

# *Eng***AGE**

**Spring Is Just Around  
The Corner!**

**Time To Talk**

With phone friends

**Better Housing Better Health**

Advice and support on home energy

**Heart Road Show**

Talk heart health with Generation Games

**And much much more...**

## Contents

- 3 Including everyone & A new plan
- 4-5 Talk Heart Health
- 6 Dementia Oxfordshire
- 7 Silver Pride
- 8 Late Spring
- 9 Live Well & Tech Buddies
- 10 Home Share
- 11 Time To Talk
- 12 Age Of Creativity Festival
- 13 World Book Day
- 14 Strictly Banbury
- 16-17 Creative Corner
- 18-19 Better House Better Health & Scams
- 20 What are your plans for the Jubilee?

## Get in touch

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[www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire)

### Follow us on social media



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### Message from Penny Thewlis, CEO

The first signs of spring are very definitely appearing now – snowdrops are giving way to daffodils, the days are lengthening and there is a little warmth in the air (on good days!) The Omicron variant of the virus was not as savage as we feared before Christmas, and we're delighted that we are able start our group activities again. I met with our Older People's Health and Social Care Panel in-person last week - for the first time in two years – and although we had kept in contact through Zoom, it was wonderful to be together again face to face.

We shall continue to work in a way that keeps people safe, relaxing the precautions we have all become accustomed to only gradually as people feel more comfortable. Staff will continue to test regularly and isolate as before until the virus recedes further. We know that what feels safe for one person may feel risky to someone else, so we are treading our way through this stage quite carefully so as not to exclude anyone.

Our other focus at the moment is on the steep rise in energy costs, which is a real cause of concern. We are participating in the Age UK Cost of Cold Campaign – and thank you to all of you who signed the petition to the Prime Minister (95,000 people did so). The focus of which is now on the Chancellor, whose package of support did not go far enough to help those most in need.

Meanwhile, did you know that a staggering £2bn in older people's entitlements goes unclaimed every year? We are urging everyone who is worrying about their bills to contact us on 0345 450 1276, or the national Age UK Advice line on 0800 678 1602 to find out about their entitlements and other support available. My warmest wishes to you all,



# Including everyone.

Inequalities that have existed for a long time in our society were accentuated by the pandemic – some individuals and communities were affected more than others. At Age UK Oxfordshire, we have committed to doing what we can to address these inequalities by developing and improving what we do and how we do it.

To help us to focus our efforts most effectively, we asked the National Centre for Diversity to conduct an audit of the charity's equality, diversity and inclusion work and policies.

Thank you to those of you who took time to complete our survey. Over 200 staff, volunteers, service users and partners participated and, alongside a review of our policies, procedures and websites undertaken by the assessor, you have helped give us a very clear picture on what our priorities and focus need to be.

Early February we met with the assessor to review their findings and develop an action plan. We were pleased that we were recognised as being “effective at advancing equality, diversity and inclusion”, with lots of ideas as to how we can improve.

In the next issue of EngAGE, we will share with you some of the action that we have taken, along with what we are doing to include people from less represented groups.

If you have any comments or suggestions about how we can make our work more inclusive, please contact us on [admin@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk](mailto:admin@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk)

NATIONAL  
CENTRE FOR  
DI>ERSITY



## A new plan for Age UK Oxfordshire.

**We are pulling together a new plan for the organisation over the next three years, in a world that has been changed by the pandemic.**

We have developed these five goals:

1. Connect people to the support they need to manage their daily lives, maintain their independence, and secure their rights. This means making available high quality and readily accessible information, advice, advocacy and support to anyone who needs it.
2. Understand how inequalities develop as we get older, and work to prevent their impact on health and wellbeing. This means reaching everyone, particularly those who are most disadvantaged, enabling them to participate in social and physical activities.
3. Enable people to enhance meaning, joy and celebration in their life. This means ensuring there is a diverse and creative offer of age-friendly activities.

4. Drive an age friendly and inclusive Oxfordshire that values all older people. This means working with partners across Oxfordshire to raise awareness of the things that improve the quality of later life, challenging ageism and influencing genuine change

5. Be an innovative, sustainable and inclusive organisation, which uses resources effectively and is a great place to work. This means focusing some of our attention on strengthening the organisation - so that we can deliver on the other four goals

We would welcome your comments on how you want to see your local Age UK develop over the next three years. Are these goals the right goals? What are we missing? How can we improve what we are doing?

If you would like to comment, you can do so by writing to Penny Thewlis, 9 Napier Court, Barton Lane, Abingdon OX14 3YT, by emailing [admin@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk](mailto:admin@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk) or by phoning **0345 450 1276**.

# Talk

# Heart ♥

# Health

**Eat, move, beat... repeat**



Generation Games, together with partners such as the Here for Health team from the JR, British Heart Foundation, Stroke Association and Move Together are going to be touring Oxfordshire in April, May and June and look forward to meeting many of you at the events!

We will be offering blood pressure checks, functional fitness MOTs, handing out specialist home exercise DVD packs and chatting to people about simple changes that you could make to improve your heart and overall health. You could also win a £100 John Lewis Gift voucher!

Call us to reserve your space!

## Tour Dates

<b>Oxford - Bonn Square</b>	Monday	4th April	10.30 am – 2.30 pm
<b>Barton Community Centre</b>	Tuesday	5th April	1 - 5 pm
<b>Blackbird Leys Community Centre</b>	Tuesday	26th April	10 am - 2 pm
<b>Banbury market place</b>	Thursday	28th April	9 am - 1 pm
<b>Rose Hill Community Centre</b>	Tuesday	3rd May	2 - 4 pm
<b>Cowley Templar Square shopping centre</b>	Tuesday	10th May	10 - 2 pm
<b>Blackbird Leys Community Centre area</b>	Tuesday	17th May	10 am - 2 pm
<b>Banbury Mosque</b>	Friday	13th May	11 am – 3 pm
<b>Abingdon, Rye Meadow</b>	Thursday	2nd June	11 - 3 pm
<b>Banbury, The Hill Community Centre</b>	Friday	6th May	10 am – 1 pm

We are so pleased that we now have quite a few face-to-face classes up and running in addition to our existing online offer.

We are still proceeding with caution and managing numbers of participants in each face-to-face class carefully so that no class is over-full and there is enough place for everyone to move, socially distance and feel safe.

If you'd like to join one of our classes, please get in touch so we can let you know whether you can just go along or whether we may need to add you to the waiting list.

### Face-to-Face classes - £5 per session, pay as you go

<b>Cumnor United Reformed Church</b>	Chair- based exercise	Mon	09:45
<b>Cumnor United Reformed Church</b>	Chair- based exercise	Mon	11:15
<b>Cotteslowe Community Centre</b>	Strength & Balance	Mon	11:00
<b>Bicester Methodist Church</b>	Strength & Balance	Mon	12:15
<b>Bicester Methodist Church</b>	Strength & Balance	Mon	13:30
<b>Bampton Village Hall</b>	Strength & Balance	Mon	13:30
<b>Henley YMCA</b>	Chair- based exercise	Tue	11:15
<b>Deddington Community Centre</b>	Strength & Balance	Tue	12:00
<b>Tackley Village Hall</b>	Strength & Balance	Tue	14:00
<b>Dean Court Community Centre</b>	Strength & Balance	Wed	10:00
<b>Milton under Wychwood Village Hall</b>	Strength & Balance	Wed	11:00
<b>Didcot Civic Hall</b>	Big Bold and Balance - Parkinson's class	Wed	10:30

### Online Zoom classes - £ 4 per session, booked online

<b><i>Move More Monday</i></b>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>10:00</i>	<i>FREE</i>
<b>Strength &amp; Balance</b>	Mon	10:00	
<b>Strength &amp; Balance</b>	Tue	10:00	
<b>MS Movement &amp; Strength</b>	Tue	11:30	
<b>Strength &amp; Balance</b>	Wed	09:45	
<b>Chair-based exercise</b>	Thu	09:45	
<b>Strength &amp; Balance</b>	Thu	11:00	
<b>Strength &amp; Balance</b>	Thu	13:00	
<b>Strength &amp; Balance</b>	Fri	10:30	
<b>Strength &amp; Balance</b>	Fri	13:30	

## Contact Us!

For further details on our Heart Road Show or exercise classes please call **01235 849 403**, email [gg@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk](mailto:gg@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk) or visit [www.generationgames.org.uk](http://www.generationgames.org.uk).

# Dementia Oxfordshire Working in the Community

As we move forward from the pandemic, Dementia Oxfordshire is taking a blended approach to running groups, offering a mix of online and in person sessions. We will continue to provide our online groups and start to get back out into the community to see our clients and carers face-to-face.

We run carer support groups, memory groups and carer education sessions. These were completely online during the pandemic.

They offered a chance for people living with dementia and their carers to connect with people on a similar journey and get advice and support from Dementia Advisers. Now, many of our clients are seeking to reconnect with others away from a screen. We also want to be able to provide support for those who have felt isolated in the past two years because they were not online.

We work with partners and volunteers to run groups, providing a mix of activities and social opportunities. Bicester Memory Café, briefly re-opened last year before Omicron forced us to close again and reopened again recently. The latest meeting was a success with clients, carers and Dementia Oxfordshire staff enjoying getting back together, playing games and eating cake!

We would particularly like to thank our supporters who recently donated games following a shout-out on Facebook. The group members were thrilled with them.

To find out more about online or in-person groups you can visit our website, [www.dementiaoxfordshire.org.uk/dementia-oxfordshire-directory](http://www.dementiaoxfordshire.org.uk/dementia-oxfordshire-directory), email [info@dementiaoxfordshire.org.uk](mailto:info@dementiaoxfordshire.org.uk) or call our support line on 01865 410 210.



Clients and carers enjoying Bicester Memory Café.

Presented by  SOUND RESOURCE  
withering through tragedy and time

## Moving Music CONCERTS

**04 MONDAY APRIL 2022**

**11:30am - 12:30pm**  
refreshments: 11:00am - 11:30am

**2:00pm - 3:00pm**  
refreshments: 1:30pm - 2:00pm

**SILK HALL, RADLEY COLLEGE,**  
Kennington Road, Radley, OX14 2HR  
(Oxford Bus Company, city35 stops outside the gate)

**£5 ADMISSION CHARGE**  
(carers admitted for free)  
Refreshments included

**ALL ARE WELCOME,**  
particularly people living with dementia along with their family, friends and carers

**DEREK PARAVICINI** (piano)  
and  
**HANNAH DAVEY** (soprano)

**PLEASE RESERVE YOUR PLACES AND PARKING (ROUND PAVILION CAR PARK) IN ADVANCE AND PAY AT THE DOOR**  
01865 251305 [movingmusicconcerts@gmail.com](mailto:movingmusicconcerts@gmail.com) [www.soundresource.org.uk](http://www.soundresource.org.uk)

This concert is generously supported by Patsy Wood Trust and funds raised by pupils at RGS High Wycombe





## Silver Pride

**Where:** Cornerstone Arts Centre Cafe, Didcot, OX11 7NE  
**When:** 11am-12pm second and fourth Friday of each month

**Silver Pride coffee groups, for older people in our LGBTQ+ community. Join us for a friendly, social morning for coffee, cake and a chat and to share your experiences.**

For more details please contact Kate on 07827235403 or Gaynor on 07785425601

# Late Spring

## Bereavement Support

We have many opportunities to “Walk and Talk” with people who understand. The short and gentle walks offer the company of others and time to talk.

Our in person groups are now re-starting, please contact us to book a place. We are starting to meet up in local cafes and pubs to “count the memories not the calories” and enjoy a meal together, or cake!

Our In-Touch number is available as part of our support service linking you directly to an experienced member of our Late Spring team. **01235 426600**

If you would like to book a place in a group, lunch or cream tea or would like to join in with a walk please contact Petra **01235 849434**



### ADVERTISEMENT

## SUPPORT TO THRIVE AT HOME

At BelleVie we go beyond home care.

Using our expertise and extensive network we source trusted products and services to help you live happily and comfortably at home. Examples of how we can help include:

- Hand and foot care
- Nutrition advice
- Doorstop food deliveries
- 1-2-1 Yoga sessions
- And much more!

We're here to support you in all aspects of your life. Get in touch to discuss your needs:



01235 355 570  
belleviecare.co.uk



# Live Well Oxfordshire

**Activities, Clubs and groups in your area are returning after many months of closure.**

As Spring approaches, why not visit the Live Well Directory to discover what's happening around you. Live Well is a free on-line directory and you can tailor your searches to fit around your post-code. Would you like some tips and support to use the directory? Please contact one of the Network Live Well Champions.

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/livewell](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/livewell) – Live Well Oxfordshire, information to connect you to your community.

Telephone **0345 450 1276** and your champion will contact you



Community  
Information  
Network

Looking after someone



Things to do



Money matters



Staying independent



Finding a care home



Community support



Keeping fit and well



Help with life events



5 ways to wellbeing



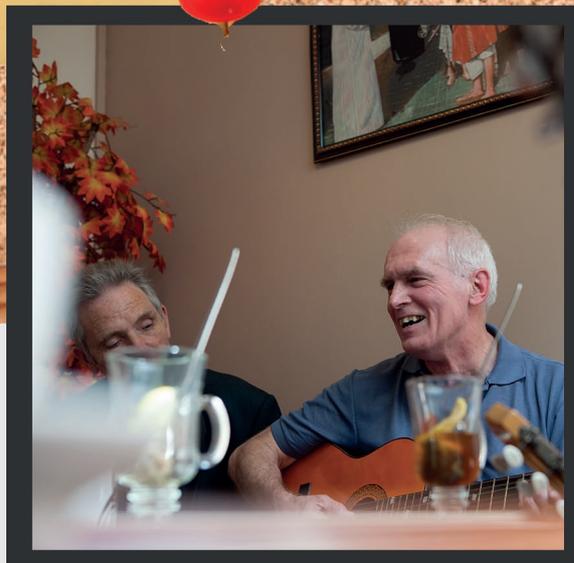
What's On

March 2022

Events Today < >

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27	28	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	1	2

[View full event listings...](#)



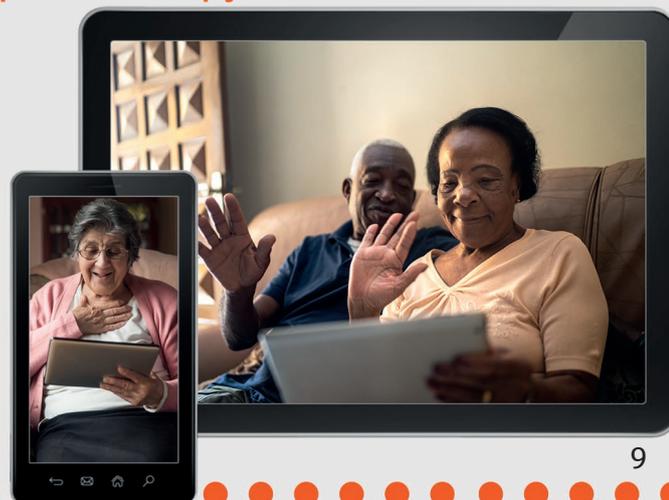
# TECH

# Buddies

Getting digitally connected could be a phone call away. Our Tech Buddy service is free for older people in Oxfordshire. A member of our digital team and volunteers can support and develop your skills.

- Stay connected with family and friends over Skype or Zoom
- Do your shopping on-line
- Set up an email account
- Join a virtual group or activity
- Learn how to use your IT gadget
- We will listen to your issue and if we can't help you we will know someone who can

Call our Tech Buddy team!  
0345 450 1276



# A match made in **Homeshare**

## ‘Perfect catch, perfect match!’

Each and every Homeshare Oxfordshire match is very different from the next. People’s reasons and motivations for wanting to Homeshare are varied.

For many older people, it is their concerns about becoming isolated or lonely that lead them to Homeshare. Companionship is central to their Homeshare arrangement. For others, still socially connected and very much valuing their own space, it is the reassurance of having someone else around that is the key to them welcoming someone new into their home.

**Valerie**, 84, friendly, sociable and extremely considerate - very much values her independence, her own space and her time alone. At the same time she recognises that the presence of someone else in the house, particularly at night, is most reassuring, not just to herself but to her brother Bill, who lives a couple of hours drive away.

**Tomi**, 24, a Film Studies Masters student from Slovenia, has been welcomed into Valerie’s home and described by her as **‘the perfect catch!’** Valerie says, **“Tomi is such a lovely person to have around. I really enjoy our conversations. I actually see Homeshare as a way of keeping in touch with today’s fast-moving modern world too.”**



Reflecting on his Homeshare experience, Tomi describes Homeshare as being **“a way to learn as well as teach, to help and be helped; in short, an enriching reciprocity”**. **“To be honest”**, he says, **“it’s like a dream come true. Living in a lovely home with a lovely person and within my limited budget. Being of help to someone is also a really important part of it for me”**.

Bill, Valerie’s brother, continues to visit on a regular basis, but with a Homeshare arrangement in place he knows Tomi is there and is more than happy to help with the small things that inevitably crop up. **“I don’t need to worry if I can’t get hold of Valerie on the phone. A quick call to Tomi puts my mind at rest”**, Bill says. **“Homeshare, to me, is reassurance”**

*“To be honest , it’s like a dream come true. Living in a lovely home with a lovely person and within my limited budget. Being of help to someone is also a really important part of it for me”*

# Time

# To

# Talk

As part of the national 'Time to Talk' day, we spoke to several Phone Friends volunteers from Age UK Oxfordshire's confidential telephone befriending service. Time to Talk day highlights the importance of being open to the idea of talking about mental health to help ourselves and others.

One phone friend thought views about mental health have changed a lot over the years: "Older people can find it hard talking about mental health. When we were younger we did not talk about it, people 70 or over can have a mindset of saying 'you just get on with it'".

"It can be hard as you get older, you can't do some of the things you used to do but you are still the same person in your head. Sometimes, you can feel invisible, the things on TV and in magazines are for younger people. Also, mental health in the elderly can be quite different from younger people because of loneliness and vulnerability. I dread losing my independence. But older people can be strong minded, and able to deal with things because of their wealth of experience."

They thought that having someone to speak to on the phone was very important: "speaking to someone every week anonymously can be very helpful, as people can vocalise what they are experiencing. Often, they have no one else to speak to about it. Sometimes, people tell me things they have not told anyone else. You don't always want to tell friends and family negative things, instead you can get it off your chest talking to someone anonymously."

Another volunteer emphasised how unique the phone friend role is: "you are their phone friend, just for them, as you don't have any contact with their friends or family or carers. The Phone Friends service is anonymous but not impersonal. I was a Phone Friend for a woman, but when she passed away her husband wanted to continue. He has been able to share his grief, sadness and happy memories with me about her."

"It's important to have fun together. Sometimes people feel there is nothing to talk about, but after asking the right questions about when they were courting or jobs they have had, their memories can be fascinating. Perhaps they had not thought about them in long time, but they remember how engaged and interested they were. They finish the phone call a lot lighter and more enthusiastic!"

She continued: "It's important talking around mental health but not having it as a checklist to go through, or labelling or stigmatising a person. All sort of things may have happened to people, but as you become a reliable Phone Friend then they are more likely to share, as they feel comfortable, confident and trust in you. Things can then come full circle and they ask about me, it's a two-way thing."

## Find out about Phone Friends

If you would like to know more about our Phone Friends service, make a referral or find out more about how you can join our team of volunteers, please contact the Phone Friends team on **01295 234 850** or email [phonefriends@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk](mailto:phonefriends@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk)

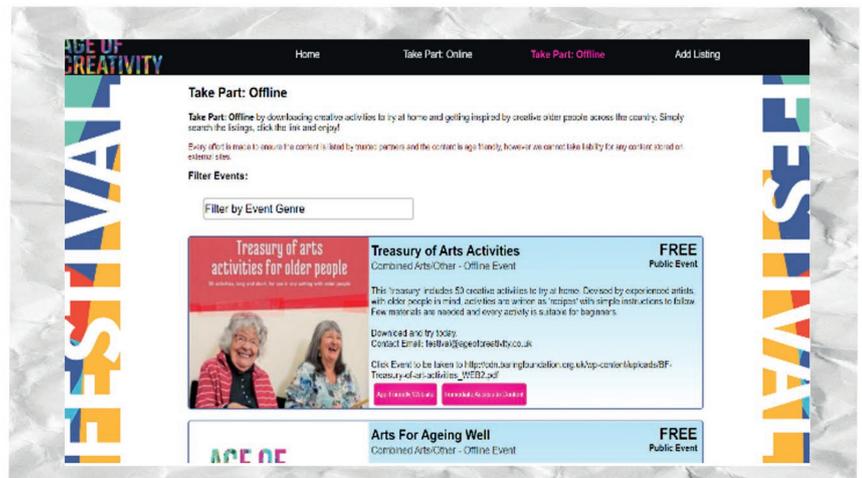
# AGE OF CREATIVITY FESTIVAL 2022

## Celebrating Creativity in Later life

Age UK Oxfordshire's Creative Team are busy planning our annual festival and we want you to take part. Whether you are aged over 50 and want to take part in a creative activity, or you have a passion for arts and culture and want to include an age friendly creative opportunity for others to take part in then get involved!

The Age of Creativity Festival runs from the 1-31st May every year and celebrates older people as creative participants, audiences, volunteers and artists. We recognise that not everyone is ready to be back in theatres and galleries, so our festival programme aims to include opportunities that are available online, through the post, on the phone or in your local community. For those who are keen to socialise in person and meet new friends, we are also working hard to generate lots of local opportunities.

[www.festival.ageofcreativity.co.uk](http://www.festival.ageofcreativity.co.uk)



### Our Website!

**A CALL TO ACTION**

- If you want to take part in something creative then check out our website and see how many opportunities are already there to try.
- If you want to add your creative opportunities to the festival programme then simply upload them onto the website.
- If you are a carer or family member wanting to access creative activities for someone else then you can also find a wealth of opportunities on our website.

### Contact Us

We appreciate that not everyone can get onto the website, so if you don't have access then just get in touch via **[festival@ageofcreativity.co.uk](mailto:festival@ageofcreativity.co.uk)** or call: **0345 450 1276**  
Many of the creative opportunities available are accessible without the need for a computer or we can put you in touch with our Age UK Oxfordshire activities that run locally.

Proud to be part of

**AGE OF CREATIVITY FESTIVAL 2022**





# World Book Day is 25

On March 3rd 2022 World Book Day will celebrate 25 years of changing lives through a love of books and shared reading because Reading for Pleasure is known to be the single most important indicator of a child's future success but did you know it is also hugely important as we age?

World Book Day encourages children, families, and schools to develop a love of books but Age UK research shows that the positive impact of Reading for Pleasure does not decline with age. In fact, the data shows that it can have a huge benefit on wellbeing- as well as being relaxing, uplifting, comforting, interesting...

It is for this reason that Age UK Oxfordshire run a local project called TeaBooks for people aged 60+ to share a love of books and make new friends. We run supported reading groups all over the county and we are always looking for new members and volunteers to help run the groups.

Oxfordshire library kindly supports TeaBooks by lending books in different formats, so there is no need to buy a book. We have 15 groups running all over Oxfordshire and groups meet once a month with a nominal charge of £1 per meeting. Groups meet in a variety of places, from libraries and residential homes to sheltered accommodation and even a local pub!

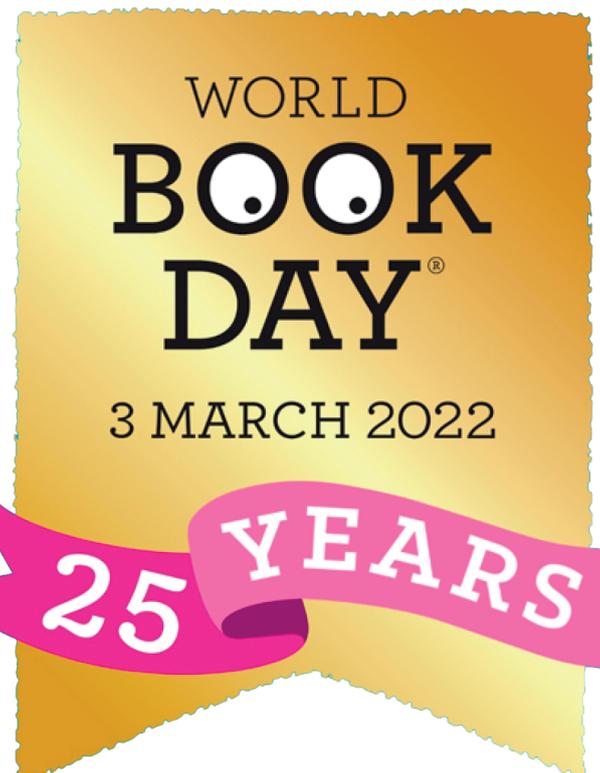
In the words of our TeaBook members:

**"It has given me the opportunity to access books. The group has widened my horizons"**

**"I love the meetings and the way that the group has developed into a friendly and supportive set of friends."**

If you are interested in joining one of our groups or if you would like to become one of our amazing TeaBooks volunteers, we would love to hear from you. Our volunteers really enjoy the experience too:

**"It's not just discussing the books that's so important. It's also the chance to meet like-minded people from the same neighbourhood for an hour of friendly, stimulating chat. Often it ranges far beyond what we have all been reading. What's more, unlike most book groups there's none of the expense or bother of acquiring books."**



Our TeaBooks project is delivered by Kate Castleden, part of Age UK Oxfordshire's Creative Team.

For more information visit: <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire/our-services/teabooks/>  
Contact: [katecastleden@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk](mailto:katecastleden@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk)  
or Call: **0345 450 1276**



# STRICTLY BANBURY

## Let's Meet Victoria!

**Victoria is a Community Link Worker and Social Prescriber at Age UK Oxfordshire.**

**She has taken on the challenge of 'Strictly Banbury' to raise money for 'Carers Oxfordshire'.**

### How long have you been in your role?

I started working for Age UK Oxfordshire on 10th January 2022. I was previously a teacher in Primary Education and Special Needs Education.

### What's the most rewarding thing about your job?

The most rewarding part of my job is helping people, just knowing you may have made their day or life a little better in some way even if it is just with a listening ear.

### What is one of the biggest challenges of your role?

The biggest challenge has been learning something new.

### How would your friends describe you?

Kind, outgoing, full of energy, always busy and a bit mad.

### If you could do another job for just one day, what would it be?

I would love to be a 100m sprinter at the Olympics or try a day as a HM Customs and Excise Officer working in the airport.

**Want to see Victoria hit the dancefloor? Strictly Banbury will take place on 8th and 9th April 2022!**

### How do you spend your free time?

I sing in two bands so that takes up lots of time. I enjoy cycling, swimming, walking, exercising, knitting and learning French.

### Tell us something that might surprise us about you:

I can sign and teach beginners British Sign Language Classes to adults.

### What's been your favourite part of participating in Strictly Banbury?

I have enjoyed trying something new and learning new skills. As a huge Strictly Come Dancing fan it is great to have a go at some of the dances myself.

### What's the biggest challenge you faced whilst participating in Strictly Banbury?

Remembering which way to turn!

### What dance has been your favourite to learn?

So far I am enjoying learning both the Cha Cha Cha and American Smooth but I am looking forward to learning the jive.

Visit: <https://www.themillartscentre.co.uk/shows/strictly-banbury-2022/>  
To book your tickets for Strictly Banbury 2022.

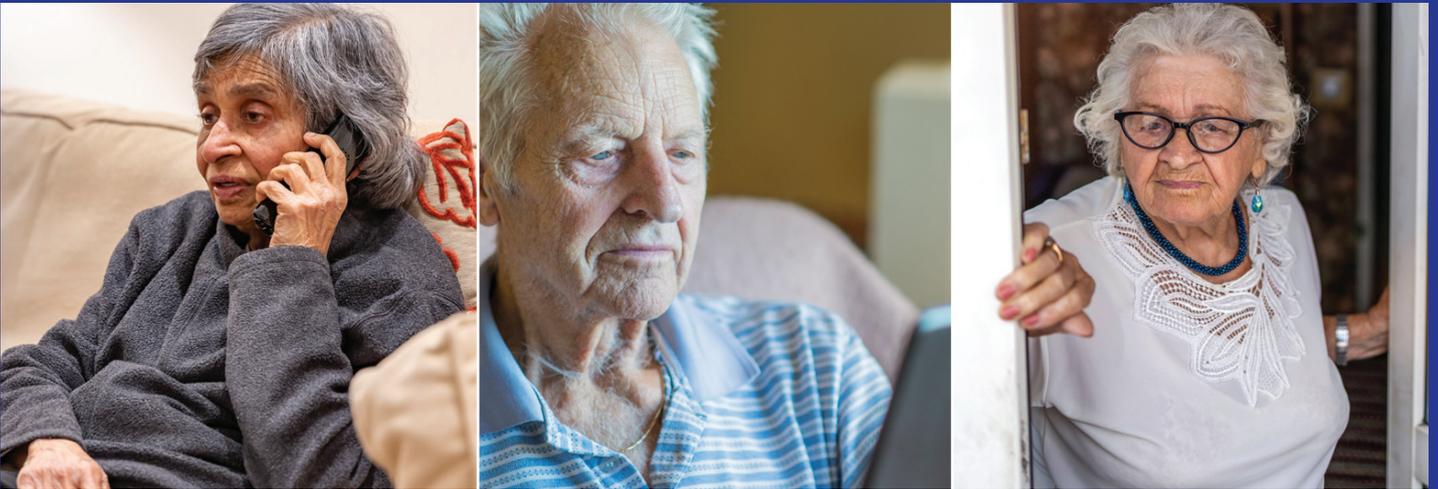


Scan this QR code to follow Victoria's 'Strictly Banbury' journey and donate to raise money for Carers Oxfordshire.

You can also visit: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/victoria-jackson81>

# Scams awareness:

find out how to protect yourself



Any of us can fall victim to a scam. Scams are increasingly common and many people are caught out. They can be very distressing, and the impact is often emotional as well as financial.

**If you've been the victim of a scam, remember that you're not alone.**

The good news is that there are ways to help avoid being taken in by a scam if you know what to look for.

Call us on 0345 450 1276 to hear more about how we can help you to protect yourself.

Age UK Oxfordshire is a registered charity 1091529.  
Registered office: 9 Napier Court, Barton Lane, Abingdon,  
Oxon, OX14 3YT



# Weaving



# And

# Gaming

'Using my spinning wheel outside my campervan.'



1

## Age Friendly Oxfordshire profiles:

Briar Noonan was trained as a dressmaker at Manchester High School of Art, she has set up her life and house to maximise creativity and culture.

## What does creativity and culture mean to you?

'Since childhood I have always been very creative. If I couldn't create, I would feel very frustrated. Culture takes me away from the everyday humdrum, it's a way of being more me, rather than a grandma, mother, or just someone that does the housework - which I'm not very keen on!

I like to play computer role playing games, it's the perfect escapism. You become the avatar when you interact with the adventure. I also game online once a week with a friend of mine in the United States. It's a way for us to keep in touch.'

## How does taking part in creativity and culture impact your life?

'It's a big part of my life. I belong to a number of groups, including the Cotswold Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers, and meet a craft group where we work on our projects individually.

During the lockdown I joined a ukulele group online, I do that three times a week in person now. I live alone as my husband died three years ago. During lockdown I did not go out for 14 weeks. If I did not have all these things to do, I would have gone out of my mind!'

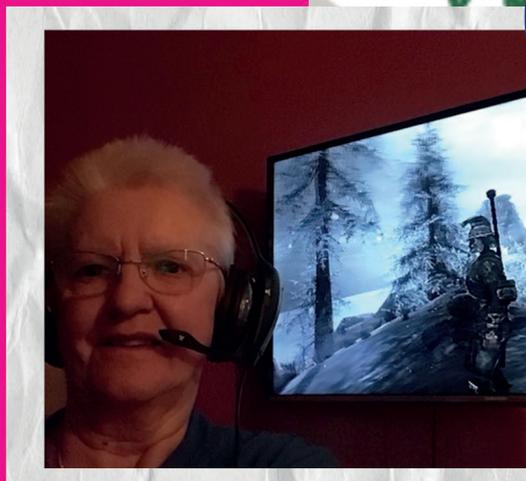
## What is your most creative achievement?

'Years ago, when I had children, my husband was a stage director, and I made a lot of costumes for plays. I dressed Julie Walters and Richard Griffiths. More recently, I taught a dressmaking course at the Mill Arts Centre, in Banbury. I wanted to teach in a way that left students with something they could wear at the end of the course.'

## What would you recommend to someone that had not done anything creative or cultural for a while?

The most important things are: don't limit yourself by saying you are too old to learn something new or you are not good enough. Creativity should be fun, you should enjoy it. It's not a competition! Join a group. There is nothing like peer encouragement and getting help!'

A selfie playing on the Xbox'



6

# Creative Corner



2



5



4



3

- 1 'This is the first patchwork jacket that was inspired by my visit to a Native American reservation. I saw in the shop there that the tribal dress was actually patchwork and some of the beautiful designs inspired me. I have since made another five, some of which have computer embroidered decoration.'
- 2 'Before Covid I used to make soft toys for Katherine House shop to help raise funds. I was so grateful for the help and care that my husband received there before he passed on Christmas Day 2018. For a few years I made professional Father Christmas suits. They had to be made in high quality velvet and the luxury fur fabric was backed with Velcro on the lining so that the trim could be removed and cleaned.'
- 3 'An appliqué of The Green Man on the back of a jacket that I made. Appliqué' is a technique used to make pictures out of small pieces of fabric which are attached to a background fabric using a zigzag stitch on a sewing machine.'
- 4 'These all started out as basic V neck T shirts in plain colours, but with the addition of some fabric fat quarters they became a bit more stylish.'
- 5 'Here is my loom during the process of being warped up in my back garden.'
- 6 'The 'Over the Rainbow' mask is made from ModRoc (plaster bandage as used for casts) I wrapped it around my face as a mould then painted it gold to represent the sun. To illustrate the song I attached blue birds on wobbly plastic strips flying over the rainbow. It was inspired by the rainbow symbol used for the NHS during lockdown.'

Sign up for our newsletter to keep up to date with creativity in Oxfordshire

We are very lucky to have Briar as part of our Age UK Oxfordshire Age Friendly Creative Network (OAFCN), some of her creations have been featured in the OAFCN e-news. To join please contact: [helenfountain@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk](mailto:helenfountain@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk)

# BETTER HOUSING BETTER HEALTH+



FREE HOME ENERGY VISITS FROM OUR  
TRAINED ENERGY ADVISOR FOR  
RESIDENTS IN OXFORDSHIRE

**CALL: 0800 107 0044**  
**EMAIL: [BHBH@NEF.ORG.UK](mailto:BHBH@NEF.ORG.UK)**

The winter months can be a particularly stressful time if you live in a cold home. The pandemic and the ongoing worldwide energy crisis have made it even harder for many people to adequately heat their homes.

Better Housing Better Health (BHBH) is a not-for-profit service run by the National Energy Foundation, working to help vulnerable residents and those living in fuel poverty to access advice and support to ensure they are warm and well in their home. The service has also recently expanded to offer comprehensive home energy visits to help identify solutions to improve a residents home, particularly related to energy efficiency and warmth, but can also signpost to other useful local services.

If you live in Oxfordshire and are experiencing any of the following issues, please call our free helpline on 0800 107 0044 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm). Our friendly advisers can help with a range of issues and where appropriate our trained energy advisor can visit you in your home.



We may be able to offer you similar support like we did for Mr. O:

**“When I was discharged from hospital after major surgery I had been away from home for just over a month. Winter was coming and as my boiler was due to celebrate its 50th birthday and had already been condemned during its last service (it had a gas leak) and I was really quite worried about having no heat during the coming months. I already had no hot water (another boiler defect) so the situation was a tad bleak. The Better Housing Better-Health service was my saviour in just about every aspect of securing a grant in order to install a new combi boiler and arranging everything in between. I now have a new and reliable source of both heat and hot water and can now recover from my surgery free from the worries I previously had thanks to the wonderful staff at the NEF.”**

- **Struggling to understand your energy bills, pay for fuel or read your meter**
- **Broken heating systems**
- **Lack of insulation**
- **Signs of damp/condensation/mould**
- **Understanding and programming heating controls**
- **Any other factor that you think might be affecting your ability to stay warm and well**

## Information About Energy Prices Rising

Energy regulator Ofgem has announced that the energy price cap on gas and electricity will rise by 54% from 1 April 2022. On typical use, it's set to increase from £1,277/year for a household paying by direct debit to £1,971 – adding £693/year to the average bill. If you are on a pre-payment meter the cap has been increased to £2,017/year for a typical household.

For clarity, this doesn't mean that is what everyone will pay. It's the unit rates that are capped, so if you use more, you'll pay more. It only applies to providers' standard and default tariffs, so if you're on a fixed-term energy deal, the cap doesn't apply. If you've not switched in the last year or so, it's likely you're on a default or standard variable tariff and subject to the price cap.

If you're offered a fix that's no more than 44% more expensive than your current price-capped tariff, it's worth considering – especially if you value price certainty.

Once the new price cap comes into force on 1st April we'll be in a better position to see if fixed tariffs are higher than the new price cap, in line or cheaper. Fixing right now will give you certainty on unit price for the length of your deal. Not fixing will give you flexibility if better deals become available.

If you're unsure how much more expensive a certain fixed tariff is, feel free to give BHBH a call and we can help you check. But please make sure you have a copy of a recent bill or know how much your energy supplier is charging you before you call, as we won't be able to offer support unless we know this information.

Whatever you decide, make sure you are giving regular meter readings to your supplier otherwise your bill will be estimated and you could end up being overcharged. You can ask your supplier to fit a smart meter which will automatically send them readings. If you are having difficulty reading your meter, please let us know and we may be able to help.



## Fake Banking App Guidance

Thames Valley Police is issuing advice to residents following a number of incidents involving a fake bank transfer app.

Over the past few months, there have been a number of reports about the app that creates an image, which shows the transfer has been made. Offenders have been targeting vulnerable individuals, including the elderly.

Shopping online can save time and effort and gives you a wide choice of goods from around the world. Unfortunately, while most buyers and sellers are genuine, fraudsters use online shopping scams because they can hide their identity and target many victims at the same time.

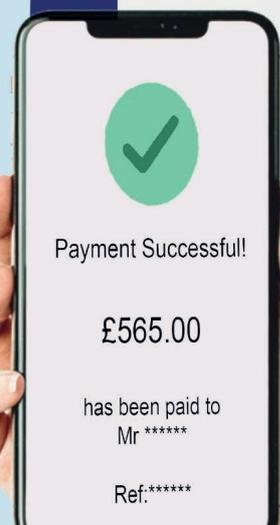
Selling sites such as Facebook Marketplace, eBay and Gumtree have reported incidents to us of offenders using this app to pretend to pay for goods they have agreed to purchase.

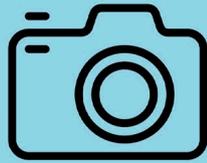
If you would like to find out more information about how to keep yourself safe when shopping online, please visit the Thames Valley Police website- <https://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/fa/fraud/personal-fraud/online-shopping/>



### SOME ADVICE THAT WE SUGGEST WHEN SELLING GOODS:

- **Make sure you receive payment confirmation before sending goods.**
- **Check your account online or ask your bank to make sure cleared funds have been received.**
- **Take pictures of items before posting them so you have proof of condition in case of a fraudulent claim.**





# What are your plans for the Jubilee?

This year, the Queen is celebrating her 70th year of serving on the throne. Throughout the years there have been many street parties and gatherings to celebrate her reign.

At Age UK Oxfordshire, we would love to see how you are celebrating this year – or how you celebrated in previous years! Send us some pictures, nostalgic stories and some patriotic cheer to feature in our next edition of EngAge.

Send your images and stories to **Age UK Oxfordshire, 9 Napier Court, Barton Lane, Abingdon, OX14 3YT.**



## ADVERTISEMENT

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## Leaving a legacy of kindness

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

To find out more please call **0345 450 1276** or email **admin@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk**. Alternatively visit our website **www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire** and search 'Leave a legacy'.



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## Sign up to EngAGE Magazine for FREE!

If you would like to receive information about activities, services and opportunities in your area, or if you would like to join our EngAGE mailing list, fill out this request form and return it to: **Age UK Oxfordshire, 9 Napier Court, Barton Lane, Abingdon, OX14 3YT** or call **0345 450 1276**. If you received this copy through the post you will already be on our mailing list. Alternatively, you can email **admin@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk** or visit **www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire/newsletter** to sign up to our magazine e-mailing list.

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## Donate

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 via **www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire/donate**. Every donation makes a difference. Thank you.

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Email address:	Telephone number:	
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Signature	Date	DD / MM / YY

### *giftaid* 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.

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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# The Innocent Big Knit...

## Keep Knitting!

To help raise money for our helpline!



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