

Easter creativity and kindness



We were excited to launch a new **Easter Art Competition** this year, and we were delighted by the **wonderful response**. Children across Solihull and beyond sent in their **colourful, creative Easter-themed designs**, bringing plenty of smiles to the team. **Thank you** to every child who entered, and to the parents and carers who supported them by **joining our mailing list**. The winning artwork (yet to be decided at the time of going to print) will be displayed at The Core until the end of April, and the winners and runners up will receive **Smyths Toys vouchers** and **Easter chocolate**.

We would also like to say a heartfelt **thank you** to **National Gas Metering**, who kindly donated **100 Easter eggs** for our social club members. Their generosity meant that many of those attending our clubs received a special treat over the Easter period, adding a little extra joy to the celebrations.



Thanks also to the businesses and community groups who took part in our **Easter chocolate bouquet raffles**, raising vital funds and giving the chance to win some delicious chocolate.

Together, your creativity and kindness helped make Easter **egg-stra special** for both the **young and the young at heart**.

Spreading festive joy

We spread joy to older and vulnerable residents at Christmas with the help of generous local people, schools, community groups and businesses.



Over **500 gifts** were donated and wrapped, **meals** and **gifts** delivered to those spending Christmas alone, social club members enjoyed **festive meals, activities**, and **treats**, and clients were invited to special **community events**. **Festive activities** raised **vital funds**, local **organisations** made **generous donations**, and we thanked **volunteers** at a festive drop-in. **Huge thanks** to everyone involved. See full details at ageuk.org.uk/solihull/christmas

50 years of AD Band

AD Concert Band's Spring Celebration Concert was a

wonderful afternoon of music, marking the band's **50th anniversary** and raising over **£800** to support older people across Solihull.



We're so grateful to the band for their continued support, and to everyone who joined us on the day. A special thank you goes to our **fantastic volunteers** who helped serve refreshments, transport equipment and clear away - your time and kindness made the event run smoothly and made it even more welcoming for the guests.

Leave a legacy of kindness

Leaving a gift in your will to **Age UK Solihull** helps older people in our borough stay independent, connected and supported for years to come. If you'd like to leave a gift to us as your **local Age UK**, please remember the **"Solihull"** part of our name as gifts left simply to "Age UK" won't reach us. Find out more: ageuk.org.uk/solihull/leave-a-gift



Cost of living support

We were pleased to help **pensioner households** in Solihull struggling with living costs over the winter, distributing **£59,000** through the **Household Support Fund**. This has now been replaced with the **Crisis Resilience Fund** which can help pensioners struggling with **energy and water bills** and **other essentials**. Call **0121 709 7597** or visit ageuk.org.uk/solihull/grants for criteria.



Dates for your diary



Social Café

First Tue of every month at The Tea Chest Café, Lynden Road. All Solihull residents welcome.

Big Knit Drop-in Group

Every Thu 1-3pm at The Core. All knitters/crocheters welcome.

Volunteers Week

1-7 June
World Elder Abuse Awareness Day Mon 15 Jun Raise funds with a purple-themed activity or do one kind thing.

Skydives

various dates

London to Amsterdam Bike Ride

9-11 Jul
Ridefest Birmingham Tue 14 Jul A static bike ride where you and your team cycle as far as you can in 20 minute shifts.

Inflatable Obstacle Course

Sat 25 Jul A fun activity for all ages and abilities.

Run Solihull

Sun 9 Aug Half marathon, 5k or junior race.

London to Paris Bike Ride

23-26 Sep

Older People's Day

Thu 1 Oct
Run Alton Towers Sat/Sun 14/15 Nov Half marathon, 5k, 10k or kids race.

Tough Mudder

various dates

Bungee jump

various dates

For more details about any of these events and activities, contact us on:

events@ageuksolihull.org.uk | **0121 704 7842** (leave a message) | ageuk.org.uk/solihull/fundraising

Acknowledgements

We are grateful for recent support we've received from organisations and members of the community, including:

(The) 29 May 1961 Charitable Trust	Blossomfield Grange Care Home	(The) Goodenough Charitable Trust	National Lottery	Specsavers Hearing Centre
AD Concert Band	Blue Orchid	IMI plc	Notcutts	St Bernard's Care Home
Adlington Farm	Bright Dawn Home Care	Issy Harris	Old Edwardians Rugby	St George & St Teresa Church
Age UK	Caremark Solihull	Home Instead Solihull	Paramo Lounge	St James Church
Alderbrook Sixth Form	Cash 4 Coins	Howden Insurance	Paragon Banking	St Peter's Catholic School
Arden U3A	Chadwick Farm	Knowle & Dorridge Lions	Pop Voices	(The) Tea Chest
Asda Chelmsley Wood & Asda Shirley	CPW	Knowle Handbell Ringers	REALM and the John Laing Charitable Trust	Tesco
Avery Healthcare	Dunelm	Lord Barnby's Fondation	Red Lion pub	(The) Two Mugs
Barclays Solihull	Edwards Insurance	Lucent Financial Planning	Right At Home Solihull	Touchwood
Baron Davenport's Charity	Energy One	Macc Care	Saxon Court Care Home	Trinity Place
Bentley Heath Wailers	Everybody Sings	Marston Green Tavern	Shirley Lions	UB Healthcare
Big Knitters	Fermata	Meridian Private Client LLP	Shirley U3A	W A Cadbury Trust
Birmingham & Solihull Rugby Club	Fountains Care Home	Metro Bank	Sing! Bentley Heath Solihull Council	Wadsworth Solicitors
Birmingham International Station	Four Ashes Golf Club	National Gas Metering	Solihull Indoor Bowls	Waitrose
(The) Black Boy pub	Gilson Ladies		Solihull U3A	(The) Wellbeing Community Choir
	Got 2 Sing Solihull		Solihull URC	

Age UK Solihull Services

Older People's Information & Advice 0121 704 7840
Linking People Together 0121 704 7854
Clubs and Activities 0121 704 7811
Winter Warmth Helpline 0121 704 8080
Digital Champion Project 0121 704 7851
Community Advice Hubs 0121 709 7590
Benefits Service 0121 709 7592
Direct Payments and PA Register 0121 709 7591

Stay in touch

Age UK Solihull The Core, Solihull Central Library, Homer Road, Solihull, B91 3RG
Tel 0121 704 7844 (Office/Admin)
Email info@ageuksolihull.org.uk
volunteering@ageuksolihull.org.uk
fundraising@ageuksolihull.org.uk
www.ageuksolihull.org.uk

Website

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Hearing Centre Solihull

Age UK Solihull Newsletter Issue 27 · Spring 2026



newsletter

Welcome to Age UK Solihull's Spring 2026 newsletter.

Read on to find out about our latest activities, events and opportunities.

Thank you to **Specsavers Solihull Hearing Centre** for sponsoring this issue.

A remarkable life

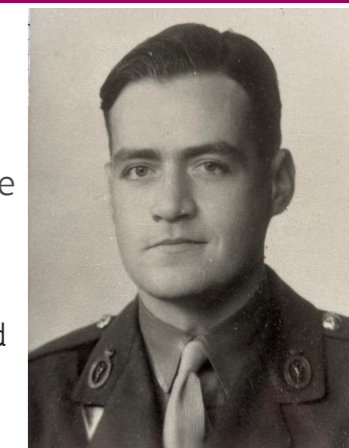
We were saddened that our **oldest client, Geoffrey Doyle**, passed away earlier this year at the incredible age of **105**. Mr Doyle, who we believe may have been the **oldest man in Solihull**, lived a remarkable life.

Born in 1920, during the Spanish flu pandemic, Geoffrey served in the Royal Corps of Signals during the Second World War and took part in the Allied invasion of Italy. He later worked as a mechanical engineer in South Africa and Spain before settling in Solihull in 1963.

Age UK Solihull started supporting Geoffrey after his wife, Sheila, died in 2017. He became well known to our team and valued the friendship and support we provided. Our Linking People Together Coordinator, **Tracey Grove**, said: *"It was a privilege to support Mr Doyle. He was a true gentleman...always grateful and always ready with a story from his remarkable life. He'll be deeply missed."*

Geoffrey loved simple pleasures such as Bournville dark chocolate, thick bread, and Morecambe Bay shrimps, and he celebrated many birthdays at Rowington Cricket Club. His family described him as resilient, independent, and full of character, and he often said, *"I've been very lucky in my life."*

We are grateful to have supported Geoffrey in his later years, and touched that he and his family chose to honour his memory with donations to Age UK Solihull. He will be remembered with great affection.



Our partnership with Specsavers Hearing Centre

We're thrilled to have been chosen as Specsavers Hearing Centre's Charity of the Year for 2026.

Nilam Yaqoob, Audiology Director, said, *"We work closely with older people every day, so supporting a charity that helps them stay connected, informed and supported feels especially meaningful. Age UK Solihull plays a vital role in the community, and this partnership allows us to give something back."*



The team marked the start of their year-long commitment to **raise funds and awareness** with a **bake sale**, and have also supported our

chocolate bouquet raffle, collected **donations** from customers, promoted our **services**, and **sponsored this Spring Newsletter**.

Our Fundraising Manager, **Rebecca Jacob**, added, *"This partnership will make a real difference to the older people in our community who rely on us for companionship, advice, and practical help. Every pound raised stays in the borough to support older residents. We're excited to work with the team this year."*

Local charity | Local services | Local people

Registered Charity Number: 1055887



New Solihull PA Register

We've launched a new **Solihull Personal Assistant (PA) Register** which makes it easier for local people who receive **direct payments** from **Solihull Council** to find the **right support**, while helping to grow the borough's social care workforce. Funded by **Solihull Council** and managed by the **Age UK Solihull Direct Payments Team**, the Register connects residents with **skilled, caring PAs** who can offer **flexible, meaningful support** in the community. PAs help **adults and children** with disabilities, health conditions, or other support needs to live **full, independent lives**. Being a PA is **flexible and rewarding** work, and ideal for those balancing **school runs, studying**, exploring a **career change**, or looking to make a difference in **retirement**. **No formal qualifications** are required; the focus is on **values, communication**, and **compassion**. **Find out more** and **see current roles** at ageuk.org.uk/solihull/PA-register



Linking MORE People Together

Our **Linking People Together** project helps people **aged 65 years and over** feel **connected, confident** and **involved** in their



community. The service has recently been **refreshed** to support **more people** each year and to encourage **confidence, independence**, and **meaningful friendships**.

We offer **flexible face-to-face** or **telephone support, short-term help** from trained volunteers, introductions to **local groups**, opportunities to **meet others** with shared interests, and guidance to build **digital skills**.

The project aims to help older people feel **less lonely and isolated, more independent, more confident**, and **more engaged** in their community.

Enquiries are welcome from **individuals, families, professionals** or **community organisations**. We're also looking for **volunteers** for the project; please get in touch if you're interested. Contact us for more details on linkingpeople@ageuksolihull.org.uk or **0121 704 7846** or complete our **enquiry form** at ageuk.org.uk/solihull/lpt

More news....

We've been thrilled to receive recent grants from **National Lottery Awards for All, Baron Davenport's Charity, Eveson, Dunelm, The 29 May 1961 Charitable Trust, Club REALM/The John Laing Charitable Trust** (*cheque presentation pictured*), **The Goodenough Charitable Trust, W A Cadbury, Lord Barnby's Foundation** and **Pamela Barlow Trust**. We could not provide our services without grant funding as well as donations from the community. Thanks to all involved!



Visit www.easyfundraising.org.uk to raise money for us each time you shop online.

Helping older people stay connected and included

Our **Digital Champions Project** makes a **powerful difference** for older people in Solihull, helping them **build digital skills** and **feel less isolated**.

Many older residents feel **anxious about technology** or haven't had the **chance to learn**. For those who **live alone** or have **mobility issues**, digital exclusion can **deepen isolation**. Through **one-to-one support, group sessions**, and our **tablet loan scheme**, older people are **discovering new independence**.

Geoffrey, 91, first accessed the project while caring for his wife and needed **home-based support**. His tutor helped him adjust his **PC settings**, use **email** safely, and navigate **websites**. After his wife sadly passed away, Geoffrey returned to continue learning at our **group sessions**, where he could also **socialise**. He even bought himself an **iPad** for Christmas and now uses it to **communicate** and **access information**. Geoffrey says he feels **more engaged, less isolated**, and **confident** using technology to stay in touch, share holiday photos and plan trips. He told us, *"It has been an excellent service...I have been greeted with courtesy and kindness. Mo has been patient and taught me many things like searching the internet, using Google Maps, and accessing services."*

Valerie, 62, **lives alone** and had **limited contact** with her family. Mobility issues made it difficult to see her relatives, leaving her feeling **isolated**. After being referred for **tuition** and a **tablet loan**, she learned the basics - **searching online, watching videos, using apps** - and later received help setting up **WhatsApp** on her **new smartphone**. Her **confidence** grew each week, and she now uses technology to **stay connected, explore interests**, and **access services** independently. Valerie now **video calls** her sister regularly, which has been **life changing** for both of them.

Getting ahead with our hats

We're thrilled that the **Big Knit** will be returning soon. The last campaign raised almost **£4,000**, and we'd love to match or beat that this time! While the next deadlines are to be confirmed, we're encouraging supporters to **get knitting now** - we've already received nearly **2,500 hats** from keen knitters! We receive **30p per hat** knitted for us, which go on **innocent smoothie bottles** in shops. Knit at home or join our **Big Knit Drop-In Group** every **Thursday 1-3pm** in the Activities Room at The Core. It's **free to attend** and there's no need to book - just come along with your needles, and we'll provide wool, patterns and hot drinks. Visit ageuk.org.uk/solihull/big-knit for full details and patterns.



More news....

Thank you to **Knowle & Dorridge Lions** for raising funds for us with their **Easter Egg Raffle**, as well as hoping to make a donation for the **Knowle Fun Run**. Big thanks to our volunteers who supported these events!

Last year, our **All-age Benefits team** helped Solihull residents successfully claim over **£3.5m** in benefits they were entitled to. This included over **£700,000** in **Attendance Allowance** for older people.

Mention **Age UK Solihull** when taking out a new car, home, van or business insurance policy with **Howden** (Solihull branch), and we'll receive a **£50 donation**.

Want to fundraise for us? Email fundraising@ageuksolihull.org.uk to discuss.

Valerie said, *"My tutor is a good teacher who is patient and always spends time to talk to me through my queries. I feel comfortable and enjoy learning."*

Our **Digital Champions** have helped **hundreds** of older people feel **safer**, more **confident**, and more **connected** online. It is a **valued serviced** in our community, and it's **crucial that it continues**.

But right now, that future is uncertain.

We urgently need your support

The project is facing **funding challenges**, and without new donations, this vital service may not be able to continue. If you believe, as we do, that no older person in Solihull should be excluded from the digital world, **please consider making a donation**.

Every contribution truly makes a difference, helping older people in Solihull stay connected, confident and included.

Text **DIGITAL** to **70560** to donate **£5** to our Digital Champions project.

Texts will cost the donation amount plus one standard network rate message, and you'll be opting into hearing more from us. If you would like to donate but don't wish to hear more from us, please text **DIGITALNOINFO** instead.

To find out more about Digital Champions, contact us on **0121 704 7851** or digital@ageuksolihull.org.uk or visit ageuk.org.uk/solihull/digital-champions

With thanks to our sponsor:

We can look after your ears as well as your eyes

- Free hearing checks
- Hearing devices from £500
- Wax removal, £55 for both ears



Specsavers Solihull
21 Drury Lane
Tel 0121 704 1125

Specsavers

Take on a challenge for local older people

If you're looking for a personal challenge, look no further than our sponsored challenge events. From Solihull to Paris, we have a challenge to suit everyone!



Whether you're a **runner**, a **thrill-seeker**, a **cyclist**, or simply someone who loves an **adventure**, our **challenge events** offer something for everyone. Every step helps us provide our services for older people right here in Solihull.

Congratulations to our first participant of an **international challenge** - **Paul Doyle** ran the **Paris Half Marathon** in March, raising **£250** to help us support local older people. Paul's fantastic achievement shows just how far our supporters will go to make a difference, and we'd love to see more people follow in his footsteps. Check out our other upcoming **overseas events!**

From **local runs** and **family-friendly activities** to **skydives, cycle rides** and **virtual challenges**, there are plenty of opportunities to get involved. See details of upcoming events in the **Dates for your diary** section of this newsletter, or visit ageuk.org.uk/solihull/challenges to see our full range of challenges.

More news....

Visit our **charity shop** at **89 Hobs Moat Road** to find a **bargain**, or **donate** good quality items you no longer need. *Remember, the Age UK shop in Shirley belongs to the national Age UK, not Age UK Solihull!*

Our **Postural Stability Instruction** project is sadly **closing** in May 2026. This much-valued service has provided falls prevention support to over **1,500** older people in Solihull. **Thanks** to the **instructors, volunteers** and **supporters** who helped to make this service so successful and **so much fun!** We hope to find funding for a similar service in the future.

Please **leave a gift** to Age UK Solihull in your **will** to help us to be here for **future generations**.