

Age UK Oxfordshire's Magazine

EngAGE

Changes to the Winter Fuel Payment

Let's talk money

Celebrating the role of older people

We are a local independent charity supporting older people across Oxfordshire to live life to the full.

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Welcome from our CEO, Paul Ringer.



As we start to see leaves falling, temperatures dropping and nights drawing in, autumn is the perfect time for us to start thinking about staying warm and well this winter.

You may have heard about recent changes to the Winter Fuel Payment meaning that only those receiving certain benefits will get it. We don't feel that the decision has been well managed and are worried about how this will impact older people this winter.

We're most worried about those who have a low income but fall just above the Pension Credit threshold, those who have high energy costs due to need, particularly those living with a disability or long-term illness, and those who care for them, and those who are eligible but not receiving Pension Credit. Beyond raising these points, we continue to help people find ways to keep safe and well in their homes. We also encourage people to check whether they may be eligible for Pension Credit. Read more about the changes on p18.

I'd also urge you to learn more about the Priority Services Register (PSR) (see p16). If you're eligible you can sign up for free, meaning you'll get extra support should your gas, electricity or water supply be interrupted.

This October we'll be taking part in the International Day of Older People, the theme of which this year is "The part we play". On p8 you can read about some of the many older people in our county who play an integral part in strengthening our communities and neighbourhoods.

I hope you enjoy this issue, particularly the many wonderful stories about older people in Oxfordshire.

Very best wishes
Paul.



What's been happening?



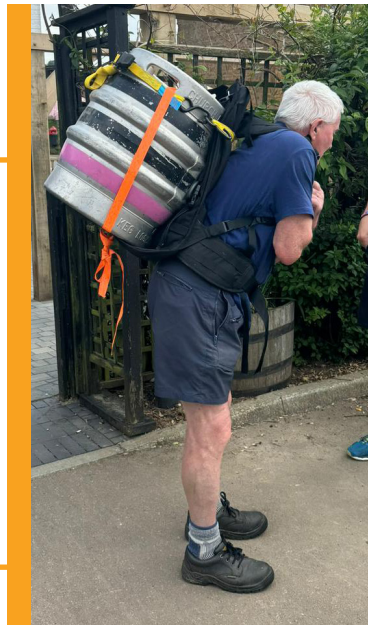
Our Charity Duck Race!

In July, we held a charity duck race at The Ferryman's Inn in Bablock Hythe. We had a very successful day, raising over £1,400! We were joined by plenty of people from the local area and customers at the pub, even the sun made an appearance! Our main event was the race on the river with 100s of ducks, but we also had a great performance by local Morris Dancers, a lovely selection of homemade cakes, various crafts and activities and our information stand.



Cheers Kevin!

Kevin Martin has raised an incredible £1,100 for our dementia support service, Dementia Oxfordshire, to show his appreciation for the support he and his wife, Kathy, have received. Never one to sit still, the intrepid 78-year-old from Avon Dassett had a full-sized metal beer barrel strapped to his back and, on an extremely hot day in May, walked a four mile route around his favourite local pubs.



We're really pleased to announce that The Big Knit is back!

The fundraising campaign, which features small hats crafted by local people appearing on top of innocent drink bottles, has been launched again - and we'd love you to get knitting or crocheting! Great news too is that the amount we'll receive per hat has been increased to 30p. Hats can be dropped off to us at **Age UK Oxfordshire, 9 Napier Court, Barton Lane, Abingdon, OX14 3YT** up until June 2025 (please include your name and address). If you're not able to drop off, please get in touch on **0345 450 1276** or **contactus@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk**.

A simple pattern can be found on p11 and more are available on our [website](#). Alternatively, we can pop some more in the post to you if you give us a call. Thank you for your support.



Let's talk money

Having conversations about money can seem awkward. Talk Money Week this November, is all about encouraging people have more open conversations about their money – and to continue these conversations year round.

Building money conversations into our everyday lives helps us build financial confidence and resilience to face whatever the future throws at us. Although it can feel difficult to talk about what should happen after someone dies, open and frank conversations about wills and inheritance can make things a lot easier further down the line.

Creating a will

Setting up a will is the only way to make sure your money and possessions go to the people and causes you choose*. You will also need to choose someone to be an executor, who will be legally responsible for dealing with your estate after you have passed away. It is important you choose them carefully and select someone you can rely on.

There are a few different ways you can write up your will. Lawyers can offer advice and there are some charities that offer free will-writing services in the hope you will leave a legacy to them. Some run this all year round and others, such as Age UK, sign up to 'Free Wills Month' each March and October, or to the alternative 'Will Aid' each November. Some banks also offer these services - contact your local branch for more information.

You can leave your will with a solicitor or bank, or with the Probate Service. Alternatively, you can store it safely at home. You should review your will every five years or after a major change in your life, such as moving house or getting a divorce.

Make sure others can find out important details, should they need to, by filling in a free Age UK Lifebook. You can include the location of important documents or insurance policies, even where the spare key to the shed is! Email contactus@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or call **0345 450 1276** to order.

*Please see the back page if you'd like to consider including Age UK Oxfordshire in your will.





Power of attorney

A power of attorney is a way of giving someone you trust the legal authority to make decisions for you if you can't make them yourself – or if you don't want to.

There are a few different types of power of attorney: lasting power of attorney (LPA), enduring power of attorney and ordinary power of attorney. You can have more than one, however the most common is an LPA, which has two types - one for making financial decisions and another for making health and care decisions.

To set up your LPA, you can download required forms or complete them [online](#). To receive the forms in the post or ask for any assistance call **0300 456 0300**. It's important to take your time or ask for help when filling out the forms as mistakes may mean they are rejected. The next step is to have your LPA signed by someone you've known for at least two years or a professional (not a partner or family member). Once this is done, you need to register your LPA with the Office of Public Guardian (visit the website above or call **0300 456 0300** for more information).

Age UK have a range of useful guides and information on their [website](#), or call us to request them in the post.

For more information, please contact our Information and Advice Helpline on **0345 450 1276**.



Ossee's story - "Let me just say, they worked a miracle."

We spoke to Ossee and his wife Judy about the difference our falls prevention exercise and information course has had on their lives.

"Let's put it this way, since I've been to the sessions, I've had one small fall. That was in the middle of the night in the hall, but I managed to get myself up.

But before that I had quite a lot of falls. The first was in the multi-storey, I went down between two cars and couldn't do nothing. Two blokes came along and helped me up. The last one was when I was in my greenhouse and that really scared me and Judy.

We'd just been getting on with it, we didn't really know there was anything that could help the falls or change anything. But when I had the fall in the greenhouse that really shook Judy up. Then our son and daughter-in-law said 'you've got to do something' and I did see the GP.

I ended up being passed to the Occupational Therapist and she was the one who told us about the Age UK Oxfordshire falls course. But you think 'falls course' what can that do for me?

Anyway, we both went along to the sessions in Abingdon. It wasn't that close to where we live in Witney but by then we knew I had to try it. I really didn't want to go. Even when we got outside the hall I didn't want to go in!

The first three to four weeks I had to use my walker to go up to the class from the car. After that I was going on two sticks!

The first day I went there I had to do a test, walking round some chairs. That took me so many seconds the first time, and on the last day, 16 seconds!

Before the course I'd not been getting about well, I was using my frame all the time. I do still use it if we go shopping - I go around with the walker and Judy pushes the trolley - but at home I don't need it.

They were two good girls there, there's no doubt about it. I mean it's simple exercises, but it got me going. And we kept it going as well. We went on a Thursday, but we did two sessions at home, and we still do them at home together.

I've got another greenhouse now, a small one I can stand on the outside of, and I'm getting on with growing my vegetables. I've got onions, carrots, potatoes, runner beans and tomatoes! It's all growing, and it's all been done sat down. Give it another week or 10 days and I'll be digging taters.



I'm doing a bit more now than what I was. I've got a stool at the sink, so I do the washing up, and preparing the vegetables. I still feel frustrated when I look at everything Judy does like edging the lawn, you know. But I am getting stuff done. It has made a difference, given me confidence back.

They do their job and probably don't know what difference it's made really, it's marvellous. Let me just say, they worked a miracle."



Judy

"When Ossee had the fall in the greenhouse that really scared me. I just stopped him going through the glass. He really didn't want to go to the sessions, but I knew he needed to.

I did it with him to support him, and we still do the exercises at home together to keep him going. I always say to him 'We're in this together'.

It's done him the world of good. I was chatting to someone down in the town the other day and I said, 'If you get the chance to go, go'. Because I know the good it's done Ossee, in fact, it's done us both good."

You can find out more about Stay Strong and Steady, our falls prevention exercise and information programme, by emailing active@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or calling 01235 849 403.

Celebrating the integral role of older people in our communities

Each year on October 1st, people across the world mark United Nations International Day of Older People to raise awareness of opportunities and challenges faced by older people.

This year's UK theme is "The part we play", which is all about celebrating the integral role older people play in strengthening our communities. Whether as workers, carers, volunteers, community connectors, activists or in other roles, older people make vital contributions to society which are often overlooked or limited by ageism and other barriers.

To celebrate the part older people play in making our communities in Oxfordshire a better place to be, we spoke to two people who contribute in different ways.

Marilyn Ching is an amazing volunteer who has offered her time to a huge number of causes and organisations.



What is it that you do within the community?

My role in the community is very varied and after being retired for 14 years I have volunteered at Age UK Oxfordshire as a Creative Ambassador, at Oxford Playhouse and The North Wall Arts Centre as an Usher, at Dancin' Oxford, Sobell House, University of Oxford Gardens, Libraries and Museums, as well as assisting in running Adult Learning Groups for the Museum of Oxford!

What impact does what you do have on you and your local community?

There's a saying "variety is the spice of life" and my life has been enhanced greatly by so many of the projects I've been part of. Being an Age UK Oxfordshire Creative Ambassador enables me to inform people of creative opportunities within the community, which I think is vital. It's shown me it's never too late to start creative activities. Within the role I also offer my thoughts and ideas about what creative activities are of interest to older people in Oxfordshire, current opportunities, what's missing and how things could be improved. I also encourage older people in the local community to say what they think and want too.

I have a very fulfilled life knowing that I have supported so many people who need encouragement when venturing into new activities.

As an older person, what qualities do you think you bring?

I have lived in Oxford for the past 74 years and as an older person I have the experience of dealing with people from all backgrounds, and I'm able to tailor levels of support to match the needs of the individual.

Bee Myson is a well-known face in Banbury. She is employed by Age UK Oxfordshire to coordinate Age Friendly Banbury and is focused on helping make Banbury a better place to grow older.

What is it that you do within the community?

I coordinate the Age Friendly Banbury Partnership of local organisations, committed to making Banbury an age-friendly town. The Partnership brings together older people, community leaders, local charities, businesses, and local councils, which makes for a varied and interesting group of people to work with, making contacts and understanding the different ways partners interact with and serve older people.



What impact does what you do have on you and your local community?

I'm very grateful to be involved with a project that's achieving positive changes for the local community. I do this by hearing from older residents, connecting partners through organising events, publishing a monthly newsletter and building a network of supportive organisations – 'joining the dots' as I describe my role - hopefully helping raise awareness of the priorities of older people and enabling partners to collaborate more effectively to improve later life for residents.

As an older person, what qualities do you think you bring?

Having been involved with older people almost all my working life, through advice helplines, developing activities and services, and supporting a local day centre, I aim to bring experience and insights from these activities to my role.

Being older, I can also sympathise with some of the challenges and privileges that arise as we navigate later life, including the pleasure of being a grandparent, and these help me to understand the priorities for action that older people report.



I'd like to say that being older can provide a sense of perspective and an appreciation of the value of seizing opportunities, combined with an urgency to use every opportunity to learn and use the time available to make a difference to the best of my ability.

Support to explore the online world

At Age UK Oxfordshire, our Digital Support Team are here to ensure you have the opportunity to safely participate in the digital world. We can demonstrate the benefits of being online, improve your confidence and help you to avoid online scams.

Along with our team of volunteers, we can support you to access the online world in whichever ways benefit you – that could be sending an email, keeping up to date with your family's lives on social media, ordering a grocery shop online, renewing library books, chatting with likeminded people, contacting your GP or much more!

Ultimately, we want to assist you in becoming digitally independent so that you can benefit from the digital world and all it has to offer, whether that's using a smartphone, tablet, laptop or computer.

The difference our Tablet Loan Scheme made to Robert

Health issues had affected Robert's ability to do the things he loved, and he was feeling isolated and alone. He contacted us for support as although he had a smartphone and wanted to be more connected, he was very concerned about accessing the internet.

We organised for Robert to borrow a tablet on our Tablet Loan Scheme and supported him to use his smart phone to email. We also introduced him to the internet and how to access sites safely and avoid scams.

Robert now uses BBC Sounds as he loves music! He's also really pleased to be able to use the NHS app which enables him to access his GP surgery, medication information and health record. Robert found the tablet loan really useful, so we were delighted to be able to donate a device to him so that he can continue to access the internet and feel more connected.

Stephen Mott who supported Robert handing over the donated tablet



We run a wide range of in-person bookable one-to-one digital support sessions to help you use your device, such as a mobile phone, tablet or laptop. Find out more by calling **01235 849 434**, or if you use email you can contact us at community@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk.

Puzzles

Anagram 1

decideoutsure

Anagram 2

citymumno

Trivia

What is the name for the science of growing apples?

Take part in The Big Knit

Knitting pattern for a blue bobble hat

Beginner pattern by Juliet Bernard.

Yarn: Blue and orange DK (choose any two colours)

Needles: 4mm

Abbreviations:

St(s) - stitch(es)

st st - stocking stitch

k2tog - knit two together

Step-by-step

Cast on 31 sts in orange

Knit two rows (garter st)

Change to blue and beginning with a knit row continue in st st as follows

2 rows blue, 2 rows orange, 2 rows blue, 2 rows orange, 2 rows blue, 2 rows orange. Continue in orange.

Next row: k2tog to last st, k1 (16sts)

Next row: purl

Next row: k2tog to end (8sts)

Cut the yarn leaving approx 10cm length. Thread this through a sewing needle and bring through stitches and pull up to tighten.

Making up

Use a sewing needle to join side seams.

Make a pompom in blue and sew securely to top of the hat.

See p3 for details about the campaign and how to get your hats to us.



The challenge of caring

Before his wife Janine was diagnosed with dementia, Roger had only ever done the cooking during Wimbledon fortnight.

“She loved the tennis. That was her fortnight for just putting her feet up in front of the TV. The rest of the year we divided the chores along very traditional lines, and she did all the cooking, washing et cetera.”

All that changed in 2017 when Janine began to struggle with simple tasks around the house. Roger noticed that she suddenly couldn't set the correct time on the microwave and couldn't operate the phone or TV remote. The first two times concerns were discussed with the GP were rather frustrating as no diagnosis was made, but finally the following year Janine was diagnosed with Alzheimer's.

Roger now does everything for them both, and he is frank about the challenges he has faced.

“There are moments of extreme frustration, when you are doing everything you can to help the person you love, but something tiny provokes an outburst. You have to walk away, remembering they are not the person they were, and try to put aside the episode when you return because they will have no recollection of what caused the outburst.”

He feels those caring for someone living with dementia need to prepare for the emotional challenges ahead. ***“It can be a very lonely role, but it's important to remember that you are part of a much wider family of carers, and chatting to people who are going through the same experiences is vital.”***

Roger has now joined the Experts by Experience Group for our support service, Dementia Oxfordshire, helping to shape the inclusive and informative education sessions for informal carers that take place across the county. He also makes good use of his local memory café to meet up with other people living with dementia and their carers.



In June, Roger won a Highly Commended award at the Oxfordshire Care Awards, and although he was unable to attend the ceremony, he popped into the Age UK Oxfordshire office to collect his award from Juliet Cocks (Head of Carers Oxfordshire), Melissa Spearman (Education Lead for Dementia Oxfordshire) and Paul Ringer (CEO) (left to right).



Dementia Oxfordshire runs a wide range of regular activities designed for people living with dementia and their carers, from memory cafés where you can chat to others over a cup of coffee, to more active sessions such as walks in the grounds of Blenheim Palace. Do take a look at the Dementia Oxfordshire website to find out about activities and events in your area, or call the Dementia Oxfordshire Support Line on **01865 410 210** (open Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm).

Thank you!

A big thank you to Mumby's Live-In Care and Lincroft Meadow Care Home who kindly sponsored this year's Dementia Oxfordshire Summer Fete. Their generosity meant even more of the money raised could go towards supporting those living with dementia in Oxfordshire.

Also, huge thanks to BelleVue and Home Instead for sponsoring the Dementia Oxfordshire Autumn Information Fayre in September, and to Care Home UK and Wallfinch who will be sponsoring our Winter Fayre in December.

To find out more about forthcoming events, take a look [online](#).



Soul mates

Sitting outside their home looking out over fields in Upper Heyford, we talked to Jonathan and Patricia about their recent wedding, and how they're thankful to Age UK Oxfordshire for helping bring them together.

“We got married in June”, Patricia tells us, “We had the ceremony at Garth Park registry office, and then a party at the hotel nearby”.

“We laid on all the fun stuff for our guests, bowling, pool and table football, and we had a lovely lunch for 26 people” adds Jonathan.

They tell us that up to 85 more guests joined them later in the day (including some of our team from Age UK Oxfordshire!), and about the beautiful cake their daughter baked, the wonderful evening food ‘that could have fed a regiment’ and the fantastic four-piece band that were ‘out of this world’.

It’s fantastic to see the photos of their special day and hear about the wonderful occasion, but we’re also keen to learn about their individual experiences and how they met.

Patricia says, **“I used to volunteer at the Age UK Oxfordshire exercise classes where my daughter Louise was a tutor. We would go all over, and one of the classes was up at the Veteran’s Club. We’d have lunch there before we went on to the next class elsewhere and this one day a lady came over and asked if me and Louise would go and sit next to this gentleman – ‘he doesn’t get out much’ she said.”**

“In other words, she dropped me in it!” Jonathan says.

“Well, we went and joined him that week, and each Tuesday we did the same. He struggled a bit as his leg and arm weren’t working very well, and I thought really, he should come along to the exercise class. This was in early 2020.”

“Uh. Keep fit. Well, I knew about it.” Jonathan adds, “But I thought, you’ve got to be joking, I’m not doing that, no chance! But Patricia was pretty persuasive and somehow one week I ended up in the class! I said, ‘I’ll give it a go, I’ll sit, but I’m not doing anything’”.

Patricia adds, “And I sat next to you, to help you, and Louise told me off actually for helping you too much! Anyway, we kept the lunches up and I soon learned that he enjoys art like me, and we spent a lot of time chatting”.

Jonathan and Patricia talk about how they seem to have always been close by without knowing. **“It turns out, where I used to live, he played at the Bowls Club just one road away, and we found out we’d both been living in Holland at the same time. It’s the weirdest thing, it was definitely a sign”** Patricia says.

“It’s like we were soul mates without knowing it” Jonathan adds.



Jonathan talks about the time before he met Patricia as a 'down slope'. He lost his partner to cancer, having cared for her for nine months and wasn't really getting out. He talks fondly about the Age UK Oxfordshire bereavement group he went to, and about Jackie, Jayne and others from our team who gave him some much-needed encouragement to get out and back to the Veterans Club. "Jackie helped pick me up" he adds.

Patricia had a similar experience in September 2020. **"After my husband died, I felt funny. I don't know, I felt independent again, but I didn't know who I was. It was lockdown and even if I'd been able to, I didn't want to go out. I did keep saying to my daughter, 'I wonder how that gentleman we met is. I hope he's OK'. She phoned this lady, Ann, who said he was OK, and I said, 'thank goodness'.**

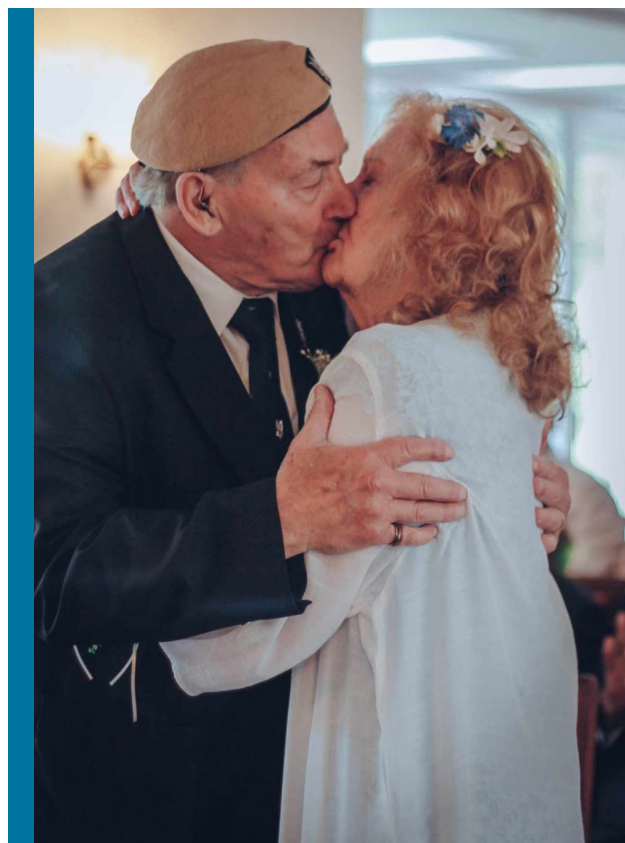
Jonathan says, "Well what happened was I was stuck in hospital, and I was in there for I think, four to six weeks. They wouldn't let me out until I had someone to care for me. And I thought, well, I'm not staying here! I nearly just walked out but then I thought I'd call Patricia! I rang her and said, 'I'm in a bit of bother' and the next day she came round – and she never left!"

"It was 16th December 2022 when he proposed", Patricia says, "I didn't know anything about it! He's not been married before, so I was surprised".

"Well, I said, you're living here, so we're a couple and so let's get married!" Jonathan laughs.

The couple talk about how they were going to get married the following year but decided to head off on travelling adventures instead. Patricia says, "I said forget about the wedding this year, let's go places. We went to Scotland twice, down to Falmouth and just all over the place".

Both aged 86, Patricia and Jonathan go dancing at the Highfield Social Club every Saturday evening and enjoy looking after their garden; they really bring out the best in each other. "We're just happy people - free spirits." Patricia says.



Have you joined the Priority Services Register (PSR)?

If you're eligible to join the Priority Services Register you should sign up as soon as possible. This will ensure that you receive priority support and information if you're ever without electricity, gas or water either in an emergency or because of planned work.

The service also helps utility companies to look after customers who have extra communication, access or safety needs and to tailor their services to support households who need extra help with everyday energy matters like bills.

Who can register?

You're eligible for free PSR services if you meet any of the following criteria:

- Are of pensionable age
- Use medical equipment reliant on electricity or water
- Have a hearing or sight condition
- Have a disability or chronic illness
- Have anxiety, depression or any mental health condition
- Have a loss or impairment of smell
- Need documents translated into another format or language
- Temporarily need extra support
- Live with any children under 5

How to register

The PSR is completely free and confidential, and it means you'll always get the help you need, particularly in an emergency. To register you can:

- Fill out an [online form](#)
- Call your gas or electricity supplier who will sign you up to the PSR over the phone

Working in partnership with



SGN
Your gas. Our network.

At Age UK Oxfordshire we're pleased to be working together with SGN to help keep local people safe and warm in their homes. If you'd like to talk to us about how you can access additional support to stay safe and warm at home, please call us on **0345 450 1276** or email helpline@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk.

Staying safe from the dangers of carbon monoxide

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colourless, odourless, tasteless, poisonous gas produced by incomplete burning of carbon-based fuels, including gas, oil, wood, petrol and coal. Because you can't see it, taste it or smell it, it's highly dangerous and in certain conditions can kill quickly and without warning. Common symptoms of CO poisoning are headaches, dizziness, breathlessness, nausea, collapse and loss of consciousness.

The signs of carbon monoxide

- Flames on most heating appliances should be crisp and blue. Yellow/orange flames should be checked by a professional.
- Staining, sooting or discolouration on appliances.
- Increased condensation.
- The pilot light blowing out frequently.

How to stay safe from the dangers of carbon monoxide

- Get coal, oil and gas appliances checked annually by a qualified professional.
- Obtain an audible carbon monoxide alarm and test it regularly.
- Ensure your appliances have adequate ventilation and don't block air vents.
- Turn off the appliance and seek immediate assistance if you suspect CO or your CO alarm sounds.
- Do not bring a BBQ or portable heater into an enclosed space without proper ventilation.

If you smell gas:

- Open windows and doors, turn off the gas supply at the meter / any gas appliances. Call **0800 111 999**.
- DO NOT smoke or use any naked flames or touch any electrical switches.

If you're concerned there is CO present in your home, notice symptoms of CO poisoning, smell gas or think you have a gas leak you should call the free 24-hour National Gas Emergency Service on **0800 111 999** immediately.



Could you benefit from a locking cooker valve?

A locking cooker valve is a simple safety device that the gas network provider can fit for free to your existing pipework, which eliminates the risk of the cooker being unintentionally turned on or left on. It can help people with dementia or autism retain their independence at home, while providing reassurance to family and carers.

For more information visit the [SGN website](#), or call us on **0345 450 1276** and we can refer you for a valve.

Changes to the Winter Fuel Payment

Did you know that the Government announced changes in July, meaning that from this year the Winter Fuel Payment will become means tested? This means that you will no longer receive the Winter Fuel Payment unless you are in receipt of certain benefits.

What is the Winter Fuel Payment?

The Winter Fuel Payment is an annual tax-free payment for households that include someone born on or before 23rd September 1958 (for 2024-25) designed to help cover heating costs in winter, with households receiving up to £300. Previously, the payment was not means-tested, but now only those in receipt of certain benefits will receive the contribution to heating costs.

How can I continue to receive it?

Pension Credit is the primary way people of pension age can continue to receive the Winter Fuel Payment, and with an estimate of more than 4,000 older people across the county not claiming the Pension Credit to which they're entitled, it's more important than ever that you check whether you might be eligible.

Pension Credit is an income-related benefit that tops up weekly income to £218.15 for a single person and to a joint £332.95 for a couple. In addition to ensuring those on a low income continue to receive the Winter Fuel Payment, even a small award of Pension Credit can provide access to help with housing costs, council tax or heating bills and, for those over 75, continued entitlement to a free TV licence.

You can apply for Pension Credit [online](#) or by calling **0800 99 1234**. If you want to check whether you are entitled to Pension Credit or other benefits, you can use Age UK's free and anonymous [Benefits Calculator online](#) or phone our free Information & Advice helpline on **0345 450 1276**.





Could Homeshare be for you?

Our Homeshare service brings together an older person (or couple) who may benefit from companionship or practical support at home, with another person (usually a professional, keyworker or mature student) who is happy to lend a helping hand and who would benefit from affordable accommodation.

In this safe and mutually beneficial living arrangement, the Householder provides a spare room in a welcoming home and, in return, can expect around 10 hours of help each week as a combination of companionship and practical support.

Marian, Homeshare Oxfordshire's Service Manager, explains – 'Homeshare works for different people in different ways. Everyone's circumstances are different. Some of our Householders are leading active and independent lives and it's the concept of Homeshare, people helping each other, that most appeals to them. Other Householders may like the ethos too but have also identified clear needs - whether that's some cooking, shopping or errands, a little help in the house or garden, help with mobile phones or other technology, or perhaps walking the dog. The companionship side of things - good company over a cup of tea, a shared evening meal or doing something out and about - is often a really important element.

A Homeshare arrangement can also sit quite comfortably alongside support from carers that may already be in place. Whatever the circumstances, the key is in the matching, finding the right person for the right person, and it's the job of the Homeshare team to do this carefully and well.

In the words of a Householder's daughter, **'I would encourage anyone thinking about Homeshare to give the local Homeshare Oxfordshire team a ring in the first place. They really do take time and care to listen very carefully. Nothing beats the personal nature of the service and I've seen the care and experience they put into matching people and to providing top-level support once the Homeshare once is underway'**.

You can find out more by visiting our [website](https://www.homeshareageukoxfordshire.org.uk), calling **01865 410 670** or emailing homeshare@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk.

Avoid romance scams and heartbreak

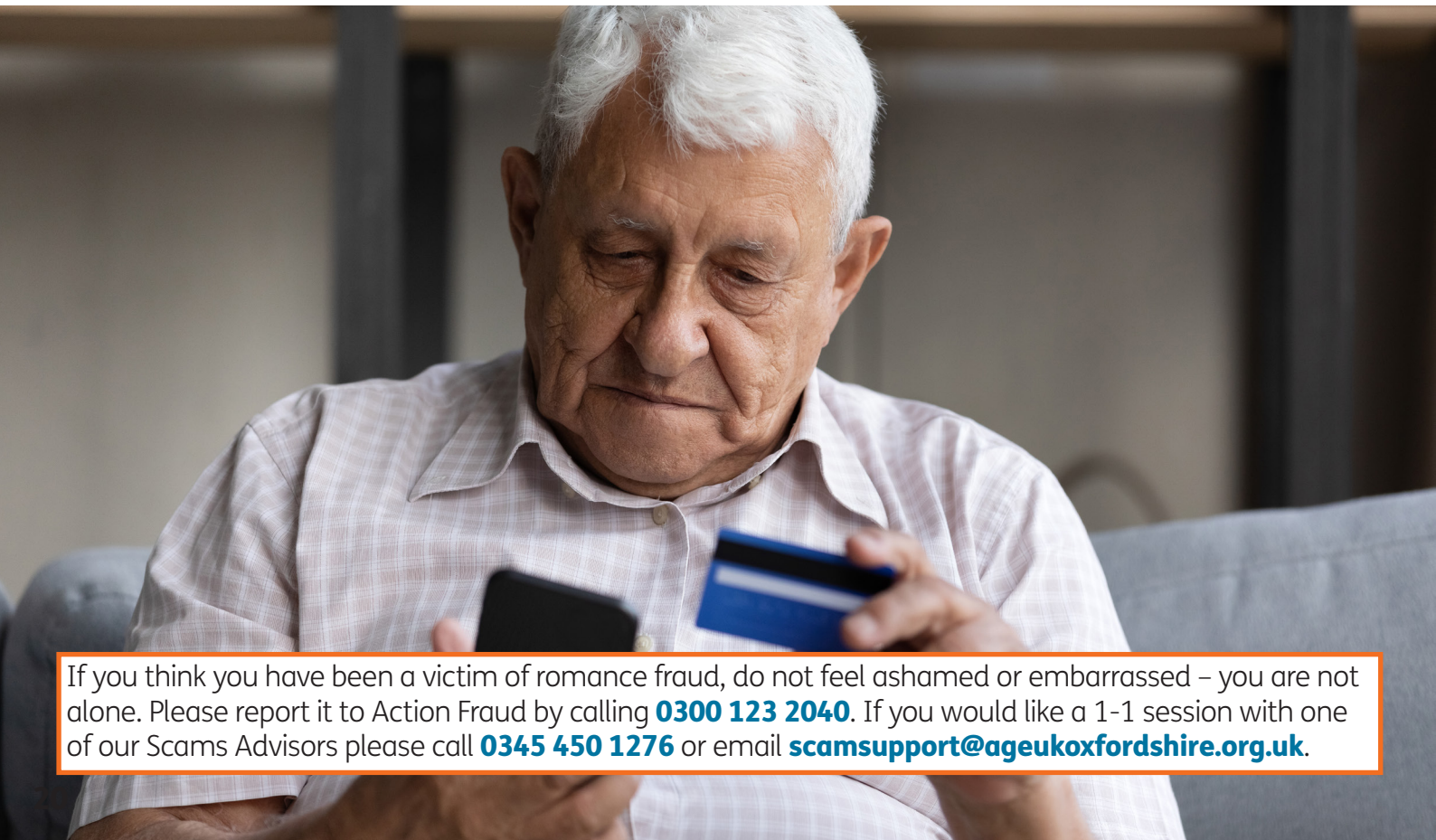
Romance fraud occurs when you think you've met the perfect partner online, but they are using a fake profile to form a relationship with you.

They gain your trust over a period of time making you believe you are in a loving and caring relationship. However, their end goal is only ever to get your money or personal information.

People who have fallen victim to romance scams tend to report the same pattern. The scammer will often ask you a lot of questions about yourself, the more they know about you, the easier you will be to manipulate. Conversation will be friendly at first but it may turn romantic very quickly, showering you with compliments and claiming to be falling in love with you.

Their story, or parts of it, may change over time - if something doesn't sound quite right or match what they said before, it could indicate they are lying. They might also refuse to video call you or meet you in person, wanting to keep their true identity hidden. Eventually, the scammer will ask you to lend them money, using any number of reasons, such as needing help to pay for a flight to meet you, or that they're in some sort of trouble. It's important you stay aware when speaking to someone online and watch out for any of these behaviours. Below are some of the ways you can stay safe from romance scams:

- Don't accept friend requests from people you don't know when using social media sites.
- Don't give away too many personal details about yourself online. Revealing your full name, date of birth and home address could lead to your identity being stolen.
- NEVER send or receive money or give away your bank details to someone you've only met online. If anyone asks for your financial details, stop communicating with them immediately and report them.
- Use reputable dating sites so that there is evidence on the dating site if they try to deny their scam.



If you think you have been a victim of romance fraud, do not feel ashamed or embarrassed – you are not alone. Please report it to Action Fraud by calling **0300 123 2040**. If you would like a 1-1 session with one of our Scams Advisors please call **0345 450 1276** or email **scamsupport@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk**.

Discover our groups across Oxfordshire

Bereavement Support

Open to people aged 60+ who have lost a loved one. Abingdon, Banbury, Bicester, Carterton, Didcot, Grove, Kidlington, Oxford, Wheatley, Witney.

community@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk

01235 849 434

Book Clubs

TeaBooks are sociable book groups for those 60+, helping people to share a love of books and reading, and to make new friends.

Abingdon, Bicester, Carterton, Headington, Kidlington, Marston, Oxford, Wantage, Witney.

teabooks@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk

0345 450 1276

Carers Support

We know the importance of peer support, and that there is real benefit in connecting with people who know what you're going through. We run and support a variety of groups through our sister organisation Carers Oxfordshire, in locations across Oxfordshire.

carersinfo@carersoxfordshire.org.uk

01235 424 715

Dementia Support

We run and support a number of groups across the county which provide information, support and connection to those living with dementia, and their carers.

Various locations across Oxfordshire through our dementia support service, Dementia Oxfordshire.

info@dementiaoxfordshire.org.uk

01865 410 210

Digital Support

Whether you need help with your phone, computer or tablet, we can support you to develop your skills and safely get involved with the online world.

Bampton, Banbury, Benson, Bicester, Burford, Didcot, Kidlington, Oxford, Sonning Common.

community@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk

01235 849 434

Exercise Classes

Tailored exercise classes for older adults, including Strength and Balance, seated exercise, and Big, Bold and Balance for people living with Parkinson's.

Abingdon, Bampton, Banbury, Bicester, Botley, Cumnor, Didcot, Enstone, Eynsham, Henley, Milton under Wychwood, Sonning Common, Witney and online via Zoom.

active@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk

01235 849 403

To find out more about the below activities, please contact us.

community@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk

01235 849 434

Aviation Group

A social group for all, whether you're an aviation expert or just have a general interest. Carterton.

Chatterbox and Social Get-togethers

Social mornings and afternoons offering a warm welcome, with refreshments and a chat.

Chipping Norton, Banbury, Bicester, Kidlington, Oxford, Thame, Wallingford, Witney, Woodcote.

Film Clubs

A social film club for people 50+.

Banbury, Carterton, Horspath, Steventon, Deddington, Oxford, Sibford, Sonning Common, Woodstock.

Information & Advice Drop-ins

Abingdon, Banbury, Barton, Bicester, Didcot, Horspath, Kingston Bagpuize, Oxford, Sonning Common, Thame, Upper Heyford, Wantage, Wheatley, Woodstock, Witney.

LGBTQ+ Groups

Social groups for older people in our LGBTQ+ community. Banbury, Didcot.

Lunch Clubs

A chance to meet and eat in friendly company. Bicester, Kidlington, Thame.

Taking care of your feet

Our friendly, professional Foot Care Service is here to help you take good care of your feet so that you can stay comfortable, healthy and active.

Our trained staff will trim and file your nails and give you a gentle foot rub with cream to moisturise and prevent dryness or itching. All treatments take place in a private room, take around 20–30 minutes and cost £17 (plus a one-off fee of £15 for equipment on your first visit).

We have clinics in: Abingdon, Banbury, Bicester, Didcot, Greater Leys, Henley-on-Thames, Wallingford, Wantage and Witney.

We will be opening more clinics across the county soon so if there isn't a clinic in your area, please get in touch to register your interest.

To book or register an interest, please email footcare@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or call **01865 717 615**.



Puzzle Answers

Anagram 1

deciduous tree

Anagram 2

community

Trivia

Pomology



Our Services

We provide a wide variety of services for older people including:

Information and advice

Dementia support

Carer support

Physical activity classes

Telephone befriending

Digital support

Home support

Homeshare

Bereavement support groups

Foot care

Scams prevention advice

Hospital discharge support

Social activities and clubs

LGBTQ+ groups

Book groups

Call us on
0345 450 1276

or visit
www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire
for more
information



All our staff have access to telephone interpreting services for over 200 languages. This magazine is available in screen-reader friendly digital format and large print. Contact us at media@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk for more information.



Leaving a legacy of kindness

A gift in your will could help give older people in Oxfordshire someone to turn to. You can make sure we are always there for those who need us for years to come. (Charity number 1091529).

To find out more please call **0345 450 1276** or email **contactus@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk**. Alternatively visit our **[website](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire)**.