



Age UK Wigan Borough urges older people to contact expanded befriending service

Older people in Wigan wanting a friendly chat and companionship are being urged to get in contact with Age UK Wigan Borough as the charity is expanding its telephone befriending service in the area, offering a free weekly phone call from volunteers. Age UK Wigan Borough's services have expanded by linking with Age UK's national 'Call in Time' initiative, which means that telephone befriending is available to even more older people in the local area. The friendship and wellbeing programme provides older people with a friendly voice and a safe and comfortable environment to chat, and for many it's a real lifeline.



Poor health, illness and lack of access to transport can often mean older people feel cut off from their family, friends and local community, and research shows that over a third of older people say the television is their main form of company. The service's trained volunteers make weekly phone calls which last for around 30 minutes for older people who might otherwise be feeling lonely or isolated. These conversations range from chats about grandchildren to general day-to-day issues.

John McArdle, Chief Officer at Age UK Wigan Borough, said: "Reducing loneliness and isolation amongst older people in our community is central to our work, so we're delighted to be able to reach out to even more people living in Wigan. We know that a regular friendly phone call can really make a difference and help to lessen feelings of loneliness."

Age UK has volunteers ready and waiting to take calls, so if you would like to find out more, or if someone you know could benefit please contact the Starting Point Plus team at Age UK Wigan Borough on 01942 826079.

Age UK Wigan Borough awarded advocacy quality mark

Our Advocacy service has obtained the QPM (Quality Performance Mark). This award is a robust, quality assessment and assurance system for providers of independent Advocacy. Age UK Wigan Borough has demonstrated its commitment and ability to provide high quality independent advocacy by achieving this. All our staff and volunteers on the service have worked very hard to make certain we acquired this prestigious award. Thank you to each member of the team for your hard work, well done.

Scams - What to look for and how to avoid them.

No one likes to feel that they've wasted or, even worse, been conned out of their money. Unfortunately, there are plenty of situations in which you can act in good faith but find you've come off worse from a transaction. The word 'scam' can be used to describe anything from criminal fraud to sharp, but legal, selling practices designed to cheat someone. Fortunately, a lot of scams and bad purchases can be avoided if you know what to look for.

Our Outreach Officer, Harry Unsworth, recently gave a presentation to a group at Aspull Methodist Church on how to spot scams and ways to avoid them. Before the presentation 20% of those that attended felt they were sufficiently informed about scams and how to avoid them, whilst 17% felt that they had a poor understanding of scams and how to avoid them.

Some of the comments from the attendees at the Aspull Methodist Church included:

- 'Very useful talk to older people who might not be aware how many scams etc. are being used.'
- 'Talk very interesting and to the point. Very easy to follow.'
- 'Very helpful. Lots more scams going on people need to know about.'
- 'I found the talk very useful.'

Harry Unsworth is now looking for other groups who would like to hear the presentation on 'Scams-What to Look for and How to Avoid Them.' If you are involved with any group and would like Harry to come along, please contact him by phoning **01942 615884** or emailing harry.unsworth@ageukwiganborough.org.uk.

Our Ambition for Ageing launches in Pemberton

The Ambition for Ageing project will work with older people in Atherton, Pemberton and Leigh West to improve their local communities. We are undertaking asset mapping with older people in these wards to identify the good things about the areas that they live in. In addition, we have a budget for investments in the wards where local older people have identified the need for improvements. The project is funded by the Lottery and is part of a Greater Manchester initiative run by GMCVO.



International walk comes to Wigan

Darkness into Light is a unique, early morning experience which begins in darkness at 4.15 am as thousands of people across the world walk or run a 5km route while dawn is breaking. The early dawn represents hope and is symbolic of the work of Pieta House; a Dublin based centre working to prevent self harm and suicide, bringing people from darkness back into the light.



This year for the very first time Darkness into Light comes to Wigan starting at the Brian Boru Club, 55 Bryn St, Ashton in Makerfield on Saturday 7th May. As well as raising awareness of mental health and in particular self harm and suicide, this walk will raise vital funds for Pieta House and Irish Community Care, a small local charity delivering crucial services in the community (www.iccm.org.uk).

If you are unable to walk you can still get involved. You can sponsor a walker or runner, become a steward. **For further information please contact:**

Irish Community Care: maxine.williams@iccm.org.uk; Tel: 01942 717999.

Brian Boru Club: info@brianboruclub.co.uk; Tel: 01942 727536 / 01942 202410.

Many happy returns to the Queen on her 90th birthday

All good wishes to our Queen
One of the best that's ever been
After that very sad occasion
When on your young shoulders was thrust a nation
Well on that day who could tell
But today we say "hasn't she done well"
Our country you have loyally served
So these accolades are well deserved
You mam were always there
Like a breath of fresher air
In your lovely hats and coats
You always, always get our votes
Standing out in the largest crowd
We look at you and we feel proud
You are the Queen who we all love
The one all of us place above.



Lillian Goulding, April 2016

Age UK Wigan Borough, Bright Days, Happy Circle member.

Queen Elizabeth II celebrates 90th birthday

On 21st April 2016, Queen Elizabeth II celebrated her 90th birthday. To mark the occasion Age UK Wigan Borough invited a number of service users born in 1926 to attend one of three 'meet the mayor' events around Wigan borough. Those who attended had a lovely day and we were delighted to be able to invite them.

Free bus taster tickets and £1 fares

Free taster tickets and £1 fares are some of the incentives announced by First Manchester ahead of the guided busway opening on April 3. Customers travelling on the service will pay a maximum of £1 for any single journey between Leigh, Atherton, Tyldesley and Ellenbrook in Worsley.

The promotional fare will be available for at least six months. Regular fares will be £4.20 for FirstDay and £14 for FirstWeek and the range of mobile tickets, including the £10 weekly for 16 to 18-year-olds will continue to be available.

Buses are set to start at 4am and run beyond midnight, with facilities including free Wi-Fi, USB charging points, climate control and on-board 'next stop' audio and visual announcements.

There will be four buses an hour throughout the day from Leigh and Atherton, meaning passengers travelling from Astley Street in Tyldesley can catch eight buses an hour in either direction. The scheme includes three park and ride sites in Leigh, Tyldesley and on the East Lancs Road that will be free for all bus users and should ease demand on rail services during morning and evening peaks. To register for taster tickets visit firstgroup.com/vantage.

Speak up about care for older people

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator of health and adult social care services in England. It makes sure health and social care services - including GP surgeries, hospitals, and care homes - provide people with safe, effective, compassionate, high-quality care and encourages care services to improve. CQC produces reports to help people choose care. In most cases, these include ratings.

In a CQC poll of 2000 adults in England, only 8% of people aged 65 and over say they are likely to make a formal complaint about a health or social care service. In comparison, more than double (21%) of the general adult population say they are likely to make a formal complaint.

CQC's 'Worked up? Speak Up' campaign wants older people to speak up and share their experiences of care. By providing CQC with feedback, confidentially if you wish, you will help improve the overall quality of care in England. Your feedback could help CQC prevent poor care and abuse happening to others in the future.

For more information or to share your experiences with CQC, visit <http://www.cqc.org.uk/content/care-older-people> or call 03000 616161.



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