

Age UK Oxfordshire's Magazine

EngAGE

Tips for coping with grief during winter

Celebrating old love and new love

The Big Knit is back!

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.



Winter is a time for reflection, connection and community, and at Age UK Oxfordshire we are committed to ensuring that everyone feels supported and valued during these colder months.

This edition is packed with inspiring stories and practical advice; from tips on staying well this winter to information about repair cafés, we hope to bring some warmth and joy to your winter days.

We are very aware of the real pressures facing lots of people this winter and continue to urge everyone to find out whether they are entitled to any additional money or support to help with daily living costs. You can complete a benefits check online at <https://benefitscheck.ageuk.org.uk> or our Information & Advice Helpline is available to support you on **0345 450 1276**.

As we navigate the challenges and joys of the winter season, I encourage you to reach out, stay connected and take advantage of the resources and support available to you. Remember, you are not alone – we are here for you.

Wishing you a warm and wonderful winter,

Paul

**Age UK Charity
Quality Standard**



Be aware of festive scams

Expecting a delivery?

Scammers take advantage of the fact that for lots of us, the number of postal deliveries we're expecting increases due to the festive period. They pose as known delivery companies, contacting you either by email or text claiming that they have not been able to deliver the goods you've ordered and asking for a fee to re-deliver. In doing this, the criminal's goal is to get your personal details such as your address, date of birth and bank details. The first question to ask yourself is whether you're expecting a parcel; if not, then you should disregard the communication immediately and not click on any links. If you are expecting a delivery, you should double check with the company you ordered the parcel from directly, as they will often be able to investigate further for you.

High street fundraisers

There are so many genuine, worthwhile causes and groups collecting on our high streets, and Christmas is when many of us choose to give back and donate. Unfortunately, not all high street fundraisers are as honest as they may seem. You may be approached by someone while you are out shopping, or they may knock on your door during the day. Scammers may falsely represent a charity and try to get you to donate or set up a regular gift which is for their own gain. If you're suspicious, ask the person to present their ID - official charity employees and volunteers should carry an identifying pass. If you're still unsure, you can call the charity directly or donate via their website instead.

Scam e-cards

Christmas e-cards can be a simple and fun way to wish each other a happy Christmas. However, if you receive one in your inbox always act cautiously and be safe. Cyber criminals send out what initially seem like harmless Christmas e-cards, that once opened, likely contain viruses and malware that will attempt to attack your device, often without you knowing. If you receive an anonymous e-card, do not open it - delete it from your inbox immediately. If it appears to be from a person you know, always double check their email address is correct and check with the person through an alternative method to make sure it is genuine.



If you think you have been a victim of 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.

Old love and new love

In this feature you can read the stories of Bob and Frances who have just celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary, and Andrew and Maggie who recently got engaged, having found love again in their 60s.

Old love - celebrating 70 years

Bob and Frances Spencer-Hughes celebrated 70 years of marriage in September. We met them at their home to talk about their many years together.

“We met in December 1953 when I was 19 and Bob was 22,” Frances begins. “We were both at a 21st birthday party in Tooting. We ended up sitting on the stairs having a drink while everybody else was doing their thing, and when Bob walked me home he asked if he could see me the next day. He said, ‘I’ll meet you tomorrow at the pictures at 3 o’clock’. He was going back to Walthamstow that next night.”

“It just grew from there” Bob adds, “I met her mum just before Christmas, then she met my mum and dad. We took it in turns staying at each other’s parents’ houses as we lived so far apart, not in the same bed of course in those days!”

“Oh, no,” Frances adds, “that wasn’t allowed! It was three in the bed - I slept in with his two sisters!”

The couple recall a wet and cold day in February, when they were waiting at the bus stop in the freezing cold travelling from Tooting to Walthamstow again. **“My feet were frozen and just out of the blue I said, ‘I’m going to have to marry you to keep my feet warm!’** Frances laughs.

“It was a joke,” she adds, “But when we got back to his mum’s, he said, ‘We’re getting married’. What could I say!”

“My mum wasn’t very happy about it!” Bob says, explaining that he’d been in the RAF for a number of years prior, completing his national service and then continuing for another two years, so his family hadn’t seen him for years. “And then along came this girl who stole her son away!” he laughs, “relations were a bit frosty”.

The couple married in September 1954 in Tooting with Frances’ younger brother as page boy, bridesmaids in lilac dresses, and the bride wearing a traditional white dress with a bolero. “You weren’t allowed to show your shoulders in those days!” Frances says. “We were living in a small council house then and I don’t know how my mum did it, but the furniture disappeared, and trestle tables and food appeared, and we all went back there after the church.”



Bob and Frances talk happily about their family, recalling how their first born arriving on Bob's mum's birthday 'warmed their relationship' a year later.

In the ten years following, they went on to have two daughters, Jacqui and Debbie, and Frances says, "We got what we wanted, a family. And now we've got six grandchildren and two great grandchildren".

Family is clearly a huge part of the couple's life, and they talk amiably about how they took them all for a meal at the village pub last Christmas, with plans to do the same this year.

"We had 17 and a half people as our 4-month-old great-grandson was there too, he was passed around like 'pass the parcel', smiling away! We all get on well together, we've got a lovely family to look after us" Bob says. "We've always been there for the kids when they've needed us and they're always there for us, when we need them now", Frances adds.

Bob worked as an accountant after serving in the RAF in Singapore, and Frances left her athletic training to become a secretary. They have enjoyed life in London, Surrey, Warwickshire and Oxfordshire, and have been settled in the village of Greatworth, near Banbury, for over 30 years.

The village, with 'wonderful community spirit', has been the setting for two fantastic celebrations of their 70 years together, with a service at St Peter's, and a lunchtime celebration at the local pub.

"At the church service we said our vows again and had Champagne for a toast! It was a joyous occasion, and we got an applause from the congregation afterwards." Frances recalls.

Bob tells us about the party their family organised, "Frances normally does all the organising, but they insisted they'd do it all. We had a buffet lunch and a two-tier cake, and I made a little speech".

When asked about the secret to their 70 years of marriage, Bob says, **"We look after each other. Now we're both getting a bit creaky frankly, but we're soldiering on. We're a partnership, and we're tolerant"**.



"You've got to do it your way," Frances concludes.



Read Maggie and Andrew's story on the next page.



New love - celebrating an engagement

Maggie and Andrew both lost their loved ones to cancer and have found happiness again together having met on an Age UK Oxfordshire trip to Stoke-on-Trent. We talked to them about their experiences, how they met and their recent engagement.



Maggie lost her husband just over 10 years ago. She says that for the first two or three years she didn't know what she wanted to do with her life. She had a determination to get fit and go to the gym and really threw herself into crafting, "I can really lose myself in crafting and I love it," Maggie says. She also decided to take up a volunteering role and now volunteers at Upton House, a National Trust property.

Andrew reflects on what you do if you've lost someone after so many years, especially if you feel you have nobody to turn to. He talks about how he started to cope after he lost his wife five years ago, "It can be difficult for a man on his own. For me it started with Troy at Age UK Oxfordshire who showed me how to use the computer. I started writing a lot of poetry and thanks to Troy's help, I was able to recite poems at certain groups online and at open mic sessions.

"Inspiring others and keeping my mind active really helps me. I used to recite limericks to my wife, and now I tell poems and stories in my role as an Oxford sightseeing bus tour guide.

"I started volunteering for Age UK Oxfordshire as a Creative Ambassador, and Maggie joined up too!" Andrew adds.

The couple first met briefly at a Creative Ambassadors outing to Farmoor Reservoir and would see each other on Zoom meetings, but it wasn't until just over a year ago that they began to get to know each other.

Maggie tells us about when she and Andrew first met properly. "We went on a Creative Ambassadors trip to Stoke-on-Trent Theatre at the end of 2023. It was a great trip, and we sat together on the train and just chatted. Andrew's a tour guide and he invited me on a walking tour of Oxford for our first 'date' – which included poetry of course! That's where it all started!"



“I’d actually got very independent and used to being on my own and it all kind of turned my world upside down, in a good way of course!” Maggie says.

Their shared experience of losing their loved ones clearly helps them connect.

Maggie says, “After being married for 38 years, change can feel difficult. We will always think of them, there’s a love that never goes, and I think that’s one thing Andrew and I really understand about each other”.

Andrew adds, “We both lost our loved ones through cancer and we both know what it’s like to do everything for that person when they need you. That’s what we both went through”.

“We just naturally talk about our pasts; it’s just part of us”, Maggie says. “But this, with Andrew, it’s just lovely, we’re so happy. We went to Blackpool Illuminations last month, popped to Weston-Super-Mare the other week! We’re doing lots of things we’ve never done before and just having fun.”

Andrew tells us about their recent engagement, “We got engaged on Maggie’s birthday in August. We haven’t set a date yet, we thought we’d just relax and enjoy this for a while”. Maggie adds, **“I don’t ever take life for granted anymore. We’re just really enjoying our time together”.**

The couple are both keen to share their experience with readers to offer hope to others who have lost their loved one.

Maggie says, “We recognise that in no way, shape or form is it easy, and there are so many things that you have to deal with - some days are good, some days are bad”.

“But we believe there is hope,” Andrew adds, **“whatever that might be. It might not be a new relationship, it might be something different, a new business or a hobby that you never thought you’d do, but just never give up”.**



Together, we're not alone

During winter risk factors for older people increase significantly, and we're urging people to support our Oxfordshire-based Phone Friends service to help alleviate loneliness and isolation among older people.

During the winter months, many older people in Oxfordshire face increased isolation and loneliness. Together, we can ensure that older people don't have to face loneliness, alone.

Phone Friends provides a vital lifeline, offering regular friendly phone calls to those who are feeling lonely, forgotten or who have no one to talk to. Weekly calls from our friendly volunteers bring comfort, friendship and joy to older people. This service not only provides companionship but also ensures that older people feel connected and supported, and at times has been lifesaving.

Currently over 330 people receive a free, weekly telephone call from one of our Phone Friends volunteers, and we have a waiting list of people who could benefit from this support.

"It's just what I needed to help stop me from feeling lonely."

Volunteer telephone befrienders really brighten the lives of the older people they call, giving them something they can look forward to. Please help support older people who are feeling lonely.

If you are able to give money:

- **£6** would pay for **2** friendly and motivational conversations
- **£36** would pay for **12** friendly and motivational conversations

Every donation, no matter the size, can help provide the human connection that too many older people live without. You can make a difference.

To donate, visit www.justgiving.com/campaign/together-we-are-not-alone, or you can donate up to £20 by texting **FRIENDSHIP** followed by your donation amount to **70460** to give that amount. For example, text FRIENDSHIP 6 to 70460 to donate £6. Texts will cost the donation amount plus one standard network rate message.



Scan the QR code with your smartphone camera to donate online.



If you are able to give time:

By volunteering just an hour or two each week at a time that suits you, you can make a significant difference in someone's life from the comfort of your own home. Volunteers are matched with older individuals based on shared interests, ensuring meaningful and engaging conversations.

We offer out of pocket expenses, training and support and in return you will join a great team of volunteers.

Full training is offered virtually, usually over Microsoft Teams, for one hour, or we can train you over the telephone. You will also receive a training information pack to support you when you make your calls. We ask for a minimum commitment of six months.

To find out more about becoming a Phone Friends Volunteer please visit www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire/get-involved/volunteer/telephone-befriending-volunteer, call **01295 234 850** or email volunteering@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk.

“You always lift my spirits.”

Could you benefit from a regular friendly call from a Phone Friend? To find out more please email phonefriends@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or call **01295 234 850**.



Registered with
FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR

Puzzles

Anagram 1

engages siren toss

Anagram 2

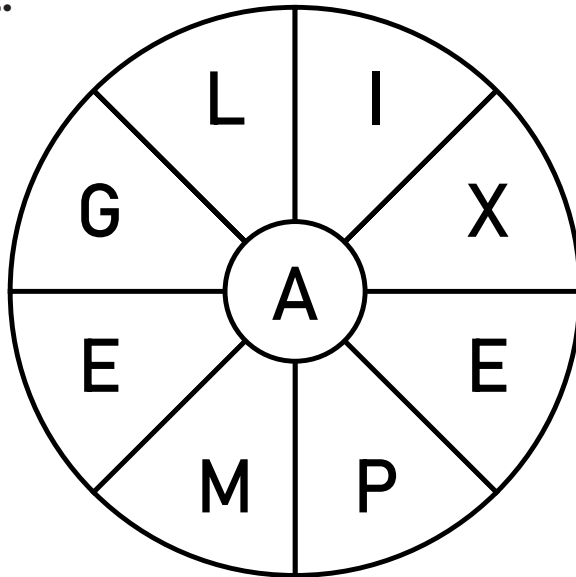
elections wrist

Word wheel

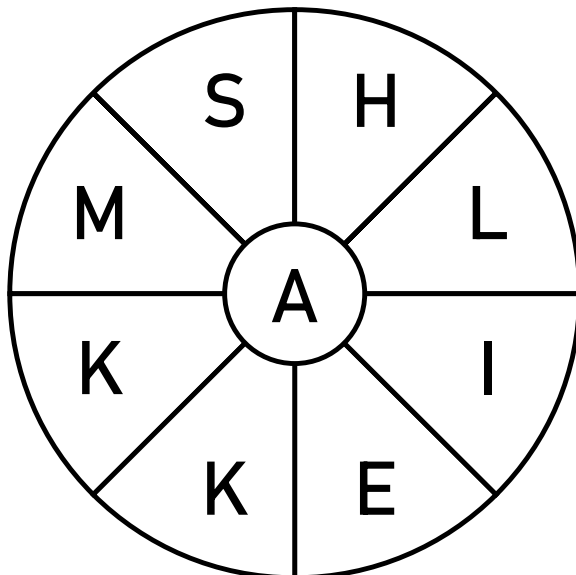
How many words can you make using the letters below?

All words must include the letter in the middle.

1.



2.





The Big Knit is back!

With the recent re-launch of the Big Knit, we are encouraging any creative crafters to help us raise money by knitting or crocheting hats for the tops of innocent smoothie bottles. For every hat you create we will receive 30p.

So why not grab your knitting needles, start stitching, and make a real difference? The funds raised will help provide older people with vital information, advice and friendship.

Please note, for Age UK Oxfordshire to receive any donations locally for the hats you have created, and to ensure the money is used to continue supporting older people in Oxfordshire, they need to be dropped off or posted to our Head Office - **9 Napier Court, Barton Lane, Abingdon, OX14 3YT**. We do not receive any donations locally for any hats delivered to Age UK charity shops. For more information please email contactus@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or call **0345 450 1276**.

Simple bobble hat

A beginner pattern by Juliet Bernard
Needles - 4mm

1. Cast on 31 sts in yellow. Knit two rows
2. Beginning with a knit row work 12 rows in st st
3. Next row: k2tog to last st, kl (l 6sts)
4. Next row: purl
5. Next row: k2tog to end (8sts)
6. Cut the yarn leaving approx 10cm length.

7. Thread this through sewing needle and bring through stitches and pull up to tighter

Making up

8. Use a sewing needle to join side seams.
9. Make a pompom in white and sew securely to top of the hat.



Staying safe and well in winter

We know that winter can be a difficult time, so we've pulled together some useful information and resources to help support you or someone you care for. Why not pull these pages out and keep them somewhere visible?

Sign up to the Priority Services Register

The Priority Services Register (PSR) makes sure that energy suppliers are aware of people's individual circumstances in order to be able to offer them the best support available. Contact your energy provider to register or visit www.thepsr.co.uk.

Check you are claiming all the financial support available to you

With recent changes to the Winter Fuel Payment, it's important to complete a benefits check to see whether you're due any entitlements like Pension Credit. Age UK's Benefits Calculator can help with this; the calculator is free to use and the details you provide are anonymous. You can complete the check online <https://benefitscheck.ageuk.org.uk> or give us a call on **0345 450 1276** if you'd like some support.

Better Housing Better Health

Better Housing Better Health is a service supporting people to keep warm, stay safe and live well in their homes. Their trained Home Advisers are ready to deliver expert in-home energy advice and provide tailored home visits, helping people stay warm and reduce energy costs this winter. If you or someone you know could benefit, email bhbh@nef.org.uk or call **0800 107 0044** to enquire about a free home visit! Find out more at www.bhbh.org.uk.



Be prepared if you're a carer

If you provide care for a loved one, Carers Oxfordshire can help you to be prepared. They have some excellent guidance and templates to help you create an emergency plan to ensure the person you care for continues to be supported should you become unwell. They can also provide you with a Carer ID card so the emergency services know that you provide care for someone and can access required emergency details. Visit www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk or call **01235 424 715** to find out more.

NHS Health Checks

Health Checks Oxfordshire provide free NHS Health Checks at a variety of locations across Oxfordshire. This is a preventive health check that can help detect potential health problems before they become serious.

The health check takes about 30 minutes and a health professional will:

- measure your height, weight and waist circumference
- check your blood pressure
- take a blood sample to check your cholesterol levels
- ask about your family medical history, lifestyle and alcohol consumption



This process is straightforward and doesn't require any physical examination or clothing removal. Afterwards, you will receive your results and personalised advice on how to improve your health.

You can book an appointment by visiting www.healthchecksoxfordshire.org or calling **0800 122 3790**. To qualify for a free health check, you must be between 40 and 74 years old and not have any pre-existing conditions, which will be stated when booking an appointment.

Healthcare options

As the winter months bring with them more respiratory illnesses like flu and RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus), Oxfordshire's hospitals are always busier than normal. It is often best to avoid going to A&E unless you really need to. If you are feeling unwell you can get advice about the best course of action by calling NHS **111**.

Some tips to keep you well and out of hospital include:

- Making sure you've got some medication in the house to combat those common winter illnesses.
- If you're feeling unwell, pharmacies can now supply appropriate medicines for 7 common conditions including earache, sore throat and urinary tract infections, helping to treat health issues before they get worse.

If you do need a stay in hospital, there's now a programme to support you back home more quickly to recover in familiar surroundings.

Staying in hospital for longer than needed can increase a patients' risk of picking up an infection and reduce their chance of regaining their independence. Wherever possible, recovering at home is the best place to be.

Flu, RSV and COVID-19 vaccines

It is important to take up available vaccines to help you stay well and out of hospital.

If you are eligible for the flu vaccine you can get it from your GP Surgery or a local pharmacy that offers the service.

If you are eligible for a COVID-19 vaccination you can book an appointment online or visit a walk-in COVID-19 vaccination site.

Another vaccine available is RSV. RSV can cause pneumonia and other life-threatening conditions in older adults. From this year, everyone will be offered this vaccine when they turn 75, and there will be a one-off catch-up programme this winter for those aged 75-79. Speak to your GP surgery for more information.

Repair it, don't bin it!

You might have heard about Repair Cafés which are popping up across the country. Derek Sayers is involved in his local Oxfordshire Repair Café in Stanford in the Vale and tells us more about them.

What is a Repair Café?

Written by Derek Sayers

First and foremost, they are not actually cafés! Repair Cafés are regular events where people can bring along broken household items – from textiles and tools to electrical appliances – to be fixed, and to learn how to fix them with the help of a volunteer.

Repair Cafés are nothing new; there are in fact over 100 in the United Kingdom alone. As well as reducing waste, these events facilitate the sharing of skills within communities and raise awareness around the social and environmental impacts of overconsumption.

The Stanford in the Vale Repair Café started over six years ago. We meet monthly and try to repair items including table lamps, radios, vacuum cleaners, record players and lots more. Other Repair Cafés have a big focus on sewing and haberdashery. The support costs nothing, but we do ask for donations, and after expenses have been covered, we're able to put any remaining money towards things for the village.

In Oxfordshire, there are about 20 community groups running Repair Cafés and two Repair Hubs (Orinoco and Bicester Green). The Repair Hubs have worked with Oxfordshire County Council to set up an innovative e-waste collection scheme, whereby members of the public can drop off unwanted electricals and electronics, to be collected and repaired by the hubs, then sold or donated to charities. Oxfordshire community groups have repaired well over 4 tonnes of equipment!

You can find more information by visiting www.repaircafeoxfordshire.org, emailing repaircafe@cagoxfordshire.org.uk or on Facebook @repaircafeoxfordshire.



Opportunities to try out creative activities – coming soon!

We're very pleased to announce our new Oxfordshire Creative Ageing project, generously funded by the Rayne Foundation, which will enable us to offer a series of Creative Ageing Pop-Up Taster Days in Banbury, Abingdon and Oxford in 2025.

At these taster days, you'll be able to try out a range of creative activities for free, to find out whether you might like to join any new groups and classes in the local area. Activities will depend on what's available locally, but will include things like seated dance, drama, pottery, creative writing, book groups, heritage groups, music groups, seated yoga, creative nature, art groups and more! We welcome your suggestions of any additional activities we could include too.



Discovering the history of Banbury and Carterton

Our local history groups in Banbury (kindly supported by Historic England) and Carterton (kindly supported by West Oxfordshire District Council) are being thoroughly enjoyed by everyone who is part of them, and we are learning so much about the local history of the areas. We're grateful to everyone for their participation and contributions and look forward to sharing the outcomes from these projects soon.



Sharing creative spirit in Oxford

The organisers of Oxford's Older Peoples Day Event very kindly invited us to join them at Oxford Town Hall and there were creative activities for people to try throughout the day. The activities, which included museum reminiscence with the Museum of Oxford, seated dance with MuMo Creative, drama with Oxford Playhouse and a taster of the Age UK Oxfordshire TeaBooks groups, were very well attended and enjoyed by all. The day ended with our wonderful volunteer Creative Ambassadors sharing insights and talking about the role they play in championing creative ageing.

For more information about Age UK Oxfordshire's Creative Ageing programme and how you can get involved please call **0345 450 1276** or email helenfountain@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk.

Are you an unpaid carer?

No one likes to be labelled. However, realising you are a carer is the first step to getting the information, advice and support you might need.

Our sister organisation, Carers Oxfordshire, supports unpaid adult carers of people living in Oxfordshire. Their support is different for each person because they understand that no two caring situations are the same. Whatever your situation, their Carer Advisers will help you to tackle the things you feel are difficult and find solutions that can make caring easier.

To find out more, call the CarersLine on **01235 424 715** (9am – 5pm Monday to Friday), email carersinfo@carersoxfordshire.org.uk or visit www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk.



Puzzle Answers

Anagram 1

seasons greetings

Anagram 2

winter solstice

Word wheel 1

Megapixel, example, exempla, mileage, impale, magpie, mealie, pelage.

Word wheel 2

Milkshake, masklike, emails, shake, makes, milks, shame, lakes, leaks, heals, leash.

Roger's story

Roger's GP referred him to our Social Prescriber, who connected him with our LGBTQ+ group, Silver Pride, in Didcot. He told us about his life and experience...

"I told my parents I was LGBT back in the late 80s. Because they were of a certain generation, they didn't really accept it. So, after a while it wasn't really spoken about. I'm not going to criticise them; they were very good parents, it's just a shame that they didn't really accept me as me.

I feel sort of like people say, 'oh, you've come out' and you do come out, but you have to keep doing that because you keep on meeting new people, you see. But it's a very private thing - you don't have to come out. People don't say, oh hello, I'm straight or heterosexual or whatever do they?

I was a member of a very, very conservative church in Swindon, which I left in 2019. I was 21 when I joined. Because I was only young, I thought if I joined the church, it'd stop me being gay. Obviously, that's not the case! And I left because of how they treated gay and trans people - very, very sad.

I moved back to Wantage and joined my local church and although they don't do same-sex marriages, they have changed a lot. I have told my vicar and she seems quite positive.

About a year ago I visited my GP and said that I was LGBT and they told me about a Social Prescriber at the surgery who could help me find other people to chat to. I think it was Mandy who wrote to me back then and I've been going along to the Silver Pride group since February.

I like going along to the group; they're very friendly. It's Kate and Gaynor and they make you feel so welcome, you can relax and don't have to hide anything. They're just very nice people. There's a man who goes with his sister and it's nice seeing her supporting him to go along, you know. So yeah, I quite enjoy going.

I went to Pride in Oxford in the summer. It was very good. I have to travel for anything LGBT because I'm in a small rural community; it is isolating at times. But I enjoy going to London - I've got a few friends there and there's a higher percentage of gay people in London than there would be around here.

I also go to bible study at a local church and attend 'Open Table', an LGBTQ+ service at Reading Minister Church. I've always been a churchgoer. It's always been a very, very big, big thing for me. Although a lot of LGBT people are not into church, because of how we've been treated over the years. There's this one guy at Silver Pride, I think he was brought up Catholic but he's anti church. Almost all my socialising is church, church, church and this Silver Pride group is the only thing that isn't church related.

I have a very quiet life. I like seeing to my garden. I go to the market and see my extended family and have a few trips to London or Oxford. I think I'm so privileged to live where I grew up and I enjoy my life very, very much. I'm very, very blessed."

To find out about the LGBTQ+ group Roger attends in Didcot or the other group we run in Banbury call **01235 849 434** or email community@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk.

Coping with grief during winter

Someone close to us dying can be one of the hardest things we ever have to go through. Whether it's expected or not, it can affect us in lots of different ways and all we can do is cope as best we can. Grief is very personal and there's no right or wrong way to deal with losing someone you care about.

For those who have lost a loved one, the onset of winter can leave us feeling anxious about the months ahead; the darker nights and shorter days, plus bad weather, make it harder to get out and about. But it's important to try and stay connected with friends and loved ones, even though it might feel difficult.

- Try to make the effort each day to go outside, even for just a short time. Even on the coldest day with a woolly hat, scarf and gloves in place, the fresh air and winter sunshine can really make a difference.
- Take up the offer of friends helping out or popping round for a coffee.
- Try not to cancel plans. Sometimes you may have to because you have woken up on a particularly bad day, but be careful that it doesn't become a habit.
- Make a list of people you have lost touch with who you'd like to reconnect with by phone, letter or social media. Why not organise to catch up for a coffee?
- Receive a free, friendly phone call each week from one of our Phone Friends. Talking as well as listening can help new friendships grow. For more information email phonefriends@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or call **01295 234 850**.
- Write a list of indoor projects you want to accomplish this winter.
- Start a 'positivity jar' - keep a daily note of something positive that has happened that day, however small, so that you can focus on the good things that happen.
- Consider joining a bereavement support group such as those we run in Oxfordshire, so that you can meet with others who understand.



If you would like more information about our bereavement support groups and walks, please call us on **01235 849 434** or email community@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk.

Useful contacts

Better Housing Better Health

0800 107 0044
bhbh@nef.org.uk
www.bhbh.org.uk

Carers Oxfordshire

01235 424 715
carersinfo@carersoxfordshire.org.uk

Connection Support

01865 711 267
enquiries@connectionsupport.org.uk
www.connectionsupport.org.uk/oxfordshire

Cruse Bereavement Support

01865 245 398
oxfordshire@cruse.org.uk
www.cruse.org.uk

Live Well Oxfordshire

01235 849 410
livewell@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk
https://livewell.oxfordshire.gov.uk

My Vision Oxfordshire

01865 725 595
info@myvision.org.uk
www.myvision.org.uk

National Debtline

0808 808 4000
https://nationaldebtline.org/

Out of hours Duty Social Worker

0800 833 408
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk



Oxfordshire Mind

01865 247 788
info@oxfordshiremind.org.uk
www.oxfordshiremind.org.uk

Oxfordshire Talking Therapies

01865 901 222
oxon-talking-therapies@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk
www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/oxon-talking-therapies

Samaritans

116 123
www.samaritans.org

Turn 2 Us (financial advice)

0808 802 2000
www.turn2us.org.uk

We'd like to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year

If you'd like to try something new in 2025, our Community Links Oxfordshire team can support you to connect with what's going on in your local area – email community@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or call **01235 849 434**. You can also find details of the groups that we have running on page 21.

We will be closed over the festive period, however Age UK's national advice line will be available from 8am-7pm every day on **0800 678 1602**, and The Silverline, Age UK's telephone service providing older people with friendship and conversation, will be available 24/7 on **0800 4708 090**.

Might Homeshare suit you?

A Homeshare arrangement could help you get through the winter months.

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

In this mutually beneficial living arrangement, the Householder provides a spare room and, in return, can expect around 10 hours of help each week as a combination of companionship and practical support. The reassuring presence of another person in the house overnight also brings peace of mind.

Our friendly, experienced Homeshare team take great care to get the matching right, as well as focusing on safety with robust vetting process, including interviews, references and DBS checks.

For more information visit www.homeshareoxfordshire.org.uk, call **01865 410 670** or email homeshare@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk.




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enquiries@hamberleycarehomes.co.uk

Chawley Grove, 195 Cumnor Hill,
Oxfordshire OX2 9PJ



Discover our groups across Oxfordshire

Bereavement Support

Open to people aged 60+ who have lost a loved one. 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, Kennington, Kidlington, Marston, Oxford, Wantage, Wallingford, Witney.

teabooks@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk

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. Plus Stay Strong and Steady, a falls prevention exercise and information programme. Available at venues across Oxfordshire and online via Zoom.

active@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk
01235 849 403

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

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, Carterton, Cholsey, 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, Chipping Norton, Eynsham, Kidlington, Thame.



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Our future direction

Our charity is embarking on an exciting journey to consider our direction and focus for the coming years. We believe that the best way to shape our future is by listening to the voices of those we serve – and that means you.

Your experiences, insights and ideas are invaluable to us and will help us to prioritise our efforts and allocate our resources in the most effective way possible, ensuring that we continue to provide the support and services that make a real difference in the lives of older people locally.



If you would like to be part of this conversation, please register your interest by emailing **contactus@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk**, calling **0345 450 1276** or writing to us at **Age UK Oxfordshire, 9/10 Napier Court, Barton Lane, Abingdon, OX14 3YT.**

Your voice matters, and together, we can create a brighter future for all older people in our community.



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 www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire and search 'Leave a legacy'.