



Age UK Worcester & District

Summer 2020 Newsletter



Welcome

Dear reader,

Welcome to the very first edition of our newsletter which will be available in both a printed and electronic version.

In it you will find a description of our current services, latest news, good news stories and ways in which you might like to get involved in the charity.

There has never been a stranger time to start producing a newsletter but also a very important time. Age UK has been at the fore-front of supporting older people through a very difficult time, our services have been turned on their head but with the help of incredibly committed staff and volunteers we have managed to give people the practical and emotional support that they have needed. With a very uncertain few months ahead who knows what will come next, making planning very challenging.

There has also never been a more vital time for our work – providing local solutions for local communities and in the months and years ahead the charity sector will remain at the fore-front of this work.

I hope you enjoy reading this newsletter – please come back with any comments or suggestions. With best wishes from all the team.

Clare Thomas
CEO

In this Issue

4. **COVID-19 Update**
5. **Latest News**
6. **Latest News**
7. **Feature**
8. **Thank You**
9. **Positive Stories**
10. **Get Involved**
11. **Volunteering**
12. **Our Services**
13. **Our Services**

COVID-19 Update

Following the updated Government Guidance regarding Coronavirus and have taken the following decisions in order to comply with the guidance and to help keep members of our community safe.

- **(Update 21/09)** We have re-opened our office by appointment only. The office will remain closed for drop-in visitors until further notice. Please get in touch to book an appointment.
- **(Update 01/08)** We have re-introduced our handyman service, working across Worcester City & Malvern Hills. Extra precaution are being taken.
- **(Update 24/07)** It is now compulsory to wear a mask whilst shopping in one of our 5 charity shops. You will not be permitted to enter unless you either have a mask on or are part of the exception group.
- **(Update 06/07)** Our donation collection service will begin to resume this week. Thank you for understanding and being patient with us whilst we get back on track.
- **(Update 15/06)** All of our charity shops are now open. Thank you for understanding and being patient with us whilst we get back on track.
- **(Update 16/06)** We will be resuming our Foot Care clinics from 26th June 2020
- All of our group activities will be suspended until further notice. We will be contacting all those affected to ensure that we can establish means for maintaining ongoing, regular contact in order that we can continue to provide help and support
- We have largely suspended our face to face Befriending service and have replaced this service with a telephone support service wherever possible
- We have continued our homeworking and some gardening services on a case by case basis. It is essential to provide support for those tasks which effect the health and safety of our clients. We have taken extra precautions i.e. none of our workers will be in the same room as clients and in some cases will not be entering homes where work is non-essential. We have also focussed on shopping for clients and will continue to extend this service – if under our homeworking service this will be charged for, if outside this service we will ask for a donation
- With regards to our Information and Advice service, from 23rd March we suspending home visits and face-to-face office appointments. We also suspended face-to-face digital support sessions. We are focusing upon our telephone services to ensure that people continue to have access to information, advice and support throughout
- Our office is also closed for drop-in visitors but telephone lines will remain open for enquiries!

We are grateful for the various offers of support that we as a local charity have received and are heartened by the various initiatives and acts of kindness that are already taking place to support people across South Worcestershire. We would encourage everyone to keep in touch with and support older friends, family and neighbours to enable us, as a charity, to focus on how we can best support some of the most vulnerable members of our communities.



@ageukworcester

Registered Charity No: 1114859. Registered Company: 5688674.



Latest News

Robin Walker MP Visits Age UK Worcester



The staff at Worcester were delighted to welcome Robin Walker MP who came to visit us to thank us for all our work over the last few months. We described what it had been like to deliver services during these weeks, the challenges, and how our services will have to change in the future. Also the heart-warming stories – of volunteers going out of their way to help and of lasting friendships formed.

Practical Help During Lockdown

An appeal on the radio and in the press was successful in recruiting many willing volunteers. After a couple of weeks this was boosted further with support from the Council run Here2help scheme. We were organising over 100 shopping trips each week by car, bike and on foot, to private houses and care homes. Although this has reduced over the last couple of weeks, we have been supporting those who are shielding and are still providing this help for some older people who are unable to shop for themselves.



Thanks must go to the many volunteers who spent hours queuing and shopping (especially for those illusive items such as toilet rolls, flour, and pasta)! Also, thanks to supermarkets who gave our volunteers priority.

Companionship During and Beyond Lockdown



Lockdown has been very hard for everyone for different reasons. It has been especially hard for older people who had to self-isolate for 12 weeks. Some of our shopping volunteers have discovered this and have since become companions to these people – now taking them out shopping for the first time, a very scary prospect in this world of masks and queues. Many others have been referred to our befriending service which has doubled over the last few months.

We have recruited some very willing volunteers to ring isolated older people at least once a week. Staff have also been ringing those we assess as most vulnerable, to check on their wellbeing.

*Daily updates can be found on our social media channels!
Connect with us on **Twitter & Facebook!***

Latest News

Bereavement Support Service To Be Launched



We are now receiving calls from people who have found the pandemic especially hard to deal with. One of these groups is those who have been bereaved – either pre covid or because of covid. They have been isolated, unable to have the human contact, so important in grief and have been unable to hold funerals in the normal way, making saying goodbye so much harder.

We are therefore working in partnership with other local Age UKs and local hospices to launch a bereavement support service – due to be launched in September. More details will be given in the next newsletter and please look out for marketing around this if you know anyone who may benefit.

Home From Hospital

During March we were part of a partnership with other local Age UK's to set up an emergency home from hospital service. We recruited and prepared volunteers to help discharge patients from hospital and make sure once home that they had enough food and were made comfortable. Also, to assess their needs and then report back to staff. Luckily, there were very few referrals to this service. Instead we are now doing preventative work, the aim being to help them to remain at home, rather than be admitted to hospital.



Footcare Clinics Resume



During the last few weeks, we have re-opened our footcare service – this provides nail cutting and filing at a low cost. Since community venues and GP practices are closed, we running sessions from our office. As clients have waited for so long this is proving popular. As soon as community venues are re-open we will re-establish more clinics. In the meantime we can still accommodate anyone wanting this service so please feel free to contact us. We are also always looking for volunteers to help us run this vital service.

At Home Services Resume

During lockdown our handyman service was suspended and our homeworking and gardening service was running in a small way under very strict social distancing and hygiene restrictions. All services are now re-open for business – again under strict COVID guidelines, so please contact us.



Feature

Switched Off: Save free TV for older people

The BBC has announced it will go ahead with plans to end free TV licences for over-75s from 1 August. At Age UK we are bitterly disappointed by this decision and are urging the Government to sit down with the BBC urgently to keep TV licences free for over-75s.

For millions of over 75s who've had a torrid time over the last few months, this must feel like another kick in the teeth, during a terrible year.

Many older people on low incomes have told us that if they have to find £150 plus a year to pay for a licence then they will have to forego some other essential, or try to survive without TV at all. We genuinely worry about the mental health of older people living on their own in this situation if they have to give up their cherished TV - for some it really is all they have and their main way of alleviating their chronic loneliness.

The BBC has taken this decision today but in reality the principal responsibility lies with the Government. Until a previous administration transferred these free licences to the Corporation under a tapering funding arrangement they had taken the form of a welfare benefit for a generation, and to have done that without any consultation left a really bad taste in the mouth.

The Government cannot absolve itself of responsibility for the upset and distress being caused to many of our over-75s today, the poorest and most isolated above all. And the sadness is that these older people have already endured so much over the last few



Sign the petition to save free TV
www.campaigns.ageuk.org.uk/page/64089



@ageukworcester

Registered Charity No: 1114859. Registered Company: 5688674.

Worcester
& District
ageUK

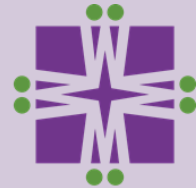
Thank You

A huge thank you goes out to all the organisations and members of the public who have donated to us throughout the Coronavirus pandemic. Below is just a small selection of supporters; without you we would not be able to continue to provide our support to local older people.



Age UK National kindly donated £10000 from their COVID-19 Emergency appeal, as well as various donations made from various other sources.

WORCESTERSHIRE
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION



MAKING A DIFFERENCE TO YOUR COMMUNITY
The Worcestershire Community Foundation were kind enough to grant us an amount in response to the Coronavirus outbreak.



Huge thanks to those who have pledged to our friends' crowdfunding project so far. Thanks to you, they've reached their fundraising target.

SEVERN
TRENT

Severn Trent pledged to support local charities with the running of their save water campaign. As a result they kindly donated £9000 to us.

Thank you TK Maxx for donating hundreds of bags of food that would otherwise

T.K. maxx

gone to waste! This enabled us to make up food parcels for isolated older people during lockdown.

goldengiving

Thank you to everyone who has donated to our Coronavirus Emergency Appeal. So far you've managed to raise a whopping £4470

Positive Stories



Pension Credit Success

During the pandemic a client contacted us for help with her finances (which was less than the pension credit benchmark).

We suggested completing a claim for Pension Credit which she was successful with, but importantly she was then entitled to Council tax support, saving her an additional £25 per week. She also needed some dental work completed but could not afford it. However, due to her being on guaranteed Pension Credit she qualified for NHS dental care, which she was relieved about.



Benefit Check Success

We contacted an 83 year old gentleman who had recently lost his wife, he was quite depressed and struggling financially.

We had a chat and it transpired that the gentleman was having incontinence problems and mobility problems. We suggested helping him complete a benefit check and an application for Attendance Allowance. He was successful with his claim, which then led us onto helping him apply for Pension Credit and Council Tax Support. Both of which he was also successful with. In total he is now in receipt of £160 per week and is now receiving Council tax support; meaning he does not have to find another £160 per month for council tax.

He explained to me that he couldn't thank us enough and that the difference this has all made had helped him to cope with the pandemic. But emotionally he no longer felt depressed as we have built up a rapport and he felt he had someone to turn to in the future if he needs any other support.

Lord Lieutenant

'The innovation, collaboration, courage and selflessness shown by so many across the County during COVID-19 has been truly inspirational and uplifting. As her majesties representative, I would like to thank you for the wonderful contribution you have made to the County during these extraordinary and challenging times'.

Lord Lieutenant of Worcestershire



It's our collective goal to ensure that over 50s in Worcester get the support they need to love later life.



@ageukworcester

Registered Charity No: 1114859. Registered Company: 5688674.



Get Involved

Fundraisers

Reaching Out Across The Malvern Hills

Help us at Age UK to create a specialist befriending service to reach out to older residents in the Malvern Hills especially isolated during the current coronavirus pandemic.

Join the crowdfund: ageuk.org.uk/malvernanddistrict/get-involved/donate

The Big Knit 2020

Our wonderful craft club (and others) managed to contribute around 7500 beautiful, knitted little hats towards the grand total last time round. For every Innocent Drink sold, 25p is donated to Age UK.

Get involved: thebigknit.co.uk

Corporate involvement

You and your business can help us continue our essential work with older people in Worcester.

Have you considered:

- Running a fundraising event
- Sponsoring one of our clubs, activities or events
- Encouraging bag or money donations at your place of work
- Sending employees to volunteer with us
- Selecting us as your charity of the year

Donate to us

Unwanted Goods

Need a clear out? Or feeling generous? We'll happily accept most unwanted items that you wish to donate to us, so long as they are not dangerous or overly damaged.

We even offer a collection service for those larger than life items or bulk donations.

Online

You can easily donate a sum of money to us from the comfort of your own home.

Whether it is a one off donation or a regular monthly subscription.

Visit: goldengiving.com/w/age-uk-worcester

Leave a Legacy

Your solicitor will be able to advise you on the required wording to carry out your wishes. If you wish to leave a gift to us, all you need is our charity details below:

Age UK Worcester & District, Bank house, 7 Shaw Street, Worcester, WR1 3QQ.

Registered charity number: 1114859

£10

Will help pay for a befriending volunteer to visit an older person who is lonely.

£20

Will help us support someone to receive a vital benefit such as pension credit.

£60

Will help pay for a client to receive one-to-one digital support and training for 6 months.

£120

Will help pay for 50 people, who may be isolated or lonely, attend our weekly lunch club.

Volunteering



Befriending in your community

Could you visit a lonely older person? Help us fight social isolation in Worcester & District by becoming a befriender today.



Helping at our charity shops

Meet new people, help us raise funds and have fun while volunteering in one of our 5 charity shops around Worcester & District.



Helping at our clubs

Help us run various activities and help create a warm, fun and friendly environment within one of our social or luncheon clubs.



Helping us in our office

Help us carry out day to day office tasks, like answering phone calls, and help create a warm and friendly environment.



Assist to deliver foot care

Help welcome and provide assistance with minor foot care to clients. Including foot cleaning, nail clipping, cutting and filing.

Are you interested in volunteering with us?

T: 01905 724294
E: info@ageukwd.org



@ageukworcester

Registered Charity No: 1114859. Registered Company: 5688674.

Worcester
& District
ageUK

Our Services

At Home with Age UK Worcester & District

Our Help at home is ideal for over 50s who are finding it difficult to complete day to day tasks and need a little helping hand at home. We offer flexible, low-cost services to work around your needs:

Handyperson - we can carry out small household jobs, decorating, repairs or adaptations around the home.

Gardening - we can help with grass cutting, weeding, planting, pruning and general tidying

Homeworkers - we can help with household cleaning, ironing, making beds, shopping and other chores

Home Energy Check (Winter Time) - we can assess the energy efficiency of your home and fit appropriate energy efficient equipment if necessary

Information & Advice

Want to know your entitlements? Need help filling out a form? We are able to provide you with free information & advice on a range of topics from our office and over the phone. We can even arrange to visit you at home.

Our advisors are trained to help you on the following topics: Benefits, Welfare, Your Home, Social Care, Staying Fit & Healthy, Local Traders & Local Signposting.

Befriending

Befriending is available for older people who live alone, have no family living locally, who feel isolated and lack social contact.

We provide both befriending and tele-befriending here at Age UK Worcester. We have a selection of befrienders who will come and visit you at home. Upon referral to the scheme you will be added to our tele-befriending list until we can place you with a suitable befriender.

Money & Benefits

Age UK Worcester & District knows that money matters. So did you know that you could be eligible for some extra benefits? As part of our Information & Advice service, we can help you check your eligibility and help you get what you're entitled to.

We can help check your eligibility and help you apply for: Attendance Allowance, Carers Allowance, Council Tax Support, Disability Living Allowance, Housing Benefit, Pension Credit, Personal Independence Payment, Winter Fuel Payment

Our Services

Digital Inclusion

We offer free, bespoke one-to-one computer classes for older people who are looking to start using a computer for the first time or are looking to improve their skill set further. Each class is 30 minutes long, features no techy talk and has no set course follow (meaning you can start, finish and progress at a comfortable rate).

Our computer classes can help you with: Basic Computer Skills, Browsing the Internet, Sending Emails, Using Smartphones & Tablets, Online Form Filling and much more.

Foot Care

We provide regular foot care clinics for our clients in Worcester. Our clinics will provide basic level care, with reduced waiting times and at a lower cost.

Our clinics can help with: Nail Cutting, Nail Filing & Basic Skin Care

Legal Advice

We provide regular 30 minute appointments for those seeking legal advice in Worcester & District. Our experts are on hand to help you for free.

Our legal advisor can help you on the following topics: Protecting Your Home & Assets, Lasting Power of Attorney & Planning Your Will.

Clubs & Activities

We offer a wide range of clubs, classes and get togethers, all of which are held locally within Worcester & District, with the aim of abolishing social isolation.

Social Clubs - We have 4 active social clubs around Worcester, each with a varying programme of activities and day trips throughout the year.

Lunch Club - We run a weekly lunch club where you can enjoy delicious lunch time meals, as well as take part in regular activities such as quizzes, bingo, raffles and hosted speakers.

Craft Club - Come and become a knitter and have a natter with us at our weekly get togethers.

EnJOY Seated Dance - Dancing can bring you so much joy, so why not come along and enjoy dancing with us? Our new classes are led by instructor Fiona Petts and are fun, sociable and creative!

Men's Shed Worcester - Currently in development and we hope to be running soon.





Summer 2020

www.ageuk.org.uk/worcesteranddistrict

Age UK Worcester & District,
Bank House, 7 Shaw Street
Worcester
WR1 3QQ

Registered Charity Number: 1114859
Company Number: 5688674