



Welcome to our first edition of Age UK Surrey's Volunteer e-Newsletter, dedicated to you our wonderful volunteer team. You are so very important to our charity.

We are celebrating Volunteer Appreciation Week 1-7th June and want to thank each and every one of you for giving your time to our services to support so many lonely and isolated older people.

Juliet's Story

During the Covid-19 lockdown, I felt the need to do something to help the elderly whilst I could not visit my own mother in a care home in Sussex. Others are helping her; I need to do my bit.

As an afterthought, when I signed up with Age UK Surrey as a volunteer, I added and advised that I could speak Italian and reasonable French. Surprisingly, a couple of days later I was contacted by Jean at Age UK Surrey who was looking for someone to help out with an Italian couple in Guildford who needed shopping. She found someone able to do the shopping, and just needed someone to call the couple each week, get their list and WhatsApp it over to the shopper. Easy, and I get to practise my Italian!



Well, sometimes my Italian has failed me, and sometimes the Italian gentleman (who usually does the talking) has had me in stitches with his little jokes and apologises profusely when I don't immediately figure out that Betty Crook is Betty Crocker and he wants cake mixes! And sometimes my poor shopper needs some help; it is surprising how much room for interpretation there is in a shopping list. I have learnt that as much detail as possible is really useful for getting the exact item - a description of the packaging, if they don't know the brand, for example.

Please keep sending your stories to us, we would love to share them and show how we are all making a difference to older people.

I love my chats with the couple and I have had the pleasure to talk to the shoppers - they have the tough part: the queuing, the searching, the carrying. But the couple are extremely grateful and want me to convey that to the shoppers.

And we all look forward to the day that we can get together for a cup of tea and a slice of cake without social distancing and get to know a little more about each other.

There is still time to have a free enhanced DBS for all our volunteers in contact with clients (being offered during the Covid-19 crisis period). Please email: debra.davies@ageuksurrey.org.uk if you would like to take advantage of this opportunity.

Are You Returning To Work?

As lockdown restrictions ease, some of you may be starting to go back to work. We do have opportunities that can fit around work, for example our Check in and Chat telephone befriending service and marketing and community fundraising events – do contact us if you are interested.



If you return to work and do not wish to continue volunteering in any way with us, or you do not wish to be on standby, please let us know and give us a minimum of a week's notice for us to find a replacement if already matched to a client.

Appreciation Event

Every summer we like to show our sincere appreciation to our volunteers with a summer party. This gives us an opportunity to celebrate your efforts and thank you in person, recognising and awarding so many of you for going above and beyond in your volunteering support of our clients. Unfortunately this summer it will not be possible but as soon as it is safe to do so we would like to invite you a Volunteer Appreciation event. Details will be shared with you nearer the time.

Our Sincere Thanks

Thank you to our committed volunteers who supported clients right up to the day of lockdown and who have been keeping in touch with clients supported by our social activities:

Café Culture volunteers in Farnham and Cranleigh (Clive, Jenny and Colin, John and Victoria).

Tea and Chat volunteers in Caterham, Oxted and Lingfield (Jenny, Ann and Karil).

Farnham Hospital volunteers (Sally and her team) who engaged patients with activities for as long as it was safe to do so.

GO50 walk leaders – special thanks to Clive who has recently introduced 'twosome' walks.

The **Computer Drop in** team, led by Mike who have initiated a new service to support clients by telephone.

Our wonderful **Befriending** volunteers who have supported their clients during lockdown remotely and some of you not only have supported your own client but also other new one's needing help in your area.

Thanks to Jenny and Sally for your incredible support of the **Help at Home** service and to all the H@H volunteers who are giving their time to those in need.

Thank you also to **I&A, Men in Sheds** and **Haslemere Lunch Club** volunteers for all their efforts, year round.

Thank you also to the **Admin, Marketing and Accounts** volunteers who work in all our offices for as long as they were able to do so safely.

Thank you to all our new and existing volunteers who have stepped forward to help with our **Emergency Shopping, Prescription Collection** and **Check in and Chat** services.

You have joined us from all over the county and from all walks of life...from teachers, to cabin crew, business people, London commuters, speech therapists, counsellors, young Mum's, retiree's, students, lecturers, hairdressers, shift workers, police officers and forces personnel.

On behalf of our clients **THANK YOU!**

We will be launching our **aloneTOGETHER** campaign on social media shortly, to help raise funds to support our services. Please look out for the campaign and share with friends and family. FB: [@ageuksurrey](https://www.facebook.com/ageuksurrey) Twitter: [@AgeUKSurrey](https://twitter.com/AgeUKSurrey)