

# What's Happening - In Brief

## A Note from Amanda Allen (CEO of Age UK BRWF) - November 2024

- This month our Chair, Jonathan Shapiro, and I met with the MP for Redditch, **Chris Bloore**. Topics discussed included the rising cost of living, changes to the Winter Fuel Allowance and increasing demand for advice services, in addition to the impact of the Autumn Budget on charity finances. Next month we are due to meet with the MP for Bromsgrove, Bradley Thomas, whose Pensioners Fair we also attended this month
- Following the sale of the building in March, our **High Street Charity Shop** (Bromsgrove) closed its doors on 23rd November. Opening as a 'Pop Up' shop in January 2022, the shop has provided us with the valuable opportunity to gain experience of having a dedicated furniture shop, as well as having a High Street presence. Whilst we are sad to be closing, we are really pleased to announce that we will soon be opening a new, permanent shop on Bromsgrove High Street in the former Shoe Zone premises. This month we finally received the keys to our new shop in Kidderminster, in Walter Nash Road, so a busy time for our Retail team!

## Meet the Team - Victoria Phillimore (Charity Shop Manager. Winyates)

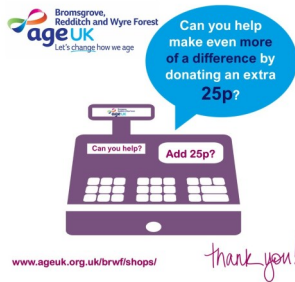
- For this month's 'Meet the Team' we get to meet **Victoria Phillimore** who joined Age UK BRWF in July as Manager of our new Winyates (Redditch) Charity Shop!
- Having worked in Retail since she was 15, and with a wealth of experience, Victoria came to Age UK BRWF from the fashion retailer Roman, where she was the Acting Manager. Living in Redditch and knowing the charity's involvement with supporting the local community, when she saw the Winyates Shop Manager role being advertised, Victoria thought it would be an '*interesting position*', and one which she would enjoy
- After almost five months, when asked how the role has met with those original expectations, Victoria said '*I think there can be a misconception about charity shops, that you just put things out on hangers and put a price on it and that's that, but when you come in and actually see behind the scenes, and what is actually done, there's a lot more hard work involved but it's rewarding hard work...when I go home at night and I'm tired it's a good tired*'. When asked if there was anything that had surprised her Victoria added, '*I have been surprised at the range of items that we sell...as the saying goes, one man's trash is another man's treasure*'. Victoria also added that she was surprised about the range of support and services that the charity actually provides for older people and how she now has a better understanding of how '*every penny that is raised by the shops counts*' towards ensuring that this support continues.
- Since its opening in August, the Winyates shop has been really well-received and, with the support of Assistant Manager Tom, the shop already has a '*full-blown-complement*' of amazing volunteers. As the shop goes through the seasons of its first year, Victoria is looking forward to trying out new ideas. Understanding the 'challenges' (!) of growing children, this month the shop has been trialling 'Lucky Bags' of Children's Clothes!
- Outside of work, married with a daughter, Victoria has two little dogs which take up a lot of her time. She also enjoys reading, going to the cinema and meals out, as well as helping the local community (including supporting the Baby Bank in Winyates)
- When asked to sum up the last few months, Victoria said, '*It has started out really good. I am really enjoying it, and I think that we will be here for a long while yet!*'



Victoria with Winyates' Lucky Bags!

## More News from our Shops

- Following a change to our Tills this month, our Retail team are now able to ask customers help make even more of a difference by **donating an extra 25p** to their total shop. In its first week an additional **£125** was raised!!!
- Thank you to the team at **Bluebird Care** for responding to our **Christmas Clearout Campaign** and collecting two cars full of donations and bringing them to our Winyates Shop!



## Support available this winter

- We continue to work with WCC to distribute vouchers to eligible pensioners through the **Household Support Fund**, in addition to offering **Free Home Energy Checks** <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/brwf/about-us/news/articles/2024/help-support-available-this-winter/>



## New Chapter for the Shed

- After 8 years, **Bromsgrove Men in Sheds** is starting a new chapter, with the Shedders getting ready to leave Unit 1 Metal & Ores when Age UK BRWF's lease on the property ends at the beginning of December
- With Unit 1 being put up for sale in August, the Shedders appeared on the front page of The Standard in September as they sought to find a new home. Despite a lot of support from the community, this appeal did not result in any immediate offers, hence we were looking at the prospect of raising significant additional funds to cover the annual rent being proposed by the new owner. Just as we were looking to proceed with a new lease agreement, an opportunity arose to share a unit on **Finch End Farm** and, following a Shed Meeting on 26/10/24, the decision was taken to move - watch this space!



## Christmas Card Fundraiser

Looking for a personalised and meaningful way to share your 2024 Christmas message ?

How about a personalised, animated Christmas e-Card created by Age UK BRWF's Amphlett Hall Computer Club members?



To find out more, please visit:

[www.ageuk.org.uk/brwf/get-involved/christmas-e-card-fundraiser/](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/brwf/get-involved/christmas-e-card-fundraiser/)

- Our **Amphlett Hall Computer Clubs** have been getting creative again with their animated Christmas e-card!
- For a donation of £5, you can receive your own copy of the animated 2024 Christmas e-card (to which we can add your personalised message - a maximum of up to 6 Lines, 20 Characters per Line) to share with friends, family etc. via email, social media etc. For more details please visit our website <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/brwf/get-involved/age-uk-brwfs-xmas-e-card-fundraiser/>

## Pi's Charity Quiz

- Thank you to the **Pi Partnership** for raising £595 for Age UK BRWF with their annual Quiz Evening!



## Support us for Free!

- We know these continue to be difficult times, but please help by letting people know that there are ways that they can support us for free!
- When doing your Christmas Shopping, or any other shopping online, don't forget to use **easyfundraising**. Over 8,000 retailers will donate to Age UK Bromsgrove, Redditch & Wyre Forest at no extra cost to you. To sign up and help us raise more please visit <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/ageukbrwf/>
- As part of the Local Community Fund, Co-op Members can support **Bromsgrove Men in Shed** via this link <https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/88298>. The more votes, the more money the Shed will receive!