exercise but feel nervous going out by themselves. The service provides a friendly volunteer to visit once a week and accompany someone on a short walk in their local area.

Walking has been proved to be the safest activity for older people to improve their health. By giving encouragement and friendly support, the walking befriender can help people overcome barriers which might be preventing them from being active in later life. If someone has recently had a stroke, or maybe suffered a fall which has knocked their confidence, they might not feel ready to leave home on their own, especially if they have been shielding during the coronavirus pandemic.

Raj says he is keen to get regular exercise and to be out in the fresh air.

“I look forward to the walk with Jason every week. I am not able to go for a walk by myself at the moment,” he says.

This Walking Befriending Service is only available to people age 65 + and living in Northampton at the moment but as the number of volunteer walking befrienders increases it is hoped that we will be able to provide it in other areas of the county.

Jason Williams who co-ordinates the service, and also accompanies several people on regular walks, is passionate about the benefits of exercise. Get in touch if you'd like to put your spare time to good use by accompanying an older person on a gentle walk near their home.

“We're always looking for more volunteers who can improve later life for people in Northamptonshire,”

says Jason.

For more information or to volunteer for our Walking Befriending Service call 01604 611200 or visit our website www.ageuknorthants.org.uk.



The Age UK Northamptonshire

Our support team has been working in Kettering General Hospital since December 2018. Initially we supported older patients to help improve their wellbeing and their experience of being in hospital.

Fast forward to May 2021 and the service has responded to the changing needs of Kettering General Hospital and the challenges encountered during the Covid 19 pandemic. The team is frequently required to support patients being discharged from hospital who need extra support and we help people wishing to continue living independently at home. These referrals can range from short-term practical support from the Hospital Discharge and Community team to arranging deep cleans for people's homes, and other community support.

The team continues to support patients daily on the hospital wards and in Accident and Emergency, providing friendly conversation and company, bringing refreshments and assistance at mealtimes. We also liaise with hospital staff to help with any questions that the patient may have and contact family members to arrange collection of personal belongings or advise of a patient's wellbeing.

The service has grown and has seen a huge demand in supporting patients being discharged. This ward-based patient support is an important part of helping to reduce anxiety and aid patients recovery during their stay. Being in hospital can be a daunting experience at the best of times, but these past fourteen months have brought added concerns for us all.

In April 2019, Age UK Northamptonshire launched the Discharge Transport Service, which is run from, and supports, the Discharge Lounge in transporting patients home and to care settings for reablement. This service has grown from initially running three days a week to now six days a week. Our dedicated team is on site ready to provide support when it is needed and has supported over 2,200

Support Service at Kettering General Hospital



discharges. The Discharge Transport team settles patients in their home, ensuring that essential provisions are in place, personal alarms are activated and not forgetting to "pop the kettle on" for a very welcome cuppa.

Brian a patient we supported said

“ The two people who took me home in the minibus were really great and they could not have done more for me. ”

The summer of 2020 saw a much-needed addition, establishing the new Discharge Call Back Service. This service aims to contact all patients aged 55+ who are discharged from Kettering General Hospital within 48 hours. The caller enquires to see how the patient is managing once they have had time to settle at home. We check to see if we can be of any assistance, making referrals ranging from Befriending and Handyperson Service, benefit assessments following a change in

health or mobility, to quotes for installation of assistive technology. We also refer patients back to the hospital following any discharge concerns, or on to further community services. Our callers have contacted almost 3,000 patients following their discharge from hospital and have followed up approximately 45 per cent of calls made.

Rose could not say thank you enough for calling her after her discharge home, Rose said

“ I feel completely reassured that if ever I should need extra help at home, I know where to turn. ”

Rose was aware that Age UK Northamptonshire has charity shops but was not aware of the vast amount of support available, not only from Age UK Northamptonshire but in the community. Rose now has the confidence of knowing that she can remain at home longer, without the stress and worry of the tasks that she may find difficult in the future.

Telephone Befriending Service

Over the last year, many of us have experienced loneliness through not being able to see our friends and family. The stark realisation is that for many older people in Northamptonshire, this is not just due to the effects of the coronavirus and lockdown, and that is why our Telephone Befriending Service is so vital to our clients.

The Telephone Befriending Service is an amazing free service where a volunteer will ring a client once a week for a friendly conversation and to provide a listening ear. The service has proved very popular over the last year and our brilliant volunteers have gone above and beyond for our clients, many of whom they have been calling since the first lockdown.

Volunteer James Walshe said

“Whilst volunteering for Age UK Northamptonshire as a Telephone Befriender has enabled me to assist somebody in a positive way, it has also been a thoroughly enjoyable experience. I have been treated to stimulating conversation and, in many instances, tales from an older person with some truly wonderful stories to tell.”

We have also been fortunate enough to be offered the use of the website quarantine games by student, Alisha Pulham. Alisha created the website so that people could play games over the phone during the lockdowns, and it has proved a great success with our volunteers and clients.

Alisha said

“I initially adapted board games so that I could reconnect with my grandma, who was suffering from loneliness during the many lockdowns. Seeing how much fun we had together inspired me to develop a website, so that other people could also print off these board games for free and play with their loved ones who they cannot see in person at the moment. I reached out to Age UK Northamptonshire as I know many individuals benefit greatly from their wonderful Telephone Befriending Service, and I am so happy that users of this resource have been enjoying the games.”

Age UK Northamptonshire now offers the Telephone Befriending Service to over 100 older people feeling isolated or lonely in Northamptonshire with over 60 volunteers on board, each one making a huge difference to someone's day. This has been easier to manage by the Volunteer app which our volunteers started using back in January. This means that they can manage their own telephone befriending calls from the comfort of their own home.

Taking it one step further

Age UK Northamptonshire Telephone Befriending volunteer Monique has been volunteering with us since last summer and telephone befriending since April. Recently, she and the older person she calls have joined our Walking Befriending Service. They go for short walks near June's house and are building up to making their way to her local park. June says

“It is so nice to have company and it gives me something to look forward to.”

If you would like to volunteer for this service please call Alicia Cubitt on 01604 611200 or email alicia.cubitt@ageuknorthants.org.uk. You can also visit our website to see what other volunteering opportunities we have on offer www.ageuknorthants.org.uk

The importance of writing a will, to you;

Age UK Northamptonshire is one of around 130 local Age UKs across the country. Each one is an independent charity that needs to generate its own income.

Age UK Northamptonshire raises income in a variety of ways, one of which is to work with partner companies that provide different products and services for the benefit of older people.

Our will writing service is provided by one of these partner companies, a company called **BEQUEATHED**. By using **BEQUEATHED** you can write your own will free of charge using the online facility. Once completed, you then have access to 30 minutes free legal advice from a team of solicitors. In most cases this is to make sure all the necessary details are filled out correctly and legal requirements are met. It also allows you to have additional advice on more complicated matters if needed.

Alternatively, if you prefer a face-to-face experience we can arrange for you to meet with a representative from

another of our partner companies who is legally trained and who looks after our clients' needs, both for will writing and setting up Power of Attorney. The cost for a single will is £95. A mirror or joint will would be £165.

Writing a will is important to us all. It can help reduce the amount of Inheritance Tax that will be payable on the value of the property and money you leave behind. Writing a will is especially important if you have children or other family who depend on you financially. It is also vital to write a will if you wish to leave part of your estate to people or organisations outside your immediate family. If you do not leave a will it can cause distress at an already difficult time, creating legal difficulties that, had a will been left, could easily have been avoided.

Don't delay

We can make it easy for you to make a will. If you would like more information, or details on making a will, please call our reception team on **01604 611200** or visit our website at **www.ageuknorthants.org.uk** to find the link to the **BEQUEATHED** website.

Age UK Northamptonshire is facing many financial challenges and we need to fund our services so that we can continue to support local older people. The older population in Northamptonshire is growing, with the number of people aged over 80 years potentially doubling by 2030.

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the importance of your legacy **to us**

More and more people need help to live with long-term health conditions such as dementia, heart disease and Parkinson's. Whilst the need for our services is growing, the sources of funding are decreasing and becoming more difficult to access. Providing good quality care services, whilst keeping costs down is a difficult juggling act and has never been more challenging than it is today. Our expectation is that funding pressures will continue to increase, especially as the country returns to more normal life after the enforced lockdowns and problems caused by Covid-19.

Age UK Northamptonshire supported 15,541 people in the financial year 2019/2020. This is an impressive figure but we want to do more. We are determined to help as many people as possible and your legacy could help us do so.

Thank you to everyone who has helped Age UK Northamptonshire. Your donations, however large or small, have been a positive contribution and made it possible for the charity to be here for so many people. Your support has really made a difference to every one of our clients, many of whom find daily life difficult and need help.

Legacies could play a significant role in the funding of our charity and will become increasingly crucial in the future. If you are thinking of making a will, and are in a position to leave a legacy to charity, please consider leaving something to Age UK Northamptonshire.

Your kind generosity will make a really positive difference to older people in our community. The money you leave can be used to help provide our numerous services. For example, our free Information

& Advice Service provides hours of support, helping older people fill in forms and make successful claims for attendance allowance. This much needed benefit can enable them to remain in their own home for longer, improving their quality of life. Your kind gift could go towards supporting the day centres we run throughout Northamptonshire. They play a vital role in combatting the loneliness and isolation felt by our clients, providing company, a hot meal and the opportunity to join in group activities with friends.

Donations and legacies currently represent only a small part of Age UK Northamptonshire's income but they can have a major impact on the effectiveness of the charity and its ability to dramatically improve lives. Please help us transform the lives of vulnerable older people in Northamptonshire for the better, by leaving a legacy to us.

You must quote our full name **Age UK Northamptonshire** and charity number **1059995** to ensure your gift comes to us.

Please come and visit us to see for yourself what we do in Northamptonshire. Our Chief Executive Chris Duff or one of our Trustees would be delighted to show you around the William and Patricia Venton Centre in Northampton. Contact our Trading Manager Roger Harris for an informal chat on **01604 631030** or email **roger.harris@ageuknorthants.org.uk**

To advertise in the next issue of this publication please contact
Laurence

Tel: 01536 334218

Email:

laurence@lanceprint.co.uk



Day Centres

Our Day Centres offer a safe environment for our clients to make new friendships, take part in a variety of activities and have a freshly cooked meal with help from our friendly, fully trained staff.

At present we have five centres across Northamptonshire: The William and Patricia Venton Centre Northampton, St Giles Community Centre Northampton, Rockingham Road Baptist Church Kettering, Welton Community Centre Daventry and Tove Valley Centre Towcester.

Our longer term plan includes opening centres to allow us to reach more older people. We offer transport from our clients home to all of our Day Centres. We have also expanded our Day Care services to offer Day Care at Home to those clients who would prefer not to be in a group setting.

Our Day Centres make a huge difference to our clients' lives, some of whom would otherwise be isolated at home. Being in a Day Care setting can help prevent depression and slow down the decline in a person's mental and physical health.

Our Day Centres offer a wide range of activities for our clients to participate in, although some clients just enjoy watching others play games or do art and crafts. With encouragement from our day care assistants' people can build confidence and join in. All staff put on a physical activity and a mental activity suitable for clients to take part in. Our day care assistants really do get to know their clients' needs and preferences during their time with us and then plan the days activities around clients attending that day. Our clients love art and craft activities, including painting, card making and cake decorating for Easter.

Mental activities that our clients enjoy include:

Quizzes, reminiscing, musical bingo, giant Jenga, giant Connect Four, play your cards right, dominoes and good old-fashioned Bingo.

Some physical activities include:

Bowls, darts, skittles, morning stretches and exercises, just to name a few.

We have also been lucky enough to take our clients on a few day trips since the easing of coronavirus restrictions, taking advantage of the great weather and to get a change of scenery. Our day centre Managers have been working hard to plan more day trips and visits by entertainers.

We maintain high standards of cleanliness in our Day Centres and follow guidelines on social distancing to ensure the safety of our clients and staff.

The new Day Care at Home Service offers a one-to-one service in an older person's home bringing day centre activities to them. For example an enjoyable chat over a cup of tea, board games, reminiscing over old photos and personal stories. We can also take clients for a walk if they are able or play card games if they wish.



For more information on our Day Centres call **01604 611200** or visit **www.ageuknorthants.org.uk**.



Home Care Cleaning Service

Our friendly, reliable Domestic Care Workers are DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checked and have provided references, which we have checked. We can help with domestic duties in your home, such as:

- cleaning kitchens, bathrooms and toilets
- internal cleaning of windows
- small amounts of washing and ironing
- light shopping at local shops
- changing beds
- vacuuming and dusting

This service is charged at £16 per hour.

For more information on this service please call us on **01604 611200** or see our website **www.ageuknorthants.org.uk**

Come and join our friendly team

We are looking to recruit reliable caring people to join our Home Care Cleaning service countywide.

You will undertake a range of cleaning tasks according to the needs and wishes of our clients. You may also be asked to collect light shopping from the nearest local shop.

Rate of pay: £9.45 p/h

For more information on these vacancies call David Haynes or Debbie O'Sullivan on **01604 611211** or visit **www.ageuknorthants.org.uk**



Registered Charity No. 1059995



Toenail Cutting Service

We aim to provide a personal service, regardless of age or ability, in a safe environment that will enhance a person's mobility and comfort.

At each visit our nail cutters will clean your feet using anti-bacterial wipes, then cut or file your nails as necessary. If you wish they will also gently massage your feet and apply your own moisturising cream.

- Our nail cutters have had full training and are fully insured and DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checked for security purposes.
- All our staff carry proof of identity.

Charges apply for this service.

For more information on this service please call us on **01604 611200** or see our website **www.ageuknorthants.org.uk**

We are recruiting!

We are looking for reliable caring people to join our Toenail Cutting Service team in the Kettering and Corby areas.

You will visit clients in their own homes to clean and cut or file their nails as necessary.

Full training will be given and a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check will be carried out.

Rate of pay: £9.12 p/h

For more information on these vacancies call **01604 611200** or visit **www.ageuknorthants.org.uk**



Registered Charity No. 1059995

Age UK Northamptonshire Board of Trustees is very pleased to welcome two new members, Tonina Ashby and Diana Murkin, who were co-opted in April 2021.

Tonina and Diana will complement an already dedicated team of ten who work tirelessly behind the scenes. They ensure good governance is always maintained through leadership, direction and control, that enables the Charity to deliver its many vital services to older people across the county. For over 60 years we have been helping to meet changing needs and expectations, supporting some of the most frail, vulnerable people and those with no family living nearby. The Charity also works in partnership with the private and public sector and other voluntary bodies.

Tonina and Diana will build on that expertise and diversity, bringing their own skillset and uniqueness to the table. They have shared why they were drawn to Age UK Northamptonshire, which is a local, independent charity relying heavily on fundraising, legacies and donations from grateful families and clients, and from our customers who visit our local shops.

Tonina Ashby – In my day job I am a Solicitor and Partner at a local law firm, specialising in elderly and vulnerable client law. I advise individuals in and around Northamptonshire on issues of care funding, retirement planning and have a particular interest in safeguarding and protecting the welfare of older people. I have worked closely with Age UK Northamptonshire over the years, and it was therefore a natural decision to support them in my personal capacity as a Trustee. I am honoured to be able to see the inner workings of this fantastic charity and look forward to developing its services and support for older people.

Diana Murkin - I developed an interest in helping people to continue living independently and with dignity into old age, following caring for my own widowed father for the last ten years of his life. I had to overcome many and varied hurdles to support him as his health deteriorated and realise how important an organisation such as Age UK Northamptonshire is. I hope my background as a Chartered Accountant in financial services and my experience on many voluntary committees over the years, will enable me to be an active and valuable member of the Board of Trustees.

Tonina Ashby



Diana Murkin



Welcome and good luck

Social Prescribing

The Social Prescribing Service has been active since 1st September 2019. Age UK Northamptonshire has five social prescribing link workers (SPLW) operating within twenty four GP Surgeries across North Northamptonshire in partnership with 3Sixty Care Partnership. Since the start of the service, and with the need for additional support during the pandemic, SPLWs have received over 3,500 referrals.

When a referral is received by a member of the GP practice staff team, the link worker will contact the patient to talk with them, to find out more about them and what they would like help with. A social prescription is not something you take to your chemist. The link worker gives people their time and focuses on what matters to the person. It involves discussing issues the people face, exploring what is important to them, agreeing goals, finding local activities and services and helping individuals access them. Patients have more say in improving their health and wellbeing through personalised care, resulting in a more complete approach to healthy living and promoting independence.

During the past 18 months, the service has confirmed that people's health is not only affected by physical and mental health issues, but also by a wide range of social, economic and environmental factors. Providing a holistic assessment of needs and mapping support options,



helps a person to become more directly involved in their own care and encourages the person to take more control of their own health and wellbeing.

Each Primary Care Network is different, but working collaboratively through social prescribing is a new idea. The role of the link worker is varied. We are asked to support a person's need on a day to day basis. It is about investing in the bigger picture: engaging with community groups, strengthening GP practice relationships,

exploring health inequalities, and working with key investors by providing, promoting and offering services that are accessible, inclusive, diverse and improve community resilience.

For more information on our Social Prescribing Service visit our website www.ageuknorthants.org.uk.

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.

The Big Knit

The Big Knit is back for 2021

Please get knitting and help raise vital funds for Age UK Northamptonshire. Every little hat you send to us is worth 25p! If we reach our target and send off 15,000 little woolly marvels, innocent will donate a whopping £3,750 to Age UK Northamptonshire, money that will be spent improving later life in our community.

For more information on our **Big Knit** call Jo Bird on **01604 611200** or see our website **www.ageuknorthants.org.uk**.

You can send your little hats to us at The William and Patricia Venton Centre, York Road, Northampton, NN1 5QJ.



A big thank you

to **Smiths Farm Shop** who continue to display one of our collection goblets. Every penny is vital and enables us to carry on supporting older people in Northamptonshire who desperately need us.



Waitrose at Wootton, Northampton kindly donated a hamper for us to raffle to help raise funds to renovate our garden at our William and Patricia Venton Centre in York Road. Our clients have already been out enjoying the lovely weather and admiring all the colourful plants.

Thank you!



If you can think of a way you can fundraise for us and raise vital funds for older people in Northamptonshire please get in touch on **01604 611200** or visit our website **www.ageuknorthants.org.uk**.



Monday 12th April 2021 was the day that Age UK Northamptonshire retail team was waiting for, we could finally reopen our charity shop doors.

The week before had seen managers, deputies and volunteers working really hard to prepare the shops, removing Christmas and winter stock and preparing to refill with bright coloured summer clothes, a new range of books, toys, dvds, cds and fresh new bric a brac.

A full deep clean was carried out in readiness for 12th April. Covid 19 measures are still in place as per the guidelines, with most customers adhering to the use of sanitiser, masks and the one-way system which everyone had used before the December lockdown.

When the day finally arrived, some shops had queues outside so we were expecting a very busy day and our customers did not disappoint.

Staff and volunteers opened the doors and welcomed all the regular customers back and new ones. They all said how happy they were we had reopened, some just popped in for a chat and a quick hello and others came in and had a look around and a good spend.

During lockdown we had to make the decision to close our Far Cotton branch, the shop traded for 15 years and we would like to thank all our customers for the support they gave.

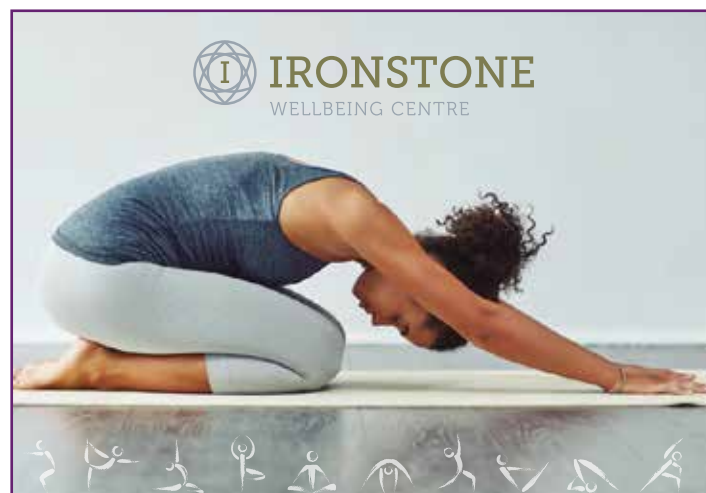
With our seven shops across the county now open we are in need of good quality donations that we can resell. All our shops can accept donations now. Our shop locations are Brackley, Burton Latimer, Kettering, Rothwell, Thrapston and two in Northampton: Kingsthorpe and St Giles St. Their contact numbers can be found on our website.

If you are a UK taxpayer you could also sign up for Gift Aid in any of our shops, it's a quick and simple form to complete but it will enable Age UK Northamptonshire to claim 25p in the pound from the government on your donations sold. All staff and volunteers are on hand to help complete the form, just ask when you pop in.

At Age UK Northamptonshire we want to be environmentally responsible and recycle where we can. With that in mind we are in need of used carrier bags. If you can help in anyway and donate used carrier bags, please drop them off at your nearest shop and they will be gratefully accepted.

Age UK Northamptonshire has just launched Online Retail utilising eBay where we have started to list various items for sale. Use the link <https://charity.ebay.co.uk/charity/AgeUK-Northamptonshire/3136657> to view the items. Items listed will be for sale by us or by private sellers who have chosen Age UK Northamptonshire to receive a percentage of their final sale. This eBay page will be updated regularly so please keep checking to see what we have on offer. If you are a private eBay seller and would like to support Age UK Northamptonshire with a contribution you can simply select our charity when you make a listing, then select the percentage you would like to contribute from the final sale price.

Age UK Northamptonshire's retail team is always looking for support, whether this is with donations or volunteering we would love to hear from you. Call us on **01604 611200** or see our website.



Northamptonshire's first purpose built Wellbeing Centre is now open

Offering a range of classes and courses from Yoga, Pilates and Hot Yoga to Tai Chi, Mindfulness and Meditation, Children's Yoga and more
The perfect place to nourish the mind, body and soul.



Memberships, class packs and pay as you go available. Visit **www.ironstone.club** for more information.

Royal Pavilion Vaccination Centre

We're supporting the **NHS covid-19** vaccination programme

Nearly five months after the Northamptonshire Vaccination Centre opened at the Royal Pavilion building in Moulton Park, our volunteers are still supporting the service on alternate weeks to cover a rota 10am to 3pm, seven days a week.

Our yellow t-shirted volunteers carry out a range of tasks, alongside NHS staff and other local organisations, depending on what needs to be done. They might be directing people towards the hand sanitiser or guiding them to the queue for the assessor who is ready to take their details. Sometimes they might offer a nervous person a drink of water or provide reassurance and comfort to someone who is finding the whole experience a bit overwhelming. It is not unusual for our volunteers to spend the whole five hours wiping down chairs in the observation area where people sit after they have had their jab. Whatever task they are asked to do, they are more than happy to oblige. Monique Kochjuit

speaks for them all when she says

“Age UK Northamptonshire volunteers welcome, we smile, we talk and help where needed. It is just nice to be part of something that hopefully brings us a step closer to normality.”



Monique says “

“ I have always been passionate about helping others in whichever way I can, but the coronavirus crisis caused quite a few activities I participated in to be suspended. I did not hesitate to sign up to volunteer for Age UK Northamptonshire.”

As the months go by the Moulton Park vaccination centre has been vaccinating thousands of people every week, working its way through the priority groups, initially giving them the Oxford Astra Zeneca vaccine and then in April becoming one of the first areas in the country to also be administering the Moderna Covid-19 vaccine. Volunteer Sharon O'Connell says

Volunteers from Age UK Northamptonshire, and from Northamptonshire Carers who are covering alternate weeks, expect to be supporting the NHS vaccination programme in the county for several more months, until their services are no longer required. Get in touch with our Volunteer Co-ordinator Alicia Cubitt on 01604 611200 if you are interested in volunteering for Age UK Northamptonshire.



“ I am so glad to be able to help. I feel it is a privilege to be part of the NHS vaccination effort.”



Age UK Northamptonshire is working in partnership with Anglian Water to help older people to register for free practical support.

If you need practical support, Anglian Water's Priority Services Register is here for you. It's completely free, and once you've signed up, you can stay on it for as long as you like.

Anglian Water offer a wide range of support including:

- Reading your meter for you (if you find this difficult)
- Sending out bills in other formats (Larger sized font, braille and talking bills)
- Providing a knock and wait service to give you a little extra time to answer your door
- A password scheme to protect you from scams
- Allowing someone else to manage your account
- Proactive contact if there is an emergency or planned disruption to your supply, with delivered bottled water, if required

As an Anglian Water partner, Age UK Northamptonshire can help you register for free practical support over the phone.

Please call Age UK Northamptonshire on 01604 631030 to register.

You can also call Anglian Water direct on 0800 232 1951.

HELP US TO HELP YOU

Whilst we are all delighted that the government has agreed a programme for coming out of lockdown, the reality is that for some families the lifting of restrictions is going to result in other problems.

Many older and vulnerable people have not been able to meet with family and friends for over twelve months and as such, they have lived their lives in isolation. Sadly, some have lost confidence, becoming more needy and dependent.

With the lifting of lockdown there will be people who will find it difficult to re-engage with the wider community and perhaps need more support from family members than they did prior to lockdown.

This could be problematic because in many cases some family members will still be in the workplace and will not have the time to give the support needed. Without that support people coming out of shielding are likely to continue to struggle.

Others may not be natural carers and so be unable or unwilling to provide the type of assistance that may be required, such as personal care or more practical tasks such as cleaning or gardening.

We are in very different times and all of us are going to have to adjust to the new world in which we find ourselves. For some, and particularly those who are vulnerable, that is not going to be easy. The reality is some families will not have the time, skills or inclination to deliver the help needed.

Now more than ever, there is a need for supporting agencies such as Age UK Northamptonshire who can help alleviate some of the pressures brought about by the coronavirus pandemic.

Age UK Northamptonshire already provides a range of services and practical help that enables vulnerable older people to continue living in their own home rather than go into a care home.

We need your help to adapt our existing services or develop new services. We would be grateful if you, as an older person, or as a family member or friend could spend a few minutes completing our survey, either online or contact us on **01604 611200** for a paper copy.

You can find this quick and easy survey online by following this link <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/northamptonshire/survey> or you can call our Age UK Northamptonshire Head Office on **01604 611200** for a paper copy.



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To find your local session:

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Fraser.Lodge@northamptonshiresport.org

07912 891993

[www.northamptonshiresport.org
/getupandgo](http://www.northamptonshiresport.org/getupandgo)

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