

## Joining the club brings joy for June



**June** (*left*) had been virtually housebound after a fall in 2019. Her children both live abroad and, while she has always had lots of contact with friends and family on the telephone, she had **very little face-to-face interaction**, especially after the pandemic hit in 2020.

June joined our **Wednesday Afternoon Club**, which takes place at **Moseley Cricket Club in Shirley**, just before Christmas. We spoke to her at the club and she told us how it had transformed her life: *“Before I joined the club I rarely got out of the house. My granddaughter sometimes takes me out, but she works full-time and she’s got her own family.”*

June has lived an **interesting life**, working as a **barmaid** and a **dancer**, and **volunteering** at Birmingham Orthopedic Hospital. She used to **travel** a lot to visit her son in America, and she loved **climbing mountains**, too! *“I used to visit my friends who lived on Snowdon. I went twice a year and climbed mountains all around Wales. It was beautiful.”*

Life has changed since June’s mountain climbing and dancing days, but she **remains positive**, telling us, *“I’ve had a hard life in some ways, but I’ve had a lot of good times too. We all have our worries, we*

*all have to go through pain. None of us know what’s round the corner. I’ve now had several falls. Shelley from Age UK Solihull took me to hospital after the last one, and she recently sorted out getting grab rails installed in my flat.”*

Shelley also suggested that June went along to our **Wednesday Afternoon Club**. June says, *“I absolutely love it here. I’m in a lot of pain with my hip but I still make the effort to come along. I always make sure my hospital appointments don’t fall on a Wednesday so I don’t miss the club! A few of us here really hit it off straight away. We just seemed to click.”*

June adds, *“When you’ve lived on your own for that long, you get used to your own company. But I love people and the club is an outlet for me. It’s lovely to get together with people around your own age. We have good fun, and that’s what life’s all about.”*

June has now joined the waiting list for our **Postural Stability Instruction** service to reduce the risk of future falls, and she is also registered with our **Linking Veterans Together** project, as her husband was in the forces. The project will help her connect with her local community even further.

We are so pleased to be able to help June **get out and about** and **enjoy socialising** again!

## Hellos and Goodbyes

There have been many changes to our Age UK Solihull team lately.

In 2021, we said goodbye to our **Volunteer Manager, Catherine Gulati** and hello to her replacement, **Ashlee Young**.

We also welcomed three colleagues into new roles. **Margaret Corcoran** joined us as **Project Support Officer, Sarah Mulcahy Lidster** as **Customer Service Officer/Administrator** and **Zakia Ditta** as **Money Advice Team Leader**.

Our **Linking People Together** team has changed, with **Tracey Grove**, who previously volunteered for us as a Befriender, joining our employee team as **LPT Coordinator**. Her predecessor, **Amanda Wilkinson**, has now stepped into the new role of **Clubs and Activities Coordinator**.

Our **Retail Manager, Dawn Townsend** also left us

at the end of last year, and we now have a new **Retail Operations Supervisor, Matt Robinson**.

**Siobhan Deery** has started in a new position as **Home from Hospital Coordinator**, in addition to her existing role as **Home Support Service Team Leader**. **Teresa Eldridge** will be joining her in a job share as **Home from Hospital Coordinator** in April 2022. Also joining us in April is our new **Housing Related Support Officer, Fran Belford**.

Last but not least, our **Fundraising Manager, Lorraine Hart**, left us at the end of March 2022 to take early retirement. **Rebecca Jacob** will be starting in the new position of **Digital Marketing and Fundraising Manager**. We are currently recruiting for a new **Fundraising Officer**.

We are delighted to **welcome** our new colleagues, and wish those who have left us **all the best**.

## Acknowledgments

We are grateful for the support we have received from organisations including:

**Amazon**

**(The) Ardwick Trust**

**(The) Arnold Clark Community Fund**

**Asda Community Foundation**

**Baron Davenport Charity**

**Birmingham Business Park**

**Capitol Mobility**

**Countryside Properties (South Midlands)**

**(The) E Alec Coleman Charitable Fund Ltd**

**(The) Eric W Vincent Trust**

**Fountains Care Home**

**Home Instead Solihull**

**IMI**

**Jaguar Land Rover**

**LM-JV (part of HS2)**

**Marston Green Infant School**

**(The) Michael and Anna Wix Charitable Trust**

**Morgan Parkes Recruitment**

**National Grid**

**(The) Rest-Harrow Trust**

**Rotary Club of Knowle & Dorridge**

**Saxon Court**

**Sharmans Cross Junior School**

**The 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust**

**Tesco Shirley**

**Tudor Grange Primary Academy Yew Tree**

**We Are All Making a Difference Charitable Trust**

## Connecting older people with digital



Our new **Digital Champions Project** offers advice and support with using digital technology to older people who are isolated in their homes.

We allocate each client a **Digital Champion Volunteer** who can provide an hour's tuition every week for a three-month period, to support with using a tablet or computer.

We also have a **tablet loan scheme** for those who do not have their own IT equipment.

### Age UK Solihull Services

**Community Advice Hubs** 0121 709 7590

**Benefits Service** 0121 709 7592

**Home Support Service** 0121 704 7848

**Older People's Information and Advice** 0121 704 7840

**Befriending** 0121 704 7846

**Clubs and Activities** 0121 704 7811

**Postural Stability Exercise Service** 0121 704 7845

**Winter Warmth Helpline** 0121 704 8080

### 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

events@ageuksolihull.org.uk (Fundraising)

volunteering@ageuksolihull.org.uk

**Website** www.ageuksolihull.org.uk



AgeUKSolihull



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# newsletter

Care UK · New Vehicle · New Services · Hub Relocation · Volunteers

## Welcome, Cynthia!

We are delighted to introduce **“Cynthia”** – our new **Environmental Performance Vehicle** (*right*).



The electric multi-purpose vehicle has been named after one of our former Trustees, **Cynthia Leonard MBE** (*left*), who dedicated much of her life to helping people in the Solihull borough.

Cynthia was **formidable**, extremely **passionate** and **cared about local people**. She was awarded an **MBE** in 1999 for her services to the voluntary sector as she worked with many charities including Age UK Solihull, where she remained our **Vice-Chair** until she passed away in 2015.



Cynthia will be used to transport clients to **activities and events** that they would otherwise be unable to get to.

We wouldn't be able to use the electric vehicle without a means of charging it. The recent installation of a **charging point** was possible thanks to a generous donation from **Countryside Properties**, based on **Birmingham Business Park**. We are hugely grateful to Countryside for the donation.

## Hub's new home



The **Central Solihull Community Advice Hub** has moved...but not far! Working with Solihull Council and the people who use our services, the decision was made to move the Hub from the first floor to the **lower-ground floor of The Core** (Solihull Central Library).

The space is **self-contained** and provides **more confidentiality** for our clients and **additional facilities** such as a **dedicated self-help area** where residents can be supported to use a computer or telephone, and a **dedicated activities & group room**. The move also brings together many members of the Voluntary Sector who work together under the **Community Wellbeing Services** including **Age UK Solihull, the Solihull Lifestyle Service (Gateway CIC), CAVA** and **BID Services** for those with sensory loss.

The **Solihull Community Advice Hubs**, funded by **Solihull Council**, provide **Information, Advice and**

**Support to Solihull residents of all ages** and also provide support to **carers** of Solihull residents.

**Lucy Garratt**, our Director of Services, says, *“It’s really exciting to have this dedicated space with additional facilities which can be used to support Solihull residents and our local communities.”*

**Kate Bunting**, Strategic Lead for Culture at **Solihull Council** adds, *“The Council is pleased to be able to further support our local Voluntary Sector and the vital work they do each day in our Borough.”*

The **Central Solihull Hub** is open **Monday to Friday 10am-1pm** for **drop-ins** and **2-4pm** for **pre-booked appointments**. The new entrance is next to the ramp that runs parallel with the entrance to Touchwood Car Park on Homer Road.

The **Chelmsley Wood Hub**, in Chelmsley Wood Library, is open **Tuesdays** and **Thursdays** from **10am-1pm**. These opening times will be extended as the demand for face-to-face services increases.



## More than just driving



The **Postural Stability Exercise** service – a programme funded by **Birmingham and Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group** and co-ordinated by **Age UK**

**Solihull** – continues to be phenomenally successful, particularly due to the dedication of our **Volunteer Drivers**.



The exercise classes are accessible to **over 65s** who have **had a fall** in the last 12 months and are registered with a **Solihull GP**. The 20-week programme provides **strength and balance exercises** that can help to keep you **strong and steady** and **reduce the risk of a future fall**.

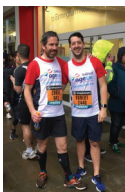


The PSI programme provides **transport** for our clients who are unable, or do not feel comfortable, to drive themselves to the classes.

By volunteering for our PSI classes, drivers not only provide much-needed **transportation** but also **companionship** for both the client and the volunteer. Come rain or shine, our volunteer drivers show up on doorsteps to provide a **ride and a helping hand**. Our drivers' dedication, courtesy and compassion toward our clients have created a service that is unsurpassed!

Our clients regularly tell us, *“We don't know what we would do without their help.”*

## Run for charity



Join team Age UK Solihull for the **Great Birmingham Run** on **Sunday 1 May 2022**. You can choose to complete either the **half marathon** or the **10k** depending on how much of a challenge you want.

**Four runners** have signed up to take part so far, including Shilpa and Patrick from **Sydney Mitchell Solicitors** (right). Join our team at:



**ageuk.org.uk/solihull/great-birmingham-run**

After the closure of Virgin Money Giving last year, we joined **GivePenny** – a fundraising platform that integrates with apps like Spotify, Strava and Fitbit. Perfect to keep your sponsors updated with **running milestones**, or creating a **playlist** that they can **add a song** to with their donation! **givepenny.com**

Raise money for us each time you shop with Amazon by starting at **www.smile.amazon.co.uk**

Our PSI Drivers also comment that they enjoy what they do:

*“It's great to be giving back something to the local community and getting to know the clients and see the improvement in all of them. Without exception, all the clients enjoy the class and talk of their improvement in mobility, as well as getting out and meeting others.”* Alan



*“I joined as a driver 7 years ago. I felt it was the thing that was missing – something positive, caring and helping others. A few years later my wife, Sandra, joined and now we both get great enjoyment from helping Age UK Solihull to improve the lives of others.”* Brian and Sandra



*“It's been an opportunity for me to use my spare time to help others in the community. The ladies I bring in have been lovely and we have a great chat each week. It's also nice to meet the other volunteers and share time each week having a coffee and getting to know each other.”* Veronica

If you want to truly **make a difference** for someone, becoming a **Volunteer Driver** is one way of doing that. We would love to have you as part of our team. Please contact our **Volunteer Manager, Ashlee Young**, on **07397 718 455** or email **volunteering@ageuksolihull.org.uk**.

If you or someone you know would like to complete the PSI programme, please contact your **GP or a health professional** for a referral or call us directly on **0121 704 7845**.

## Leap of a lifetime

If you're more of a dare devil, you could choose to complete a **tandem skydive** in aid of Age UK Solihull.



Jump on any **weekend of your choice** at **Hinton Airfield** in Brackley, Northamptonshire.

Find out more at: **ageuk.org.uk/solihull/parachute-jump**

## Dates for your diary



**Great Birmingham Run Sunday 1 May** Run a half marathon or 10km in aid of Age UK Solihull. **www.ageuk.org.uk/solihull/great-birmingham-run**

**World Elder Abuse Awareness Day Wednesday 15 June** Wear purple for the day and donate. **www.ageuk.org.uk/solihull/weaad**

**Big Knit Thursday 30 June** Deadline to submit your hats to us. **www.ageuk.org.uk/solihull/big-knit**

**Slip Into Slippers Friday 30 September** (for Older People's Day which falls on Saturday 1 October) Wear slippers for the day and donate. **www.ageuk.org.uk/solihull/slip-into-slippers**

**100 Club Draws Last Thursday of every month**

Join the club for the chance to win cash prizes each month. **www.ageuk.org.uk/solihull/100-club**  
To find out more about any of our Fundraising events and activities, call **0121 704 7842**, email **events@ageuksolihull.org.uk** or visit **www.ageuk.org.uk/solihull/fundraising**

## Christmas Round Up

Several local businesses and individuals helped make **Christmas 2021** wonderful for our clients.



After being cancelled in 2020 due to coronavirus, we were delighted to go ahead with our clients' **Christmas lunches**. Thank you to **We Are All Making A Difference Charitable Trust** for once again supporting us with a donation specifically for clients' Christmas cheer.



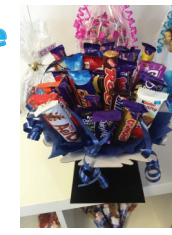
We were also awarded a **£1,000 donation** from **JLR** as part of their **'12 days of Christmas'** charity campaign.

**Birmingham Business Park, Morgan Parkes Recruitment** and **Home Instead Solihull**

were among several business that collected **Christmas gifts** for us to give to our older clients. Donations included **over 200 gifts** of chocolate and biscuits from **LM-JV (part of HS2)** and **Traffix**, as well as **25 luxury hampers** from **National Grid**.



Our popular **Chocolate Bouquet raffle** raised just over **£1,000**, and our **Christmas Raffle** raised **£1,130** – our best year yet! Thanks to all the prize donors and those who bought tickets.



## Spreading the love

Our four **social clubs** are now back open, and our members are thrilled to be back. They told us:



*“We had tried another club which we didn't like, so we were sceptical about this one at first, but we absolutely love it. It is well-organised and we are very impressed. Every Wednesday we look forward to coming out to the club.”* Michael and Patricia (left), Wednesday Afternoon Club members.

*“My Tuesdays are the highlight of my day/year. Lovely staff, volunteers, food, music. I've made lots of new friends and we have a laugh and a joke, and I don't want to go home.”* Denis, Club MG member.

*“I look forward to the company, meeting new friends and the entertainment. It breaks up the monotony of being alone when I go home.”* Tony, Club MG member.

The clubs celebrated **Valentine's Day** with special lunches (right), and delicious cakes donated by **Fountains Care Home**.

Our four clubs are based in **Olton, Marston Green, Shirley** and **Knowle**. The clubs all have **waiting lists** at present but we are working on increasing their capacity.

If you or someone you know would like to find out about joining one of our clubs, please contact **Amanda** on **0121 704 7811** or email **activities@ageuksolihull.org.uk**



## With thanks to our sponsor:



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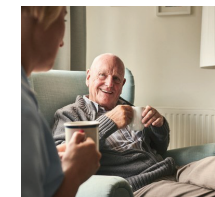
Our highly trained care teams are specialists in residential, dementia and respite care.

If you're considering care for yourself or a loved one, call **0121 314 7577**.



**Blossomfield Grange care home**  
Formerly known as **Sunrise of Solihull**  
**careuk.com/blossomfield-grange**

## Support older people



We are looking for **Home Support Workers** to support older people to live safely and independently in their homes for as long as they wish, through the provision of help with **domestic and practical tasks**.

Support Workers work flexibly in **older people's homes** and in **the community**, undertaking tasks including **cleaning, laundry and ironing, shopping, light gardening, driving and assisting to appointments and activities, helping with bills and collecting pensions**, helping with **meal preparation, walking a dog**, providing **companionship**, and **respite sits** for carers.

Support Workers **work with the older client** or complete tasks **under their guidance**, involving older people in **decision making**.

If you are interested in this flexible and rewarding opportunity, see more details at **www.ageuk.org.uk/solihull/jobs**

## Join our Board



We are also currently looking for new **Trustees** to join our Board, which is responsible for the strategic direction of the charity, ensuring we are **always doing the very best** we can to **make life better** for the **44,000 over 65s** in Solihull.

Our Trustees are **essential** to the continued success of Age UK Solihull, which is an **independent, local charity** that is **well-regarded** in the Solihull community.

To find out more about becoming a Trustee for Age UK Solihull, please contact our **Chief Executive Officer, Anne Hastings**, for an informal chat. Anne can be contacted on by calling **0121 711 3410** or dropping her an email at **anne.hastings@ageuksolihull.org.uk**

Become an Age Angel and make a regular donation. Visit **www.ageuk.org.uk/solihull/age-angels** to find out more.