

We have a new
Chief Executive!

Dementia
Oxfordshire's
Witney Singing
Group



Launch of the
Dignity in Care
Awards 2017

Fundraising
and why we do it

Hello and welcome to the summer edition of EngAGE, the Age UK Oxfordshire newsletter

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We have two exciting bits of new for you:

1. We are delighted to introduce you to our new Chief Executive, Penny Thewlis. Congratulations and good luck, from all of the staff and volunteers at Age UK Oxfordshire! On the following page you will find Penny's priorities for the coming year, one of which is fundraising – a key theme for this edition. We would like to take the opportunity to say a huge thank you to everyone who supports our work.
2. Dementia Oxfordshire's Witney Singing Group are famous! So famous their song was played on the Jeremy Vine show. You can read more on pages 18 and 19.



As you know, we have moved office. Age UK Oxfordshire and Carers Oxfordshire now work under the same roof. We have always worked closely together but moving forward we can grow stronger and help older people and their carers more.

With Carers Week coming up we have decided to launch the Dignity in Care Awards slightly earlier than usual so that you all have plenty of time to nominate someone who has demonstrated outstanding care to you or a loved one.

We hope you enjoy reading the summer edition of EngAGE. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to get in touch. Have a lovely summer!

P.S Our new address is: 9 Napier Court, Barton Lane, Abingdon, OX14 3YT

Get in touch: If you would like to get in touch with us generally or about anything you read in the EngAGE newsletter, we'd love to hear from you. Contact us on **0345 450 1276** or email us at **media@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk**.

Find us online: Visit our website at **www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire** where you can find out more about our range of services, local support options, information, advice and local job opportunities. We are also on social media:  ageukoxfordshire  @ageukoxon

The Autumn issue of Age UK Oxfordshire EngAGE will be out in September 2017. If you would like to subscribe, please fill out the Information Request Form on page 23 or visit **www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire/newsletter** to join our e-mailing list.

Introducing Penny Thewlis

"I am in the slightly unusual position of being the 'new girl' who has been around forever!"

I joined Age Concern Oxfordshire, as it then was, in 2000 to look at the needs and aspirations of older people in rural Oxfordshire and write a report, which I called Lilac from the garden, because of an experience that taught me a really important lesson. The lilac in question was brought in to a rural day centre I visited by an older woman, who struggled to carry the lilac and manoeuvre her walking frame at the same time. She presented the lilac with these words: 'I like to bring a little something when I can.'

I saw this repeated in many other settings – with vegetables from the garden, jars of jam, knitting, cards and much more – the giving was quite as important as receiving, if not more so. That was an important lesson because I came to appreciate how easy it is for us to rob people of the sense of self-worth that comes from being a 'giver' simply by the way we organise the services and support that we offer. As an organisation, I want us to be creating opportunities that enable people to continue to give.

The organisation has grown and changed enormously since 2000, but the basic principle of rooting everything we do in what older people and carers tell us is important to them have not changed.

We are in challenging and uncertain times. Funding for the public services on which so many of us rely as we age has been reducing dramatically and recruitment of care staff is at an all time low, with extra pressures in Oxfordshire because of the cost of living. State funding for voluntary sector services has also been reducing.

It is against this background that we have been working hard to think through our priorities as an organisation and we have arrived at three key priorities for the year ahead:

1. Developing our fundraising capabilities to make us less reliant on state funding and ensure the financial resilience of the charity, so that we can continue to deliver much-needed services and support
2. Tackling loneliness by improving our ability to reach out to people experiencing loneliness and connecting them to people and activities in their community – 'something to get out of bed for'
3. Campaigning for a properly funded social care system that meets people's needs in a dignified manner.

That is quite an agenda, but we have an amazing team of staff and volunteers and I am confident that we can make good progress on each of those priorities over the next year.

I am conscious that I still have a lot to learn but I firmly believe that the day we stop thinking there is something to learn is the day we stop being good at our jobs. I am always keen to hear your ideas for how we can improve or strengthen what we are doing so please let me know what you think, either by writing to me at our new address, emailing pennythewlis@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or calling 0774 126 1415. "

We asked Penny about her private passions, what she likes doing when she is not working. She told us this...

"My main passions outside work tend to be associated with places. I love rural West Oxfordshire, where we live and walk whenever possible. I love West Penwith, in Cornwall, with its rugged coastline, ruined tin mines and beautiful light. I love Venice, with its watery streets, its smell, its maze-like quality, its beautiful decay .

For completely different reasons I love New York City – the razzmatazz, theatre, art, history, atmosphere – and the Brooklyn Bridge! There's also reading, spending time with family and friends, and theatre, theatre, theatre - as often and as experimentally as possible. "



Penny soaking up the sights of Venice

Penny's piece on fundraising and why we do it...

"Fundraising has now become much more important to us than it has been at any time since I joined the organisation in 2000 and I expect we shall be writing about it more often in Engage.

Our organisation has been able to grow and develop a whole range of new services for older people and for carers over recent years largely with the support of local authority funding, which is obviously now in much shorter supply. Funding for some of our services has been or is being discontinued or significantly reduced – the idea of delivering 'more for less' is prevalent: more services, more people benefitting for less money. At the same time, many other services on which people depend are also struggling.

It's important to emphasise that we shall absolutely not stop campaigning to change this. We shall continue to campaign nationally for a properly funded social care system on which people know they can depend and under which the responsibility and risks attached to paying for care are shared between the individual and the state. This is a key hallmark of a civilised society.

But at the same time as campaigning, our Trustees have been very clear that we must endeavour to maintain services we know are important to people – the alternative is simply unthinkable – to say nothing of developing new services to fill gaps. Which means we need to become much better as an organisation at fundraising. This is a change of culture for us but we are really putting our shoulders to the fundraising wheel this year. We shall be applying for funds to an even wider range of charitable trusts and foundations than in previous years, but we shall also be popping up across the county with fundraising events – putting the FUN in FUNdraising! We hope some of you will want to support these events."

Could your group help us to raise funds?

Many thanks to everyone involved in the Carry on Dancing evening held at Wootton and Dry Sandford Community Centre a couple of weeks ago who managed to raise a fantastic £350 for our work! This is a group who get together every fortnight and from time to time choose to dedicate a night to raising funds for a charity. A few weeks ago they chose us. If you are part of, or you know any groups who might consider dedicating one of their get-togethers to fundraise for us, please get in touch with **melpaterson@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk** who can help with the arrangements.



Could you run a bake sale?

Easy Fundraising!

Did you know that you can fundraise whilst you shop online? We have just signed up to use the Easy Fundraising site, which enables you to shop with all your regular online retailers and get a donation from the retailer for Age UK Oxfordshire at the same time. Signing up is very easy – just go to the www.easyfundraising.org.uk page and on the home screen type in Age UK Oxfordshire in the "Join Us" box. Then, follow the sign up process and start shopping!

If you are interested in fundraising for Age UK Oxfordshire, please get in touch with our **Head of Fundraising, Mel Paterson** on **07464 498 330** or email **fundraising@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk**

How you have fundraised for us ...

Strictly Banbury

We caught up with Jim Ellison the week before the Strictly Banbury finals. Jim was persuaded to take part in the competition by his neighbour, Paula Donaldson who runs Phone Friends. All money raised by Jim's dancing will go towards providing older people who feel lonely with a regular phone call. You can read more about Phone Friends on page 15.

Taking part in Strictly Banbury is a big challenge for Jim who is registered blind and had only had a few dancing lessons before. Jim said it has certainly been a challenging period but that he has had a very patient instructor who has helped him to memorise his moves.

Jim wanted to take part in Strictly Banbury because it enabled him to support a good cause and have some fun at the same time. He has also found that dancing has got him into shape in the past few weeks as practice sessions have steadily increased in the run up to the finals.

Asked if he would continue dancing after the competition, Jim said "Definitely!"

Jim's dancing raised £2,000 for Age UK Oxfordshire!

Knitting News

For every little hat you knit Innocent Smoothie donates 25p towards our unfunded information and advice helpline.

So far you have sent in 16,000 hats and we would like to say a huge thank you for all of your hard work! For the 'final push' stage of the Big Knit we will be running a 'Creative Knit' competition, the knitter who sends in the most inventive hat will win one of the (human sized) hats that *Oliver Bonas* donated to us.

If you are inspired by our first winner's hat (pictured) by Matthew from Bicester, and would like to compete please send in your hats with your name and contact details.

To get involved with the Big Knit please contact Vibeke Kristensen-White by phone, **07827 235 405** or by email vibekek@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk



Crochet owl

Our charity shops in Oxford

We have two charity shops located in Oxford city and are always looking for new volunteers and any donations you can spare. Thank you to everyone who regularly drops in, you make our day!

You can find us at:

183 Cowley Road, Oxford, OX4 1UT and at **21-22 St Clements St, Oxford, OX4 1AB.**

If you are in the area why not pop in to say hello and have a browse.

We look forward to seeing you in the shops!

P.S With thanks to Heather (pictured) and the Billings Knitting Group who created 450 hats for the big knit!



Heather, Sarah and Ian

Our relationship with Age UK Oxfordshire:

Carers Oxfordshire is here to work alongside and support family or friends looking after someone in Oxfordshire. This support is often delivered in partnership with other organisations which allow us to reach carers from all backgrounds with all kinds of needs. If you are aged over 18 years old and looking after an adult we can help you manage your caring role.

Most people become carers in their fifties and sixties and can often take a long time before they realise they are in a caring position. This is where we can provide a bridge between Carers Oxfordshire and Age UK Oxfordshire to give carers a seamless journey between the services and support available to them and their loved one. We can help you access a full range of services such as Information and Advice (p), Generation Games (p) and more; giving carers an outlet to think about their own health and wellbeing. Together with Age UK Oxfordshire, we offer a complete range of services to support the community.

It is National Carers Week, 12th-17th June!

We are celebrating this with a wide range of activities and events from coffee and cake at your local carers group, to a travelling T-shirt competition - let's see how far it can go!

If you prefer you can 'drop in' and see us at **Witney Corn Exchange on Saturday 17th June 10am – 2pm** for information, support and advice.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Carers Quiz Night!

On Saturday 20th May we held our 'Carers Quiz Night' at Dalton Barracks. We are delighted to say that with your help, the evening raised £549!

A huge thank you to all of the volunteers involved in running the night and entertaining everyone who attended. We really appreciate the support you give us.



Coming up this Summer ...

Launch of the Dignity in Care Awards 2017

Too often we hear stories of people who have had a bad experience of care. The Dignity in Care Awards are an opportunity for you to tell us your stories of outstanding care and to say thank you to those who have supported, encouraged and cared for you or a loved one.

This is an opportunity for us to recognise the hard work of caring people in Oxfordshire and to promote higher standards of care.

In 2016 we had eight winners (pictured below) including representatives from care homes, unpaid carers, paid carers and volunteers. This year we are expanding the award categories to include an 'Inspiration Award' which is for settings and people you wouldn't traditionally receive care from, e.g. local library, shopping centre, hairdressers etc. An organisation or business that inspires others with its high standards of care and compassion.

This year we will be launching the Dignity in Care Awards during Carers Week (12th-17th June). If you would like to make a nomination please visit the website or contact **Vibeke by phone on 07827 235 405** or email **dignityincare@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk**

www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire/news--campaigns/dignityincare/



2016 Dignity in Care Award Winners

Men's Health Awareness Week

"This year the topic of men's health awareness week is focused on belly fat. Why? Because it's the type of fat that's bad for your health and men are more likely to have it.

Men often store fat around the waist where it is associated with higher blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes and heart disease. But if you don't want a Diet with a capital D, what do you do?

First, assess the size of the problem. Find a tape measure and measure your waist. Measure around your middle at a point mid-way between the bottom of your ribs and the top of your hips.

Men have a higher risk of health problems if their waist size is more than 94cm/37 inches. For Asian men, it's lower: 90cm/36 inches.

Just losing half a stone could significantly improve your health. And, contrary to popular belief, there is one diet that works every time:

- Prepare your normal meal and plate it up as usual.
- Remove half the food and place on another plate in the fridge or freezer for another day.

Easy enough? This approach cuts your cooking time, calorie intake and food expenditure in half.

It's about portion control. The amount you are currently eating alongside your current exercise levels has resulted in weight gain. Simple as that. You need to eat less and exercise more. This diet deals with the first bit in the easiest way."

This article was provided by Men's Health Forum.

For more information about Men's Health please visit their website **www.menshealthforum.org.uk** or ring **020 7922 7908**.

Nearly three million older people struggle financially despite billions going unclaimed

Age UK national have been conducting research into the pensioner poverty. Their report, released recently, found that one in four over 65's are struggling financially - describing themselves as "just getting by" or "finding it very difficult".

We at Age UK Oxfordshire are urging older people to get in touch to find out if they're entitled to some extra financial support.

Backing up Age UK's research, the government's latest figures show that one in 10 people aged 65+ would not be able to pay an unexpected expense of £200, to replace a broken washing machine for example. Yet millions of older people who are struggling to survive on a low income could be entitled to benefits such as Pension Credit, which was slightly increased in April and could provide a much-needed boost to their weekly income if claimed. In fact, if people who are eligible for Pension Credit make a claim, it could increase their income by an average of £42 a week – that's £2,184 a year.

In addition to this, we would like to highlight the 2011 census which details that 19,600 of those over 65 in Oxfordshire state that they "struggle with day-to-day activities a lot" but only 68% appear to claim Attendance Allowance. Attendance allowance is a welfare benefit paid to people with illnesses or disabilities who need frequent help with their personal care (things like washing and dressing), or struggle to manage personal care tasks by themselves.

Penny Thewlis, Chief Executive at Age UK Oxfordshire, said: "Managing on a low, fixed income is really tough, and many people face a daily struggle just to afford the basics. That's why it is so important that every older person who is entitled to claim benefits does so. Every day Age UK Oxfordshire helps people to claim what they are entitled to, and every day we hear how much of a difference the money makes, how surprised people are by how straightforward the process is with the help of an adviser, and how much less they have to worry about everyday bills.

It is shameful that despite millions of older people struggling financially, around £3.5 billion in money benefits remains unclaimed every year when this extra income could make a huge difference to their lives. We would urge anyone who is worried about their finances, or an older family member or friend, to get in touch with us for free, impartial information and advice."

To find out if you, a friend or a relative could be missing out on an entitlement please gather some details regarding income and capital, or details of the things you struggle with daily, then contact Age UK Oxfordshire's information and advice helpline on **0345 450 1276**.

If you would like to see us face to face please call us to make an appointment at our office in Abingdon or at our community venues in Banbury.



"It is so important that every older person who is entitled to claim benefits does so."

Exercise, movement, activity; we all know we should be doing more of it to benefit our health and prevent chronic disease (150 mins. per week according to national guidelines). The good news is that you probably are already racking up a good number of minutes in your everyday routine, walking up and down stairs, carrying shopping, walking and cycling. And if you attend a weekly exercise class you are definitely on the right track!

Does it matter if I exercise alone or in a group?

The benefits of exercising in a group are not to be underestimated: Your exercise will be more varied as the teacher plans different exercises for each session, the camaraderie between participants, you will release more endorphins (happy hormones) and you are more likely to improve with regular attendance ... which comes back to the social nature of being a part of a group. Let's get social!

Try one of our classes:

Zumba Gold – Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall, Uffington – Thursdays 2-3pm
Strength & Balance – Grimsbury Community Centre, Banbury – Tuesdays 2-3pm
Zumba Gold – Rose Hill Community Centre, Oxford – Wednesdays 10-11am
Strength & Balance – Long Wittenham Village Hall – Wednesdays – 3.30 – 4.30pm
Strength & Balance – Bicester Methodist Church – Mondays – 1.30 – 2.30pm
Tai Chi – Carterton WI Hall – Thursdays – 1 – 2pm
Tai Chi for health – Watchfield village Hall – Mondays 1 – 2pm

Dementia-friendly class in Henley

We plan to set up a new session in Henley aimed at people living with dementia (and their carers – carers go free).

The session will be called “Creative Moves” is a chair-based class that centres on moving to music and connecting with others. If you would like to register your interest, please contact us to add you to our register.

Our contact details:

Website: www.generationgames.org.uk
Telephone: 01235 849 403
Email: generationgames@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk



"My balance has improved. It is good to come out and to meet people. It is motivating to exercise as a group"

Welcome to the Community Information Network



Getting Connected

The world in which we live is an increasingly busy one; many of us feel more and more isolated and disconnected.

How many of us actually know our next door neighbours or realise what is happening in our communities?

The Community Information Network works tirelessly to help people know what support, help and opportunities exist around them and can also help support them to access them and the following pages are filled with all sorts of ideas and opportunities. We also publish a Community Links Booklet which is filled with even more activities. If you would like to receive your free copy of this booklet please phone Helen on **01235 849 434** to request yours or email **network@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk**

There are many ways in which we can get connected to others:

- **By making use of digital technology:** Skype, email, texting, facebook, snapchat...the list goes on and on... Our Digital Connect Team are here to help you make sense of the increasingly digital world in which we live through our network of IT Classes and gadget drop-ins.
- **By making and receiving a phone call:** Our Phonefriends service offers those who feel lonely the opportunity to receive a regular call from a friendly volunteer.
- **By writing a letter:** Our Penfriends service matches individuals who commit to writing to each other once a month and over time become friends.
- **By having opportunities to meet with others:** Our community team run a wide range of activities across the county from cream teas to pub lunches, tea dances to social groups and bereavement support groups to carers support groups...all of which are designed to offer you the opportunity to meet up with others.
- **By volunteering:** If you have an hour to spare or a skill to share then you can make a huge difference to people living in your community: from becoming a volunteer driver, to helping at a day centre, to teaching others how to use a computer...the list is endless.
- **By smiling at and saying hello to the people we walk past every day:** The power of a smile or a simple hello can make the difference to another person...it tells them that today they have been noticed by someone.



Could you be a volunteer driver?

For further information you can contact Head of Community Development, **Ruth Swift** by email, **ruthswift@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk** or by phone: **07827 235 404**

You can also visit our website:
www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire

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The Community Information
Network is supported by:



**OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL**



West Oxfordshire

Community Information Network

Ten Pin Bowling 30th July.

Do you fancy having a go at Ten Pin Bowling? Why not pop the date in your diary and come along and join in?

Please don't think you can't do it because the balls are too heavy, we have equipment and people who will help.

More information and contact number on the poster below.

Cream Tea 1st Wednesday of every month in Chipping Norton.

Come and join us to be spoilt rotten with a Cream Tea at the Crown & Cushion Hotel.

From 2pm-4pm includes scone, jam, cream, butter Tea/Coffee and great company all for £3.50.

Please phone Stephen to book your place

We also have monthly cream teas running in Witney and Carterton with new ones coming soon in Enstone and Burford

Information drop ins

An opportunity to pop along and find out about local services, groups and Activities, as for help or simply say hello. Stephen and Alison look forward to meeting you.

Witney, Corn Exchange: Chatterbox, every 1st Thursday of the month from 9.30am-12noon

Woodstock Museum Coffee Shop: Every 2nd Wednesday of the month from 10am-12noon

Chipping Norton Lower Town Hall: Chatterbox, every 2nd Thursday of the month from 10am-12.30pm

Eynsham Emporium Cafe: Every 2nd Monday of the month from 10am-12noon

Carterton Library: Every last Monday of the month from 10am-12noon

Milton-under-Wychwood, The Paddocks: Every 3rd Tuesday of the month from 2.30pm-4pm



Stephen Mott

07827 235 450

stephenmott@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk



Alison Hook

07827 235 428

alisonhook@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk

Free Computer Drop in Help sessions and lessons.

We have IT lessons and drop ins running in **Witney, Carterton, Woodstock, Chipping Norton and Charlbury.**

These sessions are suitable for anyone and everyone. If you have attended before but would like to know more, you have a new Gadget/tablet/smart phone or maybe you have never used technology before and want to give it a go. Why not give Stephen a call to find out more or to book your place.



At an IT drop in session



Come and join us at RAF Brize Norton for an afternoon of Ten Pin bowling.

Sunday 30th July 2017

12.30pm - 4pm (Arrive for 12pm)

£10 per person (2 games, shoe hire, lunch & a drink)

Or £5 for just lunch if you want to come and watch
(Cash bar open during the session)

To book a space from the date above, please send an email to Stephen at stephenmott@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or leave him a message on 07827 235450.

If you need a lift, or are able to offer a lift to someone near-by, please let Stephen know.



Volunteers needed

We are always in need of people who would like to get involved and help us continue to make a difference here in the West. Helping with IT classes, making cups of tea at an event, being that welcoming and friendly person at an activity...if you would like to find out more please give Stephen or Alison a ring

We are really pleased to be working in partnership on new projects with:

Banbury United

The Spencers Social Group at Banbury United Clubhouse.

Enjoying retirement but sometimes miss the company of your work-mates? Why not come along to our new group:

Starting on Wednesday 21st June and running every 1st & 3rd Wednesdays of a month, from 10.30am to 12pm. (See poster below)



Banbury and Bicester College

Lunch and Natter: an opportunity to enjoy a 3 course lunch in the pleasant surroundings of the Cherwell Restaurant and Bistro. Only £5 for lunch with an additional £1 charge for tea/coffee. 12pm-1pm on Thursday 15th June. Further dates from September onwards. All welcome but booking essential.



Troy Bryan

07957 981 381

troybryan@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk



Libby Griffin

07827 235 410

libbygriffin@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk



Halima Ahmed - BME Information Worker

07827 235 431

halimaahmed@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk



Kasia Zielasko

07827 235 402

kasiazielasko@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk

New Kidlington Late Spring Support Group:

Starting on Monday 22nd May from 3pm-4.30pm in the Kidlington Methodist Church. This group, for those who have been bereaved, will then continue to run every 2nd and 4th Monday of a month. Please contact Helen on 01235 849 434 for more information

Information Drop-in Sessions

- **Banbury, RVS Cornhill Centre, Castle St:** Every 1st Thursday from 11am-1pm
- **Bicester, Pop in Centre, Manorsfield Road:** Every 3rd Thursday from 10am-11.30am. An information volunteer will also be available every 1st Friday from 10am-11.30am.
- **Kidlington, Moorside Extra Care Housing.** The Moors, Kidlington, OX5 2UZ: Every 4th Wednesday of the month 10.30am-12 noon.
- **Steeple Aston, Sports and Recreation Centre.** Fir Lane, Steeple Aston, OX25 4SF: Last Wednesday of the month from 2pm-3.30pm.

No appointment necessary.

The Spencers Social Group at Banbury United



Banbury United Clubhouse
Banbury Plant Hire Community Stadium
Station Approach, Banbury OX16 5AB

Enjoying retirement but sometimes miss the company of your work-mates?

Why not come along to our new social group:

First & third Wednesdays, from 10.30am to 12pm

Sport-themed quizzes, indoor floor games, talks, and more. Free entry and refreshments.

Starts Wednesday 21st June,
then 5th July, 19th July & 2nd August

Stuck for a lift? We can help with transport in the Banbury area (book in advance). Free parking on-site.

For details contact Libby on 07827 235410
or libby.griffin@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk



Volunteers needed

We are always in need of people who would like to get involved and help us continue to make a difference here in the Cherwell. Helping with IT classes, making cups of tea at an event, being that welcoming and friendly person at an activity...if you would like to find out more please give Troy, Libby or Kasia a ring



IT Classes and drop-in sessions.

These regular, free, opportunities to learn how to use your laptop, tablet or smart phone at your own pace continue to run across Cherwell in Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington and Tadmerton. For more information please contact Kasia.

Bicester resident Jacoba (91) dropped in to Age UK Oxfordshire's free IT Session at her local library recently, to get some advice about using her smart phone. Jacoba was so pleased with the help given by Activity Worker Kasia, that she returned the following week to present her with a hand-crafted Thank-you card. Jacoba says she loves to make things and keep her hands busy, so her local Community Networker has introduced her to a crafting group in a nearby village. Jacoba is now looking forward to joining the group this month, making new friends, and creating many more beautiful items.



Kasia and Jacoba

Don't get left in the dark!



If you have a power cut ring the Oxfordshire County Council's Emergency Planning Unit on **105**.

It's a free service and you can call the number from most landlines and mobile phones. It doesn't matter who you choose to buy your electricity from - anyone can call 105. It will put you through to your local electricity network operator who manages the cables, wires and substations that bring electricity into your home.

You can also call this number if you spot damage to electricity power lines and substations that could put you, or someone else, in danger. If there's a serious immediate risk, call the emergency services too.

What should I do during a power cut?

Switch off all electrical appliances that shouldn't be left unattended, ready for when the power comes back on. Leave a light on so you know when the power cut has been resolved and if it's cold wrap up warm. Call 105 and report the power cut and you can also call this number for updates.

Can I use my phone during a power cut?

Cordless phones probably won't work during a power cut. They take their power from the mains and most don't have battery back-up. Traditional corded phones will work - you might want to keep one handy so you can plug it in and make phone calls if you have a power cut. In most cases, mobile phones will work if they are charged.



We are really pleased to welcome Carla, Rachel and Bob to our team here in South Oxfordshire and they are really looking forward to getting out and about to visit local groups and meet you all. If you know of a local group that would like a visit or if you have an idea of an activity you would like to see started up please give one of them a ring.

Our regular monthly information drop-ins continue to run in Didcot, Henley, Moulsoford, Sonning Common, Thame and Wheatley.

New Information Drop-ins:

Berinsfield Health Centre: every last Wednesday of the month from 10.15am-11.45am. Please contact Carla for more details

Wallingford Library: every 2nd Tuesday of the month from 10am-11.30am. Please contact Rachel for more details

Tetsworth Memorial Hall: Every last Tuesday of the month from 2pm-3pm. Contact Rachel for details

Chalgrove Day Centre: Tuesday 17th October from 10.30am-12pm. Contact Rachel for details

Thame Market Information Stand: Tuesday 13th June from 8am-11.30am. Contact Carla for more details



Bob Bishop
07827 235 403
bobbishop@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk



Carla Didcock
07827 235 417
carladidcock@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk



Rachel Poole
07827 235 460
rachelpoole@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk

We continue to run **IT classes and Gadget drop-ins** across the South in Berinsfield Library, Didcot Library, Henley Library, Sonning Common Library and Woodcote Library.

Information about these sessions and booking on to these sessions can be done by either phoning the library direct or by contacting Carla, Rachel or Bob on the numbers above. If you live in a community that does not have any IT classes and would like to see classes happening please contact the team to let them know.

NEW Gadget Drop in at Benson Library, on the 2nd & 4th Tuesday of every month from 2pm-4pm covering IT Gadgets and promoting the County Council's Library E-book and Audio-book Service. To find out more please contact Bob.

Penfriends

Within the increasingly digital world in which we live, the gift of a handwritten letter or card can be precious and very much appreciated by many. Handwriting is also known to be relaxing, and written relationships can be just as central to a person's life as any others.

Would you take pleasure in receiving a regular letter through the door that's not in a brown envelope? Or, would you like the excuse to write to someone else who is interested in hearing your news?

We welcome writers of all ages and it's easy to join. All you need to do is call the office for a chat and to register your interest.

Contact Helen on 01235 849 434 or send an email to: penfriends@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk



Would you like to be a pen friend?



The Vale

Community Information Network

New: Grove Late Spring Bereavement Support

Group: From 10am to 11.30am in the meeting room at the Methodist Church. Every 1st and 3rd Monday. If you would like to find out more about this group please contact Helen on 01235 849 434

New: Preston Road Film Club, Abingdon:

Following a successful taster session in April we are really pleased to be continuing to run these sessions at the community centre on Tuesday the 20th June and Tuesday 11th July at 2pm. Only £2.50 per head includes tea/coffee and cake. Please contact Mandy for more information.

Watchfield, Cinema Afternoon Taster: Watchfield Village Hall, SN6 8TA on Wednesday 12th July from 2pm. £ 2.50 per person to include tea and cake. Contact Mandy for more information.

New: Wantage Information drop-in: Wantage Health Centre, OX12 9BN every 3rd Wednesday of the month from 10.30am – 12noon. Contact Sonia for details.



Sonia Robinson

07827 235 414

soniarobinson@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk



Mandy Richens

07827 235 429

mandyrichens@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk



Bob Bishop

07827 235 403

bobbishop@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk

1-2-1 IT classes continue to run regularly at:

Mayott House, Abingdon: every Thursday from 10am to 1pm. Ring Helen to book your place.

Faringdon Library: every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Please book direct with the library on 01367 240 311

Barclays Bank, Abingdon: every Wednesday from 2pm to 4pm. Ring Bob to book your place

Grove Library: every Thursday 10am to 12noon. Please book direct with the library on 01235 763 841

Cornerstone Cafe, Grove: every Wednesday from 10am to 12noon. Please book direct with cafe on 01235 772 280.

Phone Friends: 'A friendly voice at the end of the phone'

Phone Friends provides older people who feel lonely with a regular, free and friendly phone call from one of our Phone Friend volunteers.

Phone Friend volunteers make about 1,400 calls a month and reach over 270 people each week who feel lonely. We have over 40 friendly and caring volunteers who offer approximately 2 hours a week to telephone a group of people, many of whom have no other contact at all and we are often the only person they may speak to in a week.

If you are interested in joining our team of volunteers and being that friendly voice at the end of the phone please contact Paula. Full training and ongoing support is provided and calls can be made from a central venue or from the comfort of your own home.

If you are interested in receiving a phone call please give Paula a ring on **01295 234 850** or email phonefriends@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk



Loni and Margaret

New Kidlington Late Spring Support Group:

Starting on Monday 22nd May from 1.30pm-3pm in the Kidlington Scout Hut, Blenheim Road. This group, for those who have been bereaved, will then continue to run every 2nd and 4th Monday of a month. Please contact Helen on 01235 849 434 for more information.

New: Rolling Programme of Courses: These free courses will be running at Bullingdon Community Centre, Peat Moors, Headington. These sessions will run every Thursday morning from 11am to 1pm starting with 'creative writing'. Please contact Fiona for more details or to find out more about the other courses that will be available in the coming weeks and months.

First Wednesday Lunch Club

Meeting every other month on a Wednesday in the North Oxford Community Centre in Summertown. All those with a diagnosis of Dementia and their carers are welcome to come along and join in and meet with others who understand. A two course home cooked lunch is offered along with great company for only £2.50. (1st session free) Please contact Helen on 01235 849 434 to find out more and to book your place.

Community Film Club Templars Square,

Cowley: every 1st Tuesday of the month starting at 10.30am with refreshments served from 10.15am. Once inside the shopping centre take the door next to the TSB and take the stairs up to the first floor. Contact Sian for more information.

The Swan and Castle Pub Lunch Group: An opportunity to meet with others for a pub lunch, ordering direct off the menu on the day. Every 3rd Wednesday of the month from 12.15pm. Castle Street, Oxford. Please contact Sian for more details

Botley Coffee Morning: Every 1st Thursday of the month from 10am-11.30am in Field House, West Way, Botley. £1 to attend, refreshments provided.



Fiona Tracey
07469 150 669
fionatracey@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk



Tricia Brant
07964 038 813
triciabrant@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk



Sian Whitlock
07827 235 448
sianwhitlock@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk

IT Gadget Drop-ins (no need to book, just pop along).

- **Barclays Bank, Botley:** Every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month from 10am to 12 noon
- **Bullingdon Community Centre:** Every Tuesday from 10am to 12 noon.
- **Barton Neighbourhood Centre:** Every 1st Wednesday from 2.30pm to 4.30pm.
- **Littlemore Community Centre:** Every Friday from 10am to 12 noon
- **Donnington Community Centre:** Every Tuesday from 11.30am to 1pm.

Volunteers needed

We are always in need of people who would like to get involved and help us continue to make a difference here in Oxford City. Helping with IT classes, making cups of tea at an event, being that welcoming and friendly person at an activity, helping at one of our community clubs...if you are interested in finding out more please give Sian or Fiona a ring

Age UK Oxfordshire will be at Cowley Road Carnival on Sunday 2nd July!



Our stall will be running from 11am and we will be happy to chat to you and offer any information about services we provide or advice should you need any. We will be based inside Mary St. John's Church Hall (in case of British summer rain!) and will be offering tea and refreshments for a small cost. We hope to see you there!

If you have any questions about our stall at the carnival please contact Vibeke by phone, **07827 235 405** or by email, vibekek@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk



Regret vs. Guilt...a normal part of grieving

“Since they died, there are so many things I feel guilty about. When they asked me to do something for them and I put it off. When I rolled my eyes when they couldn’t do things for themselves. I took care of them up until the last two weeks, when I finally called in the hospice to help. It was the best thing I ever did but the guilt I feel is driving me crazy.”

We hear these sentiments over and over when working alongside those who have been bereaved. Having guilty thoughts or regrets about what was or what could have been is a normal and healthy part of grieving. For many these feelings of guilt/regret are what keep them awake at night, stops them mid laughter or simply brings that tear into their eyes.

How we recognise and deal with these feelings, however, is often key to us being able to look forward and forgive ourselves. Understanding whether what we are feeling is guilt or regret is the start of this process: The problem is we often get the two confused. You may be thinking “it doesn’t matter what I call it, it is still painful.” Yet knowing the difference between guilt and regret can help us to understand how to work through these painful emotions.

Guilt gnaws away at you and can affect your self esteem. Guilt implies action (or lack of) of some sort.

- Not spending more time with them before they died
- Having had an argument and not being able to say sorry
- Hating the hospital visits

Regrets are things that we think we “shoulda woulda coulda,” done. Things that we would have done differently if we had known then what we know now.

- I wish we had had more time together
- I wish I’d been there when they died
- I wish I had listened

How we can cope and work through our feelings of guilt and regret:

- Talk to someone you trust about what you are feeling. Blaming ourselves or wishing we had done something different is natural. We may need to be reminded that we did the best we could, that we were tired or stressed, or that we couldn’t have been there at the last minute. If the person you trust says, “No, you aren’t to blame,” trust them and let it go... talking with others can help clarify what you are feeling
- Write a list of what you feel bad about. This will help you get your thoughts and feelings out on paper... often when you see it written down it is easier to rationalise/be objective
- Ask yourself ‘what would they say’... often we know that they would tell us we were being silly and that it doesn’t matter
- Be open to forgiving yourself.
- Most importantly, allow yourself to remember the things you did right. Guilt and regret are feelings that occur as we focus on the things that may have gone wrong in a relationship or the things we didn’t do. Those memories may need some attention, and it is important to acknowledge them, but remember to look at the big picture. Those moments that we feel guilt or regret over are often simply a small part of the bigger picture of your whole lives together. Try to focus on remembering all the good times/ memories

We have 17 Late Spring Bereavement Support groups running across the County in Abingdon, Banbury, Barton, Berinsfield, Bicester, Burford, Chipping Norton, Faringdon, Grove, Henley, Kidlington, Milton-under-Wychwood, North Oxford, Southmoor, Thame and Witney (2 groups)

Please contact Helen on 01235 849 434 or email helensollis@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk for more details about your local group.

Dementia Oxfordshire Witney Singing Group

The Witney Singing for Dementia Group has composed a song that represents their thoughts and feelings about living with dementia. The song is called 'I am...', 'My life is...'

Composing and performing the song was a massive challenge for the group as many had forgotten the song between sessions and there was very little practice time. There was a soloist, a poet and a mouth organist!

On 24th May the song was played on BBC Radio 2, the Jeremy Vine show. Two members of the group, Tony and Mary Ann, also attended to discuss their experiences of dementia, supported by Dementia Adviser, Frances.

Tony: I am still me. I will always be me. Deep inside I will always be me but on the outside looking at me I am not me.

Frances: I think that's our message, isn't it, Tony? People with dementia still have lives to lead, dreams, projects, songs to sing, they've got talents – let's see past the diagnosis."

Tony: I can still put a screw in a piece of wood; I can still drill a hole.

Frances: And you've got a beautiful garden.

Tony: And I've still got a beautiful garden! I can still do things, next year I might not be able to do this.

You can listen to the song by visiting the website: www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire/our-services/dementia-oxfordshire/

Well done to all involved!

What can Dementia Oxfordshire do for you?

We can provide:

- Information
- Advice
- Support
- Signposting for older people with a diagnosis of dementia across Oxfordshire.

When we receive a new referral into the service, we take time to find out the needs and wishes of our client. If the client does not have a diagnosis of dementia, our Dementia Advisers can provide general information and advice to help them access the appropriate help to meet their needs.



Creation of the song!



Tony, Frances, Mary Ann and Jeremy

This may be about connecting older people to other services such as their GP.

Clients with a diagnosis of dementia are offered a home visit. At the home visit, Dementia Advisers will gain more insight about their client. They will be able to understand their living arrangements, family support and health issues. Carers can also discuss their needs and what would make life easier for them in their caring role.

From the home visit, Dementia Advisers complete a support plan for the client, which will include their agreed goals. The achievement of these goals may involve connecting older people to dementia friendly activities in the local community and / or enabling them to access the right support from internal services and external organisations.

Some of our clients express an interest in attending local activities and groups. They may lack confidence in being able to go along to a new group which can lead to anxiety. Clients and their carers can feel that they have become lonely and isolated. One carer said: "We don't get invited out anymore, since things have started to get difficult".

You can contact Dementia Oxfordshire by phone, 01865 410 210 or by email, info@dementiaoxfordshire.org.uk

Learning opportunities for carers of people living with dementia across Oxfordshire.



We are offering you the opportunity to find out more about dementia and supporting the person you are caring for, as well as the chance to meet other carers and share experiences.

The sessions are free and are running over the next few months in **Abingdon, Banbury, Bicester, Didcot, Faringdon, Oxford, Thame and Witney**. They cover:

Understanding Dementia

Gain an improved understanding of dementia; the types, signs and symptoms and learn about the issues associated with the different types of dementia. Find out where and how to access support and ways to help someone to remain independent for as long as possible.

Communication

Find out about techniques around how to communicate with a person living with dementia to enable them to live well.

Understanding Behaviours

Understand changes in behaviour in the person you're caring for, what they may mean and explore ways to work with the changes.

Find out more today: get details about dates, times, venues by calling **01993 899 980**, checking the 'Training for Carers' section of our website: www.dementisoxfordshire.org.uk or emailing Claire Ward: cward@guideposts.org.uk

If you will find it difficult to leave the person you're caring for to enable you to participate in these sessions, please call Claire for a chat as there are a couple of ways we may be able to help support you with this.

Feedback from Carers who have attended previous sessions:

'Great, really learnt lots - understand things better now.'

'Relaxed and informal setting, I felt at ease.'

'I am sure the things I have learnt will help both me and my husband now.'



Start a Conversation

Get the Picture, Age UK's Oxfordshire's creative campaigning project, is working to raise awareness about loneliness in Oxfordshire. We spoke to two ladies from one of the Late Spring bereavement groups about the importance of talking to neighbours and finding time for the people you meet.

Jenny

"If you've got a neighbour who's on their own, just talk to them over the garden fence or pop round to see how they are. That is very important. I think we can all do that, and it doesn't take any effort to just put down the washing up or whatever you're doing and go round to see people. It would make a big, big difference.

My cat's name is Pippa and she's a great comfort to me. I think pets are just great company if you're on your own. When I come home and I go in the door, I call out 'hello', which is what I always did, and the cat always answers me, and she sits beside me in the evening and she's great company. And I think everybody should have a pet if they're on their own".



"My cat's name is Pippa and she's a great comfort to me."

Joan

"My neighbour, he's a wonderful man, if he sees me coming home and he happens to be in his garden, if I'm walking away from my car with bags in my hand, a voice behind me will say "I think I'd better do that". Sometimes I go to the car and you meet somebody walking by and they talk about the weather. I don't care what it is - about the weather, whatever it is, -it's nice."

Well, lace making is a wonderful hobby for someone who is disabled, particularly if you've got one hand or both hands that don't work very well. It's a great thing to get lost in ... you think 'oh, I'll just sit down', and before you know it you're still doing it ... and you're always left with something nice when it's finished."



"Lace making is a wonderful hobby for someone who is disabled,"

The theme of 'starting a conversation' is part of the Jo Cox Commission's effort to 'turbo charge the public's awareness of loneliness.' During her time as an MP, Jo Cox was dedicated to combating loneliness in the UK. Following her tragic murder, the Commission has been taken forward in Jo's memory by Rachel Reeves MP from Labour and Seema Kennedy MP from the Conservatives. As Jo said, we can all do something to help lonely people in our community, so why not start a conversation with a lonely older person today?

Connect to your community - in your own home!

What are the benefits of taking part in Homeshare?

- Get up to 10 hours of help around the home & companionship each week
- Have the security of knowing someone else is there at night
- Do something wonderful to help and connect with your community
- Homeshare matches you with a like-minded younger member of your community, like a nurse, teacher or post-graduate student
- The younger person stays in your spare room and pays you to make sure you are not out of pocket (e.g. electricity bills and council tax)
- Homeshare Oxford, run by Age UK Oxfordshire, supports you every step of the way and ongoing during a Homeshare.

Homeshares are already happening in Oxford, here's what one of our Homesharers had to say:

"It is wonderful that my Householder had the trust and confidence to welcome me into her home – I feel very lucky to have found Homeshare. I would not be able to live in the city without it."

Contact Homeshare Oxford

Website: www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire/our-services/homeshareoxford/

Telephone: 01865 410 670 (answer phone only)

Email: Homeshare@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk

Homesupport Options FAQ

What does the service provide?

Our Home Support Options Service provides tailored support to help people stay independent in their own home. This can include: light cleaning chores, household management tasks, meal preparation, shopping, collecting prescriptions, laundry and companionship.

What does it cost?

The charge for this service is £17.00 per hour.

What is the process and how long will this take to set up?

Following your referral you will receive an assessment visit which will cover in more depth what we can offer in terms of support and how we can tailor this to suit your individual needs. We will also complete a risk assessment of the home to ensure that it is safe for one of our home support workers to attend. Our coordinators aim to make contact in a few days after receiving the referral and aim to have the assessment complete in a week or two and support will usually start the following week.

What makes us different from other Home support companies?

Consistency, same home support worker, no short visits minimum of an hour.

How do I apply?

Our enquiry line is open Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm on **0333 577 1044**. You can also email our team on amygreenway@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk



*Could you use some help
around the home?*

Advertisements



Do you, or a loved one, need care as a result of disability, accident or illness?

Some people are entitled to NHS funding for the full cost of care and accommodation. This is called 'NHS continuing healthcare'. There is an assessment process to check if you qualify.

Beacon gives free expert advice and information on NHS continuing healthcare:

Call us on: 0300 548 0300

Or visit us at: www.beaconchc.co.uk/oxon

We can help you to:

- get to grips with the criteria
- navigate the assessment process
- appeal a decision.

Beacon is a UK social enterprise endorsed by Age UK, Parkinson's UK and NHS England.

**Would you like to see your
advert here?**

Contact **media@
ageukoxfordshire.org.uk**
for full information pack

Special offer: Place an advert in
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332 Abingdon Road, Oxford, OX1 4TQ Tel: 01865 242 500

Information request form

If you would like to receive information about activities, services and opportunities in your area, or if you would like to join our Newsletter mailing list, fill out this request form and return it to: Age UK Oxfordshire, 9 Napier Court, Barton Lane, Abingdon, OX14 3YT. If you received this copy through the post you will already be on our mailing list, so it is not necessary to complete the below form.

Alternatively you can email admin@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or visit www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire/newsletter to sign up to our Newsletter e-mailing list.

Title..... First name..... Surname.....

Address.....

Postcode.....Daytime phone number.....

I would like to receive:

☐ The Age UK Oxfordshire Newsletter ☐ Information about activities and groups in my area

☐ Information about (please specify).....

We will use the information you have supplied to communicate with you in line with Data Protection guidelines. Age UK Oxfordshire (registered charity no 1091529). If you would prefer not to hear anything further from us please let us know by calling us on 0345 450 1276 or email database@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk. We will not pass on your information to any other third party organisations without your consent or we are legally obliged to do so.

Donate today!

Age UK Oxfordshire relies on donations to ensure that we continue to support people in Oxfordshire to **love later life**. 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 at www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire/donate

Every donation makes a difference. Thank you.

Title:	Initials:	Surname:
Address:		Postcode:
I wish to make a donation of <input type="text"/> £		
<input type="checkbox"/> I enclose a cheque/postal order made payable to Age UK Oxfordshire.		
Signature		Date <input type="text"/>

giftaid it **Gift Aid declaration**
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.

Lifebook

The easy, safe and free way to record the practical details of your life.



What is the Age UK Lifebook?

We know that with a million and one things to keep track of, it can be easy to mislay important documents and information. That's why we developed the Lifebook – so you can find exactly what you need without searching through file after file. You can record all sorts of useful details, from who insures your car, to where you put the TV licence.

Why should I complete it?

The Lifebook will not only help you to be more organised but could also be invaluable to a family member or a friend if they need to locate important information about you in an emergency.

To obtain your free Lifebook
please call Natasha or Lisa at
Age UK Oxfordshire on
01235 849 425