

EngAGE

Advice on **keeping well**
this **winter**

How **Homeshare** is enhancing lives

Make a nomination for the
Oxfordshire Care Awards 2023

6 **energy**
scams
to watch
out for

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Welcome from Penny Thewlis, CEO

A very warm welcome to our winter edition of EngAGE. And indeed, warmth is our theme for this edition, which is full of tips for keeping warm and well this winter.



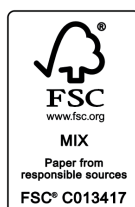
I met recently with our Older People's Panel. Their aim is to have some influence on issues that matter to older people. We started the meeting by thinking of something we had done that week to take care of ourselves and people talked about walks, contact with others and eating well. But they also talked about campaigning, which made me reflect on the importance of making our voices heard, even, or perhaps especially when we feel powerless.

Age UK, together with many older people, have campaigned very hard for the restoration of the triple lock on pensions and the uprating of Pension Credit in line with inflation and, as I write this, the Chancellor is presenting his Autumn Statement, which confirms that their campaigning has been successful. Thank you to all of you who participated in the campaign.

People have told us that they want us to do more campaigning work and in our new three-year plan, we have committed to this. Our campaign to increase the uptake of Pension Credit in Oxfordshire is continuing, with some success, and if you have not already checked your entitlement, I would strongly encourage you to do so before 19th December. This is the cut-off date for people to be eligible for an additional cost of living payment.

As I continue to reflect on influencing, I think inevitably of our remarkable Chair of Trustees, Davina Logan (pictured right on the opposite page). Our AGM on Nov 4th marked the end of Davina Logan's six-year tenure as Chair. Davina exemplifies a very quiet but extremely effective kind of influencing, through which she has shaped developments in the organisation. We owe her an enormous debt of gratitude for her passionate commitment, for the time she has dedicated and for her unfailing (though never unquestioning) support. We wish Davina very well in the next chapter of her life.

My warmest wishes, Penny.



What's been happening?

HOPE Bugs Project

In October we ended our recent collaboration with the Oxford University Museum of Natural History, and were treated to a 'Big Bug Ball' to celebrate all of the exciting activities we have enjoyed over the summer months. The ceramics display is proudly standing in the museum; what fun we have had discovering the wonderful world of entomology. A big thank you to everyone who has been a part of the HOPE project.



Dementia Oxfordshire Information Day

Our Dementia Information Day in November was a great success, offering information and advice and bringing a variety of organisations under one roof. These included Age UK Oxfordshire as well as Dementia UK, a range of at-home care providers, legal services and the Fire and Rescue Service. We also held a taster carer education session, which offered a shorter version of the 3 hour carer education sessions we deliver, enabling carers to learn more about dementia and how to support someone living with dementia.

Our AGM

It was wonderful to celebrate the successes of our previous year and share our plans for the next few at our AGM in November. Everyone enjoyed hearing from Natalie Turner (pictured left) from Centre for Ageing Better who spoke passionately about building an 'Age Friendly Movement'. Thanks to all who joined us.



Homeshare Oxfordshire Get-togethers

We held another Homeshare get-together at the lovely riverside location of the Victoria Arms in Old Marston in autumn. It provided a great opportunity for people to meet others who are homesharing and to feel part of a wider Homeshare community, and also gave people new to Homeshare the chance to chat with others about their experiences of homesharing. Thank you to everyone for coming along and making the occasion so special!

Winter Wellbeing

Winter can evoke memories of cosy evenings at home and time spent with family during the festive season, but it can be a tough time too.

Cold weather can lead to worries about our health and energy bills, especially as we get older. Shorter days and longer nights can leave us feeling out of sorts too. Here are some tips on keeping well this winter.

Eat Well

The increasing cost of food is affecting what and how much lots of people are eating, but it's so important to keep eating well. If needed there are many ways in which you can access support to obtain food.

Food Banks: These are organisations supporting people finding it very hard to buy food. Food banks usually require you to be referred, but some accept self-referrals.

Community Larders: These are hubs where you can access food that is surplus, enabling you to save some money on your food bills. They often offer additional services, information and advice, and a café. They are for the local community and offer somewhere to connect with people locally, to meet friendly faces and catch up with neighbours.

Whatever your level of need there is no judgement. Good Food Oxford has a great map where you can search for your nearest food support - <https://foodmap.goodfoodoxford.org>

Stay Connected

At a time of year when none of us see our neighbours as much, making an effort to connect with others is really important for mental wellbeing. We have lots on offer to help you stay connected.

You might enjoy an exercise class (p.8), joining a book group (p.21) or one of the other groups we have running (p.20).

Our telephone befriending service, Phone Friends, is also available to link you with a volunteer for a regular call (p.7).

Our Homeshare service can connect you with a home sharer (p.16).



Find a Warm Space

There are many organisations, churches, libraries and other venues that are opening their doors to people for free this winter and providing a welcoming warm space. These warm spaces also offer an opportunity to connect with people locally. You can find information about local warm spaces online at www.warmwelcome.uk and www.warmspaces.org – if you'd like any additional support to find a local warm space please do call us on **0345 450 1276**.

Check Your Entitlements

You might be eligible for an income top up in the form of Pension Credit which could help you with the rising cost of living this winter. Call the Pension Credit claim line on **0800 99 1234** or get a benefits check – either online at www.ageuk.org.uk or by calling our Information & Advice team on **0345 450 1276**.

Protect Your Health

If you're 50+ or a carer, you can get a free flu jab and Covid-19 booster this winter. You should also check which other vaccines you're eligible for. Contact your GP for more information.

Prevent Falls

With colder weather on its way, the risk of falls increases. It's important to take extra care when you are out and about. The good news is there are lots of things you can do to stay steady on your feet. Below are some tips that may help you stay independent and help prevent and reduce the risk of falls:

- Stick to common routes/paths.
- Try to do regular exercise to maintain your strength and balance. If you can't do it outside, try doing something inside.
- Have regular eye tests to help recognise if you need glasses or a new prescription.
- Carry a phone or alert device to call someone for help if needed.
- Keep an eye on the weather forecast.
- Take extra care if the ground is slippery. Wear shoes with good grip and consider keeping salt and sand mixture handy to grit paths. You could ask your neighbours for help to clear paths or driveways in bad weather – most people are more than happy to help.

Keep Warm

Add some heat:

Microwavable wheat bags and hot water bottles are great for helping you to keep warm.

Block out the cold:

To save on heating bills, close the doors of rooms you're not using. You can put a rolled-up towel in front of doors to keep any draught out.

Cut out alcohol:

Reduce or cut out consumption of alcohol. It can cause dehydration which can trigger heat loss.

Hot drinks:

A Thermos is a good way of having warm drinks throughout the day – saves trips to the kitchen.

Layer up:

Layers of clothing will help keep you warmer – vests, thermals etc.

Eat well:

Make sure you eat enough food to keep up a healthy weight. Body fat helps you to stay warm. Plus, a hearty diet with plenty of fluids helps to fuel the body's natural thermostat.

Keeping active for a better later life

We spoke to people visiting the Older People's Day 2022 event at Oxford Town Hall and Glenn, an Ambassador for our dementia support service, Dementia Oxfordshire, about what makes a better later life. Everyone agreed that keeping active is key.



Glenn Fletcher shares his experience....

"I generally keep in good form, go to the gym and go to lots of groups. Since I retired, I'm probably busier than before. I think it is about being stimulated enough, being interested enough and pursuing leisure activities.

I had problems with short term memory, and I went through various sorts of testing regimes before I was diagnosed as having Alzheimer's. People with Alzheimer's often feel they can't do various things: they don't feel able to do it and could be better advised. I felt I was told rather abruptly about the diagnosis. It can be a very intimidating diagnosis but there's lots of people who are living quite well with dementia.

I've worked as a volunteer for a local animal rescue centre for five years or so. We have a lot of dogs waiting to be rehomed and each weekend I'd go and walk a different dog. When I got my Alzheimer's diagnosis I told them. Unfortunately I had a couple of incidents where I put a dog in the wrong room after walking them. This led to a safety issue for the animals. They said to me they were not sure I could take part anymore because they didn't quite know what I might do.

However, they were able to adapt, and I don't need to put the dogs back in their rooms anymore. There's no risk of me taking them anywhere because they're brought to me, and they're taken away from me. I'm still a resource for that little centre. I'm going to be doing a dog show for them soon. I'm quite good at it and I bring a lot of people to it.

A couple of years after Alzheimer's diagnosis (this is just my experience) you are still the person you were. You do have this issue and it can have very bad downsides depending on your particular situation, and it can make it harder for you to do the things you normally do. However, lots of people who have dementia work and volunteer. And lots of people with dementia interact with their friends and take part in social situations.

"I'm certainly as happy doing what I am now as I would've been if I hadn't been diagnosed."

“I like to keep active, to keep dancing: Ballroom, Latin, Lindy Hop, Argentine Tango and Salsa. The music lifts you and you’re exercising. It’s very enjoyable indeed!”
- Kathleen



“Staying busy doing lots of things. Otherwise, I’d just be sitting at home on my own so I think it’s really important to interact with people. I volunteer at quite a few of the theatres locally and for music events. You meet new people through volunteering.”
- Rosemary

Time to Talk Day

Time to Talk Day (February 2nd) is a day all about starting conversations about mental health and wellbeing and encourages friends, families, communities and workplaces to come together to talk and listen to each other. The day celebrates the fact that talking and listening can change lives, which is something volunteers for our telephone befriending service, Phone Friends, really understand.

Virgina Yip regularly volunteers her time for Phone Friends, which offers a regular phone call to older people in the county. During the height of the pandemic she connected with two ladies in their 80s and calls them every Thursday.

“It doesn’t take up a huge amount of time and makes me feel helpful. I look forward to making my calls; it’s a lovely way of giving something back to the community. I have really made friendships over the phone.”

Phone Friends is a confidential service for people aged 50+ who feel lonely and would benefit from a free, regular, friendly chat.

For more information contact us on phonefriends@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk, 01295 234 850 or visit www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire.

Keep moving this winter

In winter it's more important than ever to keep moving in a way that works for you.

Moving more can make a huge difference not just to your physical health, but to your mental health and wellbeing as well – it can help improve your strength and balance, prevent falls, provide an instant wellbeing boost, and can be fun too! Even just a small amount of movement every day can be hugely beneficial to your posture and can make everyday tasks a little easier.

At Age UK Oxfordshire, we provide a wide variety of exercise classes that are tailored for older people. Our tutors will welcome you when you arrive, and you'll quickly notice the camaraderie we foster. They will then guide you through the exercises, with a gentle warm up and cool down, and they'll share some simple exercises to do at home to help improve your strength and balance.

We run a variety of classes across Oxfordshire (mostly lasting 1 hour), as well as our weekly online Zoom classes and 'Move More Mondays'. If you'd like to try something new we'd love you to join us for a free taster class.

Contact us on gg@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or 01235 849403. Find out more on our website - www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire.



Update from our partner



Age UK Oxfordshire works closely with Active Oxfordshire and we wanted to share information with you about how their Move Together programme can support you to get moving more this winter.

MOVE Together

Move Together is an Oxfordshire wide programme for people living with long term health conditions, or people who could benefit from moving more to improve their health and wellbeing. Move Together provides a fantastic range of support, advice and resources including activity packs, exercises to do at home and the chance to connect with other people at community activities, exercise classes or health walks. Local co-ordinators are on hand to provide advice and support through regular phone calls and home visits.

So far, Move Together has provided 1,700 people across Oxfordshire with support to move more. People taking part say how much difference it's made in helping to reduce loneliness, bring people together, make new friends and improve health and wellbeing.

It's quick and easy to sign up for Move Together. **To find out more and get started, visit www.getoxfordshireactive.org/move-together**

Dementia support groups:

Reducing loneliness and isolation

Receiving a diagnosis and living with dementia can feel very isolating. According to a report by the Alzheimer's Society, 38% of people with a dementia diagnosis feel lonely. Caring for someone living with dementia can also feel isolating - it might feel like nobody else understands what you're going through, even if you have good support from friends and family.

One of the best things you can do if you're a person living with dementia or a carer and are experiencing loneliness is to join a support group. Support groups provide a sense of connection and enable you to discuss your concerns in a supportive environment with others who've had similar experiences. Within these groups you may also feel more comfortable opening up about some negative experiences of living with dementia or being a caregiver than you would with close friends or family.



“I have found Care2Share useful in so many ways, but I suppose the most important was knowing that I wasn't alone. There is such a sense of support and a safe environment to share information or concerns.”

Our dementia support team, Dementia Oxfordshire, run several support groups for people living with dementia, their carers and families. Our online sharing sessions bring people with dementia together to learn and talk openly. They share practical tips and advice about living well and talk about retaining independence and making new connections. Our online Care2Share sessions for carers offer the opportunity to share thoughts, feelings and experiences with those in a similar position.

We also run an in-person carers workshop in Headington where carers can meet others, learn more about dementia and get information and advice from a Dementia Adviser. This group is primarily aimed at carers however people with dementia are also welcome and can take part in a variety of activities, including art therapy.

For more information, please visit www.dementiaoxfordshire.org.uk, email training@dementiaoxfordshire.org.uk or call our support line on 01865 410 210 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm).

Creative Corner

Age Friendly Creative Profile: The Phantom Chippy Gramophone Maker

Nigel Phillips from Chipping Norton, spoke to us about his passion for record players, both playing on them and making them.

"I've always been interested in collecting gramophones, radios and records. I started playing records over 65 years ago and I've had a business at one time, buying and selling them. The oldest record I've got was recorded in 1898. It doesn't run for very long but you can still hear the piano on it.

In the 1960s I found equipment was extremely expensive. In those days, a young person would have a Dansette record player, but I wanted to build better equipment. Stereo equipment was really for the millionaire bracket - no ordinary person had a stereo. It was extremely expensive because it required two loud speakers, plus other special bits and pieces. So, I started to make my own stuff by buying old radios from a local auction sale and wiring them up as a stereo pair.

I'm a practical person, and I still like building my own things. Currently, I am making a steam powered record player. It will be a long-term project and a bit of a novelty, but it should be fun. I'm getting the gramophone side up together, and then eventually I shall have to look around for a small steam engine to put onto it. It's not unique, there were gramophones before the First World War that were actually driven by hot air engines."

"The important thing to me is to keep my mind going, and I like thinking out little problems. I also think it's contributing a little bit, because they are unique machines."



"Recorded sound is an interesting hobby to get into. It's not treated seriously enough yet. Photographs are beginning to be recognized as historic documents for preserving the past. But recorded sound is another way where you can really listen to the past. You can put a record on, you can hear somebody performing a song who sang it over one hundred years ago. Imagine what it'd be like if we were sitting here able to hear Mozart or Beethoven. We can hear people like Sir Edward Elgar and Benjamin Britain, and then of course there is all the popular music that has been out over the years. Anybody can hear what the Original Dixieland Jazz Band sounded like in 1917 on records from the time. One couldn't have done that before the advent of recorded sound.

The important thing to me is to keep my mind going, and I like thinking out little problems. I also think it's contributing a little bit, because they are unique machines."

Nigel has very kindly recorded an oral history of his memories of participating in royal Jubilees and other celebrations, as part of our Creative Windows for the Jubilee project. His recording, along with seven others, will be given to Oxfordshire History Centre and stored in the Oxfordshire Archives for future generations to listen to, as well as being available online. We hope to be able to share this soon.

“This is a record player project that I did during lockdown. It’s a portable radiogram that has a radio, a gramophone, and a big loud speaker coupled together. It’s designed for playing the old fashioned 78s. It doesn’t run 45s or LPs. At the recent Age UK Oxfordshire Jubilee Tea Party, I used it to play a Second World War record called ‘Wish Me Luck as You Wave Me Goodbye’.”



Oxfordshire Care Awards 2023

Inspiration for all!

The annual Oxfordshire Care Awards recognises and celebrates individuals, organisations and companies who have demonstrated excellence within the care sector in Oxfordshire.

The Awards, which are hosted by Oxfordshire Association of Care Providers (OACP), Carers Oxfordshire and Age UK Oxfordshire, bring together unpaid carers, the community/voluntary sector and statutory and independent care providers.

Do you know someone who deserves to be recognised and celebrated for providing outstanding care?

Nominate them to celebrate their dedication and commitment, and help raise the profile of caring across Oxfordshire.

How to Nominate

Nominations are now open and can be made online via the OACP website, or by downloading a form and returning by email or post.

All details are on the OACP website - www.oacp.org.uk

To obtain a form by post, or for more information about the awards, call **0345 450 1276**.

The deadline for nominations is Friday 24th March 2023 at 5pm.

The awards ceremony will take place on Monday 24th April 2023 at Voco Oxford Thames Hotel.

The Newcomer to Care - To celebrate a new member of staff in the care sector, who has shown empathy and responsiveness and fully understands good practice.

The Care Home Worker - Recognises the significant role of the Care Home Worker in consistently providing high-quality residential care.

The Unpaid Carer - Someone who gives their time, energy, and skill to ensure that people have a better experience of care, and feel they matter.

The Volunteer Award - Someone whose commitment and longevity to voluntary work has contributed to and enhanced the wellbeing of the local community or has made a difference to an individual's quality of life.

The Community/Home Care Worker - Recognises the significance of the role, consistently providing high-quality care for people living in their own homes.

The Care Team Award - A team that can best demonstrate a shared vision and agreed goals. The team should have a leader whose role is known and accepted and who takes personal responsibility for their tasks. They must demonstrate a commitment to dignity and privacy for clients and respect for team members.

The Care Employer Award - A company or organisation that acknowledges and celebrates an employer's commitment to care and how this achieves success in delivering an excellent service.

The Long-Term Service Award - Recognises the long-term service of an employee who has made an outstanding contribution to a care organisation (min. service period ten years).

The Leadership Award - A care team or service leader, who has shown a strong personal commitment to treating their service users and staff with dignity and respect.

The Inspiration Award - An organisation or business (that is not a health or care company) that inspires others with its high standards of care, support and compassion.

Josie's Award - Josie Smith was a remarkable force for good in the lives of people around her, especially people who needed care and support. This award celebrates an individual who makes exceptional difference to dignity in care.

2022 Award Winners



Andy Kessler from Stowford House Care Home won The Care Home Worker Care Award for constantly going above and beyond his maintenance role. During the pandemic, he created a beautiful commemorative stained-glass window in memory of the residents lost.

Left to right: Eddy McDowall, CEO of OACP presenting Andy Kessler with The Care Home Worker Award.



Val Wolsey won the overall Unpaid Carer/Volunteer Worker Award for the outstanding support she provides unpaid carers in Wallingford. Val has run the Wallingford Carers Support Group for over ten years, single-handedly. She organises everything including hiring the church, securing essential funding, volunteers, marketing, administration, and guest speakers.

Left to right: Val Wolsey receiving the Award from Kay Francis, Head of Carer Support Services, Action for Carers Oxfordshire.



Alive and Kicking group for the over-50s, won the highly commended Unpaid Carer /Volunteer Worker Award, for their work in organising activities for older residents. Councillor Susanna Pressel said "I nominated them for the award because they are so very kind and helpful to various of the older people in Jericho, especially when they are ill or house-bound".

Sharon Robb, Barbara Wright, and Margaret Villamuera are the main Alive and Kicking organizers.

If you would like to get involved, or need more information about the Oxfordshire Care Awards 2023 please email jane.wood@oacp.org.uk, call 01235 248087, or visit www.oacp.org.uk.



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Six energy scams to watch out for

As energy bills increase, fraudsters are using scams such as fake energy bill refunds, rebates and debt collector demands.

Scam 1

You get a text or email offering a discount

The text/email will appear to be from energy regulator Ofgem or the Government offering an 'energy bill rebate'. The link takes you to a fake application form. Remember, your £400 energy rebate will be paid automatically and deducted from your bills over 6 months — you don't need to do anything.

Scam 2

You get an email claiming you're due a refund

The email saying you're due for a refund will claim to be from your energy supplier and will contain a link to a form requesting your personal information and bank details. Remember, your energy firm would never ask for information in this way.

Scam 3

You're offered a cheap prepayment meter token

Criminals are cloning prepayment meter tokens with credit and selling them for a reduced price. But your supplier never receives the payment, and the tokens are fake.

Scam 4

Tempt you with cheaper deals

Scammers are calling people claiming they're from a price comparison site that's offering a special offer for a limited number of customers. They'll urge you to switch now to secure the deal, to get you to sign up to the fake offer, and grab your bank details in the process.

Scam 5

'Tradesmen' offer energy efficient installations

Scammers may attempt to get you to sign up for fake energy-efficiency grants and initiatives as a tough winter approaches. Some are pretending to offer the Green Homes Grant, which closed in 2021.

Scam 6

You see an energy saving device advertised online

Fraudsters have tried to sell a scam device that goes by several names, including Motex, Voltex and Voltbox, claiming it could slash a £251 monthly bill to just £15. The product, which looks like a plug and costs £59, has not passed safety tests and there's no evidence that it saves energy.

If you think you've been approached by a fraudster you should contact Action Fraud via www.actionfraud.police.uk or **0300 123 2040**.

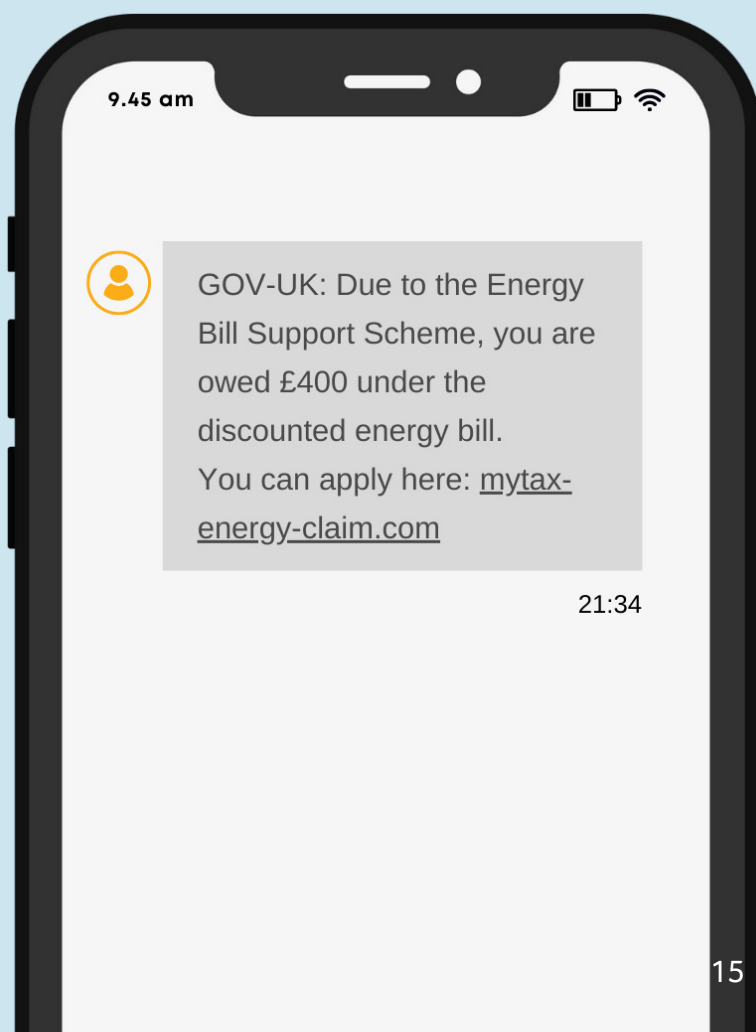
It's also important to report the scam to your energy supplier if the fake email or call appeared to come from them.

How we can support you:

We are able to offer group talks to raise awareness of scams and also 1:1 sessions for those who have been affected by scams.

We also have a digital support team who can help you make sense of the online world and build your confidence to use it as you choose.

Contact us to find out more about our scams awareness training and/or our digital support - **0345 450 1276**.



Getting on splendidly!

At Age UK Oxfordshire, our Homeshare service brings together compatible people, creating mutually beneficial living arrangements based on needs, interests, and values. We caught up with some of the people currently homesharing across Oxfordshire, to find how Homeshare enhances lives.

“In the past week or so we’ve had enquiries from three people who have been recently bereaved and who are understandably finding time on their own at home quite challenging”, says Marian Pocock, manager of our service Homeshare Oxfordshire. “Companionship is indeed often a key motivator for many people considering Homeshare and it’s heartening to see how company and being less alone can have a significant impact on general wellbeing.”

For many older people it is also health and mobility issues that lead them to consider Homeshare. A recognition that a little help with day-to-day tasks can go a long way. For others, still socially connected and valuing their own space, it might simply be the reassurance of having someone around, especially at night, that is key to their decision to pursue Homeshare. And, of course, it’s often a combination of all these factors.

Mutuality and reciprocity

It is important to many Householders that they are helping someone to live affordably in less affordable Oxfordshire. “I very much see Homeshare as a two-way thing”, Householder Andrew tells us. Vicki Baker, from our Homeshare team, shares her reflections, “It’s great to see the positive change that homesharing can bring about”, she says. “We hear so many stories of re-ignited shared hobbies, coincidences that spark meaningful conversation, and some wonderful, unexpected connections. Getting the right ‘match’ of Householder and Sharer is key to the success of the arrangement and it’s so good to see reciprocal relationships develop, that are really characterised by giving and sharing.”



“I would encourage anyone thinking about Homeshare to just give the Homeshare Oxfordshire team a ring. 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 in to matching people, taking into account a whole raft of considerations.”

Daughter of Householder

Homeshare Oxfordshire is a member of Homeshare UK, the UK network for Homeshare organisations, and has completed the Homeshare UK Quality Assurance Framework as part of an ongoing commitment to providing a safe and effective service.



Photo from Homeshare Oxfordshire

Sybil and Amanda* have been homesharing for just over six months. “Without question, my life has become easier”, Sybil tells us. “It’s the little things in life that have become no longer little to me. Just having someone who can help with putting out the bins or helping with the dishwasher makes a big difference. Having this help now gives me more energy to do things that I can do and that I enjoy doing.”

Amanda, a retired nurse and writer, describes enjoying “good conversation as much as quiet companionship” and is finding that a similar ‘take on life’ and sense of humour make for a good match! Cooking for each other from time to time has also been another plus. Steak and ale pie last week, this week moussaka and Mediterranean veggies.

Sybil and Amanda have become good friends whilst, at the same time, are very respectful of each other’s space. “We’re not 100% compatible but a good 95%!”, says Sybil. “We really do get on splendidly”.

For Sybil, as for so many people participating in Homeshare, maintaining her independence is hugely important. “My children are not able to help me in my home as much as they would wish”, she says, “and with me living alone causing them concern, they discovered Homeshare and thought it might be the ideal solution for us all.”

For Sybil’s family, the Homeshare arrangement has made a big difference. “Even though I talk to mum regularly, I worry about her much less now that I know Amanda is there”, her daughter explains.

*Names have been changed for privacy

Homeshare is a mutually beneficial living arrangement where an older Householder who has a spare room and would like companionship, help or reassurance in the home, is carefully matched with a compatible Sharer, who would benefit from affordable accommodation and is happy to lend a hand.

Visit www.homeshareoxfordshire.org.uk, email homeshare@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or call 01865 410670 to find out more.

Partnering with NHS Ageing Well services – Taking care out of hospital

At Age UK Oxfordshire we're partnering with several NHS health services.

We have a team in the hospitals providing information, advice and support to people before they go home; we're working with GP surgeries as social prescribers, linking people to non-medical activities and opportunities to improve their health and wellbeing; and we're supporting community health services.

We're working with the new NHS service 'Urgent Community Response' (UCR) and are part of a GP virtual ward. The aim is to help people who are acutely unwell stay at home rather than be admitted to hospital. Patients are assessed and stay at home for treatment if it's safe to do so.

The Urgent Community Response service is for people who experience a sudden deterioration of health or a crisis, such as having a fall. Most people want to be at home, in their own bed, with their own personal comforts; being in your own familiar space is known to help with recovery.

In the future, more health care will be delivered in the community in this way and the Urgent Community Response team has been established as part of this aim.



“Thank you so much and for being so proactive, nobody we have ever spoken to before has said – ‘right what you can do is this’, ‘you can go here for help’, ‘do you want support with this’!

People expect you to know what to do but how would we?”

If you are referred to the Urgent Community Response service, a qualified skilled healthcare professional will visit you in your home. The clinician will talk to you about your immediate health issues and conduct a thorough assessment which may include carrying out blood tests in the home.

If the clinician needs further advice, a doctor at the hospital can be phoned to talk through your case to provide the best care and treatment for you. If the clinical team think you are too unwell to remain at home you may need to have treatment in hospital. You and your family would be part of these discussions and decisions.

If you remain at home and receive treatment you will be put onto a ‘virtual ward’ and monitored by the clinical team to ensure you are getting better, or if your condition got worse the team might decide to take you into hospital for further tests.

At Age UK Oxfordshire our role in these projects is to provide social and community support to patients, or their carers. We offer personalised information, advice and support to help people to link into their community and local services, and to get the support that is right for them to remain independent at home and in control of their care.

Would some help at home make a difference to your life?

A regular and consistent visit from a friendly, reliable Home Support worker has changed many of our clients' lives and helped to reduce loneliness. We understand that sometimes a little help at home and company can make an enormous difference to your quality of life and our aim is to provide a service to help with just that.

Our Home Support Options team offer a wide range of services that can help you to keep your independence at home. Tailoring the service to your needs, we offer trained Home Support workers who can visit you regularly, from as little as 1 hour per week, to support you in your home. A charge of £20.00 per hour applies for the service. Please note we are unable to provide support with personal care.

Get in touch with our Home Support Options team to find out if we could make a difference for you – call **0333 577 1044** or email **hsoadmin@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk**



“I just wanted to say how much the visits make a difference to my sister and how amazing the Home Support Worker is at adapting to her depending on how she is feeling. She really enjoys getting out with her Home Support Worker and really looks forward to the visits each week.”



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

If you'd like to try something new in 2023, our Community Information team can support you to connect with what's going on in your local area – contact us via **01235 849434** or **network@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk**
You can also find details of the groups that we have running on page 20.

Another great way to wellbeing in the new year is to get creative! Download our Creative Challenge Pack from our website – **www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire**. You can request a copy in the post by emailing **media@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk**

We'll be closed over the festive period, however Age UK's national advice line will be available from 8am-7pm every day (**0800 055 6112**), and The Silverline, Age UK's telephone service providing older people with friendship and conversation, will be available 24/7 (**0800 4 70 80 90**).

Discover our groups across Oxfordshire

Aviation Group

A social group for all, whether you're an aviation expert or just have a general interest in aviation. Carterton.
network@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or **0345 4501276**

Bereavement Support Groups

Open to people aged 60+ who have lost a loved one. Banbury, Bicester, Carterton, Didcot, Grove, Kidlington, Oxford, Wheatley, Witney.
latespring@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or **01235 849434**

Carers Oxfordshire

We know the importance of peer support, and that there is real benefit in connecting with people who know what you're going through. Our group welcomes carers and cared for.
Cowley.
carersinfo@carersoxfordshire.org.uk or **01235 424715**

Chatterbox

Social coffee morning with coffee and cake. Chipping Norton, Witney, Woodcote.
network@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or **0345 4501276**

Dementia Oxfordshire

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.
info@dementiaoxfordshire.org.uk or **01865 410210**

Digital Support Groups

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.
Bicester, Banbury, Chipping Norton, Didcot, Eynsham, Kidlington, Oxford, Sonning Common.
techbuddy@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or **01235 849434**

Film Club

A social film club for people 50+.
Carterton, Horspath, Steventon, Deddington, Merton (Bicester) & Oxford.
network@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or **0345 4501276**

Lunch Club

A chance to meet and eat in friendly company.
Bicester, Grove, Thame.
network@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or **0345 4501276**

Exercise Classes

Our community exercise classes range from Chair-based exercise, Chair dancing to music, Mind and Body, and Strength & Balance, to more specialist classes such as Big Bold & Balance for people living with Parkinson's.
Online – Zoom.
In person – Cumnor, Cutteslowe, Bicester, Bampton, Henley, Deddington, Tackley, Dean Court, Milton under Wychwood, Didcot, Eynsham, Enstone, Abingdon, Witney & Sonning Common.
generationgames@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or **01235 849403**

Information & Advice Drop-ins

Banbury, Barton, Horspath, Sonning Common, Thame, Upper Heyford, Wootton.
network@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or **0345 4501276**

Silver Pride

Social coffee groups for older people in our LGBTQ+ community.
Banbury, Carterton, Cowley, Didcot, Faringdon.
network@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or **01235 849434**

TeaBooks

TeaBooks is a county-wide project which organises sociable book groups for those 60+, helping people to share a love of books and reading, and to make new friends. These groups bring mental stimulation, friendship and laughter to places where Oxfordshire residents can easily gather.
Abingdon, Bicester, Carterton, Headington, Kidlington, Witney, Oxford, Summertown, Thame, Wantage.
teabooks@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or **0345 4501276**

Walk & Talk

A leisurely stroll and a chance to make new friends.
Charlbury, Chipping Norton, Thame, Witney, Woodstock.
network@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or **0345 4501276**

Young at Heart Club

Social friendly group with entertainment, speakers, bingo, raffles and refreshments.
Wallingford.
network@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or **0345 4501276**

If you would like some support to access activities going on in your local community please contact our Community Information Network team on **0345 4501276** or email **network@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk**

Group reading for wellbeing

Creative and cultural participation has been identified by Age UK as the top-most contributor to wellbeing in older age, and we know that reading for pleasure is the most popular activity across the older population. So, it makes sense that having the opportunity to read, and particularly in a group setting, can make a real difference to how we feel.



Across the county we run the TeaBooks project, which organises social book groups for those over 60. Our groups are held in a range of venues, from local libraries and sheltered accommodation, to residential homes and local pubs. Each group is run by a volunteer group leader, who works alongside the local library to source the books for the group (so no one has the expense of buying the book) and makes sure everyone feels welcome and included.

Our members appreciate the social side of the meetings as much as the discussions of the latest title they've just read.

“Thought I’d let you know how much I’m enjoying my book group, they are a lovely bunch of people and I always leave the group happy.”

We’re delighted to announce that Witney Community Support Service has recently joined the TeaBooks clan, bringing us up to 16 groups across the county. We’re continuing to explore other new venues, so watch this space for news. To find out about your local TeaBooks group, contact us on teabooks@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or 0345 450 1276.



Silver Pride - LGBTQ+ community



Our Silver Pride groups run across the county and offer support & friendship to older people in the LGBTQ+ community. People attending the groups find them really friendly and enjoy having an opportunity to talk with others.

“I look forward to coming each time - It’s the best thing that’s happened in a couple of years!” Brian

“I just love coming, it’s a lovely morning with a chance to talk to people.” Kim

“It helps to talk to with the group and I enjoy it.” Jason

For more information about these friendly, informal coffee and social groups contact us on **01235 849434**. Groups are currently running in Didcot, Banbury, Carterton, Faringdon and Cowley.

Money saving tips

Carers Oxfordshire, run by our sister charity Action for Carers Oxfordshire, is a free service which offers information, advice and support to adult carers of someone living in Oxfordshire. Here are some top tips from their team on how to save money.



Wendy Meldrum, Carers Advisor, CarersLine

"When trying to economise, I make a list of things that I already have that will cost no extra money. I like to go for evening walks. Being surrounded by the beautiful natural world always makes me feel richer, more fortunate and a bit less worried."

Rebecca Cox, Outreach Worker

"We batch cook a couple of things on a Sunday afternoon, like a large vegetable curry and a pasta dish. We pair them with different sides for a few easy but healthy dinners or lunches during the week. This is cheaper, and saves having to worry about what's for dinner, as it's already cooked and just needs heating up."

Christine Stanbridge, Carers Adviser

"Shopping around for cheaper deals is really satisfying - I enjoy going to discount shops to pick up bargains! Save energy by waiting until you have a full load of washing and selecting a cool wash. Turning down the temperature of your hot water can be a real money saver."

Visit www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk or call 01235 424715 (Available 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday).



Need *help* with your PC?

Fully qualified, locally based business is here to help with all your home and small business PC requirements, however trivial or complex they may be.

During these unusual times, a visit may not be the preferred option - if so, we already help lots of clients via our very secure remote sessions.

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Donate

Age UK Oxfordshire relies on donations to ensure that we continue to support people in Oxfordshire to **live life to the full**. To make a donation please complete and return this form to: **Age UK Oxfordshire, 9 Napier Court, Barton Lane, Abingdon, OX14 3YT**. Alternatively call us on **0345 450 1276** or donate online via **www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire/get-involved/** Every donation makes a difference. Thank you.

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Please add to your donations through Gift Aid. If you are a UK tax payer, we can reclaim 25p for every £1 you donate.

☐ Yes, I want Age UK Oxfordshire to treat all donations I have made for the four years prior to this year, and all donations I make from the date of this declaration until I notify you otherwise, as Gift Aid donations. I confirm I pay an amount of UK income tax and/or capital gains tax to cover the amount that all charities and Community Amateur Sports Clubs will reclaim on my donations in the tax year.

If you would like to hear about our events, campaigns and how you can support local older people, please tick your contact preferences below. You can opt out at any time.

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Our Services

We provide a wide variety of services including:

Information and advice
Dementia support
Carer support
Physical activity classes
Telephone befriending
Digital support
Home support
Homeshare
Bereavement support groups
Toenail cutting
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](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire)
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for more
information



All our staff have access to telephone interpreting services for over 200 languages, and a number of our leaflets and DVDs are available in other languages. This magazine is available in a screen-reader friendly digital format. Contact us at media@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk for more information.

NHS HEALTH CHECK

Helping you prevent

diabetes

heart disease

kidney disease

stroke & dementia

Aged 40 – 74? Find out more about the free NHS Health Check

Even though you might be feeling great, if you're over 40 you may be at risk of developing heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, diabetes or dementia. A free NHS Health Check with your GP Practice can help you reduce these risks and make sure you stay healthy. The aim is to make some health improvements and to become aware of what you can do to lead a healthier life.

The check will only take around 20 to 30 minutes; details of what happens at your health check and what happens after the check can be found online, or your GP Practice can tell you more.

Your GP Practice will invite you for your NHS Health Check if you are eligible. If you haven't been invited but would like to have one contact your GP Practice to find out if you qualify for one.

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/nhshealthchecks