

share your warmth

What your generous donations have made possible

In February and March of this year, Sir Muir Gray, Age UK Oxfordshire and Active Oxfordshire launched the “Share your Warmth” campaign. The campaign was the brainchild of Sir Muir Gray, who asked older people who receive a winter fuel payment that they do not need to keep them warm in winter to donate it to help promote physical activity and prevent loneliness for older people in Oxfordshire.

Together, everyone who donated managed to raise the astonishing amount of £7,600, which has been of enormous value in helping Age UK Oxfordshire to respond to the Coronavirus pandemic.

The virus has particularly affected older people, who are no longer able to attend their usual exercise class or participate in physical activity. Age UK Oxfordshire has been able to use the money raised to adapt to the current situation and provide exercise opportunities in a new way for older people. The donations have been vital and have enabled us to:

- Make (film, edit and publish online) 5 new specialist home exercise films designed for local older people to improve their strength and balance whilst in isolation. It is incredibly important to remain physically active, to prevent deconditioning of muscles, help mental wellbeing and also to give a focus to the day. These films are available on our website and Youtube channel and have had 14,283 views to date (21/05/20)
- Print and distribute 1,000 tailored home exercise dvd packs to older Oxfordshire residents who don't have access to the internet
- Make 3,290 friendly calls to older people focused on alleviating loneliness and promoting exercise and wellbeing.

Sir Muir Gray said: ‘Since the campaign started, a new pandemic has emerged which makes the need for activity, particularly in groups even more important – it is the pandemic of inactivity and isolation resulting from lockdown. Now we do need to keep distant to reduce the risk of that very nasty virus which is the cause of the first pandemic but only now has the problem caused by social distancing been recognised, by the prime Minister no less.’

Penny Thewlis, CEO of Age UK Oxfordshire said: ‘We are hugely grateful to Sir Muir Gray for initiating this campaign and to everyone who donated so generously. When the campaign was launched, of course we had no idea that we would be facing a pandemic. In the event, the donations allowed us to move very swiftly to create a series of tailored home exercise opportunities and we have been delighted by the uptake.’

Paul Brivio, CEO of Active Oxfordshire said: 'When we started this work together we had never heard of COVID 19 but now older people in the County are facing even more challenges and threats to the quality of their lives. We need to keep older people at the front and centre of our thinking and planning now. We need to provide both support and provide independence; new ideas and innovations as well as good old fashioned engagement and interaction through joint ventures like this. Look at what Captain (now Sir) Tom did and what he achieved (using physical activity and exercise) so let's follow that wonderful example'.

We wanted to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you who was so generous to donate their winter fuel allowance and for supporting this campaign.

Notes to Editors About Age UK Oxfordshire

Age UK Oxfordshire is an independent local charity dedicated to giving older people in Oxfordshire comfort, support and opportunities and enabling them to love later life. We provide free local information, advice and support. We work with our national partner, Age UK, and our local Age UK partners in England. You can find further information on all our services and volunteering opportunities by telephoning 0345 450 1276 or by visiting our website:

www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire. Age UK Oxfordshire is a charitable company limited by guarantee (registered charity number 1091529 and company number 4328143)

About Active Oxfordshire

We help people in the most need across Oxfordshire by working with partners to increase physical activity.

Ours aims are to:

- Improve the mental wellbeing of people in Oxfordshire through Physical Activity
- Increase Physical Activity levels of the most inactive children and young people
- Increase Physical Activity levels of those with long-term health conditions or disability
- Decrease levels of inactivity among older people
- Focus on places with the highest levels of inactivity

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