

AGE UK WILTSHIRE

APRIL 2025

News and Views

A Message from the CEO of Age UK Wiltshire & Age UK Southampton

Dear Friends,

As we navigate through some challenging times, it is crucial to acknowledge the unique difficulties for our older population. Recent changes to the Winter Fuel Payment have left many uncertain about managing fuel bills and how to apply for benefits that ensure their quality of life in the future. Additionally, the proposed changes within the NHS have created further uncertainty around healthcare provision at a time when older people need support. Alongside this, support organisations such as ours are facing increased expenses with higher National Insurance and running costs.

We are also seeing a bigger shift towards digital services in an effort to save money, which, while beneficial in many ways, creates significant barriers for those who are less able to use apps and online services as technology moves at a fast pace and people's cognitive impairment can make it harder. This digital divide can lead to feelings of isolation and disconnection, making it harder for older people to access essential information and services and stay connected with their communities.

So how can we ensure the voices of older people are heard in this changing world?

It is more important than ever to hear the concerns of our older community. We must ask ourselves: How can we better understand and address the barriers people face in accessing services and activities that promote independence, health, and social connection? We need to ensure that our older population feels heard and valued and we understand the impact key decisions have on older people. Seemingly fairly small things such as closing a public toilet can have a big impact on people's ability to be out and about.

What are the examples of good practice?

Despite these challenges, there are some examples of good practice that we can learn from. The Wiltshire Connect bus is one such initiative, providing a bookable bus service via the phone or an app, based on individual need. This kind of community-focused solution is invaluable in promoting independence and well-being.

At Age UK Wiltshire & Southampton, we are committed to advocating for and supporting our older population. How can you help us amplify the voices of older people so everyone can be heard and no one is left behind? Please do get in touch with your thoughts and suggestions.

Warm regards,

Sarah Cardy

CEO, Age UK Wiltshire and Age UK Southampton

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How you can help us



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[Facebook page - Southampton](#)



[Facebook page - Charity Shops & Information Points](#)



[Visit our website](#)

KFR PARTNERSHIP - HOME CLEARANCE WITH HEART!

We are launching a new partnership with KFR, offering a unique and innovative change to the way house clearances are carried out in the county! This new collaboration will offer a sensitive, cost-effective, and community-focused house clearance service that aims to reduce the stress and financial burden for those needing to clear a property.

Our new service will charge clients only for items that cannot be used by charity. This will ensure a more affordable solution for those looking to clear their properties, while also supporting local charitable causes. The initiative promises to make house clearance easier, quicker, and more affordable, offering peace of mind to individuals who may be facing the task of clearing a home due to a move, bereavement, or downsizing.

To celebrate the launch of this exciting partnership, a special event was held at the Age UK Wiltshire Devizes Charity Shop with Information Point, on Thursday 17th April 9.30am - 12.30pm. There were refreshments, entertainment, and a raffle featuring a brand-new washing machine!



FRIENDSHIP ACROSS GENERATIONS AT PADWELL ROAD DAY CENTRE

There's something special happening each week at our Padwell Road Day Centre in Southampton – and it's all thanks to the power of intergenerational connection.

Every Tuesday afternoon during term-time, children from Bevois Town Preschool visit the centre for an hour of fun, games and singing. Whether it's dancing, football, or just sharing a laugh, the children and older members mix beautifully – creating real moments of joy for everyone involved.

"It's such a lively hour – the children bring so much energy, and our members absolutely love it," says Alison Rood, Day Centre Manager.

The centre also regularly welcomes occupational therapy students, who support members during activities while gaining valuable hands-on experience for their studies. It's a great opportunity for students to learn, and the extra company and support is always appreciated by the members.

Padwell Road offers a wide range of activities, a peaceful garden space, and tailored personal support – but it's the friendships and shared moments that really make it special.

[Find out more](#)



WELLBEING CHECKS WITH MEALS CONTINUES TO GROW IN SOUTHAMPTON

Our **Wellbeing Checks with Meals** service has expanded to be able to support older people in **Southampton**, helping them remain independent and safe in their own homes.

We deliver hot, nutritious meals, whilst also checking in on you or your family member's wellbeing, providing not just a delicious lunch but also peace of mind.

For more information, please contact the team at wellbeingcheckswithmeals@ageuksouthampton.org.uk or call 02380 019540. You can also visit the [Age UK Southampton website](#) to see a menu.

"Thank you, this service has given me real peace of mind knowing that someone is calling in on my mum and that she is receiving a nutritious hot meal every day (she says she particularly enjoys the puddings!)" - Sarah



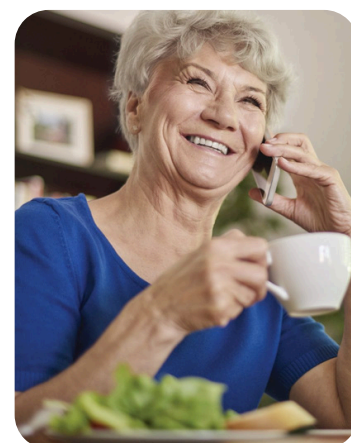
News and Updates

HELPING OLDER PEOPLE BOOST THEIR INCOME

With the help of funding support from Wiltshire Council, our Information & Advice team's project to increase take-up of Pension Credit continues to assist people with direct Pension Credit claim or eligibility enquiries, alongside wider benefits-related queries.

One notable success involved a couple who had recently lost their Winter Fuel Payment and were initially refused Pension Credit. Following a home visit and holistic assessment by our specialist benefits adviser, we identified that both may be eligible for Attendance Allowance - a non-means-tested disability benefit. With our support, they successfully applied and were awarded Attendance Allowance. This award enabled a reassessment of their situation, and they have now begun receiving Pension Credit and are on track to access additional disability and carer premiums, as well as Council Tax Reduction.

We're continuing to support them to ensure all the correct entitlements are in place—another great example of how this project is making a real difference in people's lives.



WE'RE LAUNCHING A NEW PROJECT TO SUPPORT OLDER PEOPLE IN TROWBRIDGE AND BRADFORD-ON-AVON!



Would you like to get out and about more, but just need a bit of support? Could someone coming along help? Are you unsure if you're receiving all the income you're entitled to? Struggling with shopping or prescriptions? Need advice on making your home safer or more comfortable?

A brand-new project is launching in the Trowbridge and Bradford-on-Avon areas, supported by Wiltshire Council, to offer personalised support for older people to stay independent, connected, and well.

The project will place an Age UK Wiltshire Community Connector in the local area to offer home visits, provide practical help, and share trusted information on everything from local activities and transport to financial entitlements and staying safe at home.

Support is available for a wide range of needs - from arranging transport or benefits, to simply having someone by your side as you take steps to re-engage with the world after life changes such as bereavement or worsening health.

If you answered yes to any of the questions above, or just want to find out how we can help, please get in touch. Whether you're looking for support or want to volunteer, we'd love to hear from you.

Email Kate Brooks kate.brooks@ageukwiltshire.org.uk to find out more.

MELKSHAM NEWS' PERSON OF THE YEAR AWARD NOMINATION

We are delighted to report that in January Sue Drew, the Club Leader of our Corsham and Melksham Fitness & Friendship Clubs, was nominated for Melksham News' Person of the Year Award 2024! Sue was recognised for the enthusiasm she brings to each session.

While Sue didn't take home the award, it's still a fantastic achievement - congratulations Sue, and thank you for all that you do!



A CONCERT TO REMEMBER AT THE ROYAL WOOTTON BASSETT MONDAY FRIENDSHIP CLUB



The Royal Wootton Bassett Monday Friendship Club members were entertained on Monday 20th January when the **End of the Track** Singers came to perform a concert.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves, singing along and some members got up to dance! A collection was made in aid of Julia's House Hospice.

The Monday Friendship Club runs every Monday from 2 - 4pm at Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church Hall in Royal Wootton Bassett, and we love welcoming new members so please come along!

To find out more call Tracey on 07563 028703, or Ginny on 07500 137135

OUR BRADFORD-ON-AVON CHARITY SHOP IS MOVING...NEXT DOOR!

We're moving! Our Bradford-on-Avon Charity Shop with Information Point is moving to the shop next door.

We will be open in our new premises at no.15 Station Approach from Friday 18th April (Good Friday) for Bank Holiday Hours (10am-4pm). We look forward to seeing you in our brand-new Charity Shop!



OUR BRAND-NEW CARERS TOGETHER WILTSHIRE NEWSLETTER IS HERE!

The first issue of the new Carers Together Wiltshire quarterly newsletter has been sent out to our subscribers.

Each newsletter will be packed with advice, details of community events and resources to help unpaid Carers. There are also special sections for Parent Carers and Young Adult Carers with specific resources and information from our experts!

If you are interested in receiving future editions you can sign up at the link below. You can also email Alex Turner at alex.turner@ageukwiltshire.org.uk if you would like to be sent the first issue.

[Sign up here](#)



THE BIG KNIT TINY HAT UPDATE!

We have collected over a whopping 20,000 hats so far for the Big Knit! We still have a way to go before we reach our target though, so let's keep knitting and smash that target! We need all your tiny hats by the end of May 2025 to give us time to count them and send them in to Innocent - remember, each tiny hat knitted raises 30p for Age UK Wiltshire & Age UK Southampton!

When you've finished your hats, don't forget to post them to us or drop them off at one of our offices or shops below:

- Unit 9-10, Prince Maurice Court, Hambleton Avenue, Devizes, SN10 2RT
- 44 Catherine Street, Salisbury, SP1 2DD
- Toothill Community Centre, Dunwich Drive, Swindon, SN5 8DH
- Bradford on Avon Shop 16 Station Approach, Bradford on Avon, BA15 1FQ
- Marlborough Shop 34 High Street, Marlborough, SN8 1LW
- Devizes Shop 8 The Brittox, Devizes, SN10 1AJ
- Padwell Road Day Care Centre, Padwell Road, Southampton, SO14 6QX



[Click here](#) to find **FREE** knitting and crochet patterns for all levels of experience!

WE'RE A LIVING WAGE EMPLOYER!

We're proud to share that Age UK Wiltshire is an accredited Living Wage Employer!

The Living Wage is based on the real cost of living, ensuring our staff are paid enough to meet their everyday needs and cover essentials like housing, food, and transport - providing them with financial security. Unlike the National Minimum Wage, which sets a legal baseline, the Living Wage offers a more realistic rate to support a decent standard of living.

Check out our current vacancies below!

[Current vacancies](#)



OUR CHARITY SHOPS WITH INFORMATION POINTS NEED YOUR DONATIONS!

Our charity shops in Devizes, Salisbury, Bradford-on-Avon and Marlborough need your donations - we can accept clean, good quality clothes and toys, as well as books and bric-a-brac. Why not also do some sustainable shopping while you drop off your donations, or peruse our useful leaflets at the Information Points?



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