

NEWSLETTER

Winter 2025

The Sycamores, Mount Pleasant Road, Exeter
01392 202092

UPDATE FROM OUR CEO

Welcome to our winter newsletter. There have certainly been some challenges over this winter, including the significant impact to so many on the removal of the winter fuel payments. Please do look on the back page of this newsletter to see how our Information and Advice service can support you with this and offer guidance on eligibility for any other benefits.

Despite all the challenges around us, Age UK Exeter continues to work hard with partners to ensure the over 50's are represented when shaping services. We are involved with health and social care colleagues as well as working with other agencies and charities in Exeter. We want to ensure our services are relevant and to enable all of us to age well. We also want to give over 50's the opportunity to be heard when there are so many other pressures on finances and time. If you want to have a voice or contribute to helping Age UK Exeter develop relevant services, come and join our forum (information in the newsletter).

As I look out on the garden and see the bulbs starting to emerge, I think of spring and hope. There is lots to get involved with at Age UK Exeter, whether you are 50 or over 100! We have many services and activities on offer, opportunities to volunteer, opportunities to fundraise and opportunities to use your skills to the benefit of a local independent charity.



Nicky Flynn



DONATE TODAY!



or visit <https://www.justgiving.com/age-uk-exeter>

TIME FOR YOU

Making a difference for carers and getting to know the cared for person too. This service puts a volunteer in place to give the carer a break knowing that they can go out and their partner or relative is in safe hands. There may be a small charge.



CARELINE

This service offers weekly phone chats to usually housebound isolated older people and is often a lifeline. Volunteers will ring the same people at roughly the same time each week on a certain day and chat about all manner of things from current affairs to pets' behaviour.



This service has space for new people though it is fast filling up. If you would like to find out more about any of these services then please get in touch on 01392 202092

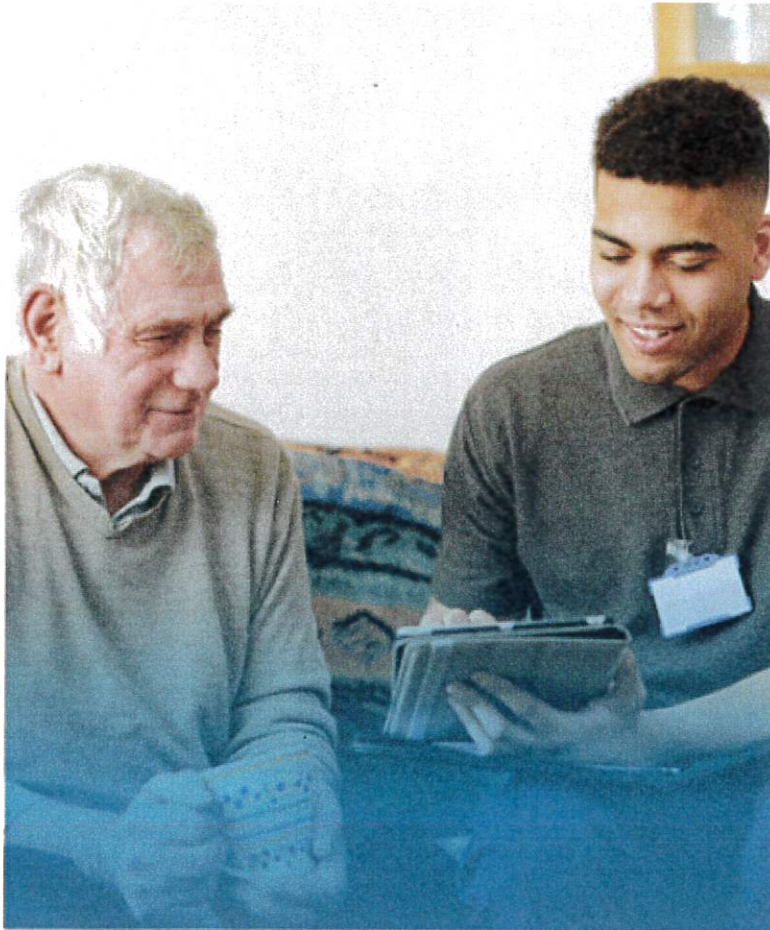
VOLUNTARY VISITING SERVICE

This service has a big heart and involves volunteers visiting an isolated older person regularly for social support and companionship. There are many people on the waiting list for the service. Volunteers are from all walks of life and the age range is impressive, from early 20s to mid 80s. New clients love the opportunity to meet someone new and hopefully their volunteer will make a difference to their lives.



There are currently 34 volunteers visiting 38 older people (some visit 2) with 4 waiting in the wings to complete their induction. Visits are weekly or fortnightly. Most visit at the older person's home though some go out for coffee, trying new establishments or sticking to their tried and tested favourite. All enjoy and value their time together, getting to know each other.





ENABLING & HOME SUPPORT SERVICE

From February, the service will be available 8:30am to 5pm, Monday and Tuesdays and 8:30am to 6pm, Wednesday to Friday.

We can offer help with cleaning, laundry, shopping, getting to appointments, de-cluttering, gardening and much more! Designed to give older people a friendly, reliable service that can offer one to one support and improve quality of life.

All our Home Support Workers are paid members of staff. They are local people who are dependable, caring and sensitive to client's needs. They are also trained in the safe use of wheelchairs.

Give us a ring on 01392 455606 for an informal chat or to book an assessment.

The Forum

What is the Forum

It enables over 50s to have their voices heard by professionals, other partners, or people who they choose to come and speak. It also allows people to feel empowered and have choice. Its aim is to focus on any barriers/concerns/challenges to ageing well in Exeter and what might be the solutions. It can be a consultative or pressure group which could influence and offer expertise or a place to discuss and share thoughts and ideas.

Who can attend

Our Over 50s Forum provides a voice for over 50s in the City of Exeter who may be accessing Age UK Exeter services but is also open to other members of the community.

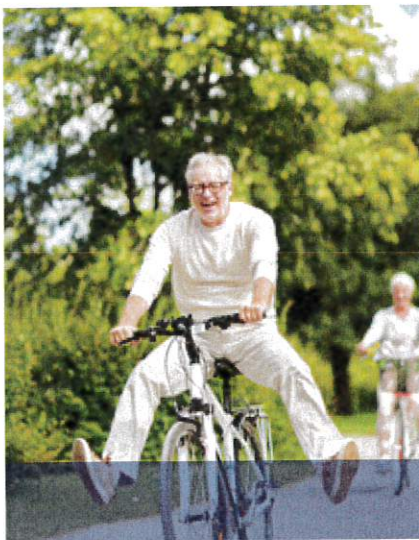
Regularity

The Forum meets every 6-8 weeks at Age UK Exeter. Currently it is facilitated and managed by Age UK Exeter. For more information contact m.wells@ageukexeter.org.uk



LEAVE A LEGACY

With a gift to Age UK Exeter in your will, you can make sure older people have the support they need in the years to come.



As an independent charity we are reliant on donations and legacies to continue to operate our service in Exeter. Our gratitude to people who pledge gifts to help us carry on our work into the future is immeasurable. By choosing to leave a gift in your will to Age UK Exeter, you can be certain that your kindness will help some of the most vulnerable older people find comfort, support and friendship when they need it the most.



Grab your needles and wool, get set and knit! The Big Knit challenge is back again. Running since 2003 in partnership with Innocent drinks, the challenge involves knitting little hats for the tops of Innocent smoothie bottles. Every hat knitted raises 30p to help Age UK provide their much-needed services and support to older people around the country.

Knitted and crocheted by thousands of legendary volunteers, these woolly masterpieces have raised over £3 million for Age UK since 2003, with around 11 million hats knitted. Last year, the 20th anniversary of the Big Knit was marked by the creation of a 23ft tall and 20ft wide hat, made up of 545 individual blankets and 2 million yards of wool, weighing in at 817 kilogrammes!

If you're a keen knitter or enjoy crocheting, please consider joining the Big Knit challenge to help us achieve our charity's mission of supporting people in later life. Please drop off any hats you make to Reception at The Sycamores, Mount Pleasant Road, Exeter, EX4 7AE during our opening hours.

BUDDING FRIENDS



BEFORE

Budding Friends is approaching its 10-year anniversary this April, and during this time we have supported 142 people living with dementia and their carers. Some people have dipped into the project for a few months, whilst many have remained with the project for several years, and four of the volunteers have been with the group for 10 years!



AFTER

“IT’S LIKE A LITTLE OASIS OF CALM AND BEAUTY”

We have gone from strength to strength starting with an allotment, complete with bathtub and an old engine, to a beautiful space full of vegetables and flowers. This year the group have also been working alongside Devon Wildlife Trust and the National Trust, raising native trees and shrubs which we planted out into a rewilding area on the Killerton Estate, with children from the local primary school.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

The Budding Friends group have a lovely new shed for the allotment that needs a group of Volunteers to erect.

The old shed also needs taking down and a new base put in place. Do you have or know, a group of practical volunteers who could help us – a lovely day at the allotment guaranteed.

Tea, biscuits and a warm welcome provided !

EASTERN DEVON DEMENTIA PARTNERSHIP

We are leading on the new Eastern Devon Dementia Partnership, following the Eastern Devon Healthy Ageing Partnership, identifying dementia as one of their 3 key priorities.

Currently there is no clear pathway to knowing what is available across the East for people living with dementia and their carers. In undertaking this work, we aim to ensure that people have access to a more streamlined pathway with the right information at the right time.

We launch the Partnership next month with presentations from The Admiral Nurse Service, Devon Carers and The Ness Care group, to other health, social care and voluntary organisations with the vision that, going forward we will continue to share updates, information and funding opportunities.



ANDY AND JOHN GO THE EXTRA MILE WITH THE HANDY PERSON SCHEME

It's been a busy start to the year for Andy and John, our incredible Handy Person team at Age UK Exeter. They've been working hard, making client calls and helping older adults across the city with essential home maintenance tasks. Their dedication and friendly approach have made a real difference, with many clients asking them to come back for more help.

Having someone work in your home can often feel a little daunting, but Andy and John understand this. They've earned a reputation for being respectful, reliable, and putting clients at ease. Many people tell us how confident they feel using our service because of the care and professionalism Andy and John bring to every job—nothing is ever too much trouble!

Meet John, a star addition to the team

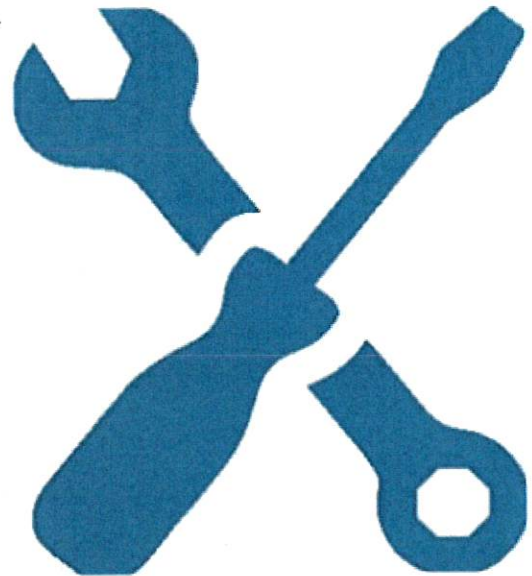
John joined the Handy Person Scheme in 2024 and has already become an invaluable part of the team. He's been working tirelessly to ensure everyone who needs help gets the support they need, from fixing minor issues to installing important safety features. His hardworking and approachable attitude has won the hearts of many clients.

Key Safes: A Simple Solution for Home Safety

One area Andy and John are particularly excited to talk about is the installation of home key safes. These secure boxes are mounted on the wall of your home and can safely store a spare key. Key safes are a fantastic idea for anyone who might misplace their keys or wants to provide family members or even emergency responders with quick access to the house in case of an emergency.

Andy and John have already helped many clients choose and install key safes, ensuring they are confident and comfortable with their use. Key safes are also a cost-effective way to enhance your home's security and provide peace of mind.

If you're interested in having a key safe installed—or exploring other home safety features—Andy and John will be delighted to talk things through with you. They can help you choose the right option to suit both your needs and your budget, making sure you feel supported every step of the way.



Give Us a Call!

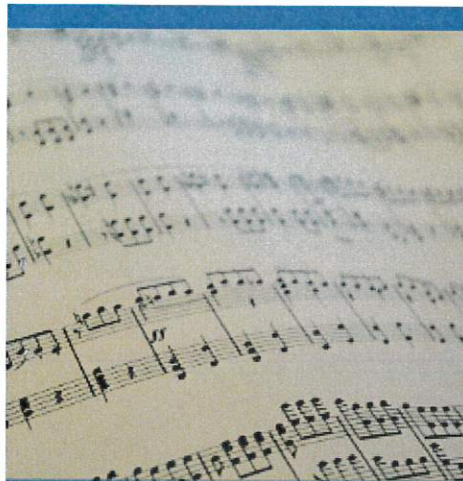
If you'd like to learn more about the Handy Person Scheme, arrange a visit, or discuss key safes and other safety features, give us a ring. Andy and John are here to help make your home a safer, more comfortable place to live.

Phone: 01392 202092

Email: info@ageukexeter.org.uk

With Andy and John on the job, you can trust that your home is in safe hands. Don't wait—let us lend a hand today!

What's On!



Singalong Group

Fortnightly on Wednesdays 14:00 - 15:30 £6

Join us for an afternoon of singing, reminiscing with music from Vera Lynn through to Sinatra, The Beatles and Abba. Tea and coffee provided



Lunches

Fortnightly on Wednesdays 12:30 - 14:00 £12

Come along and meet new people or catch up with old friends and enjoy a lovely lunch.

2 course meal - main course and pudding followed by tea/coffee all for £12.00 per person.

The menu alternates between a homecooked meal and traditional Fish and Chips



Tea Dance

Every Friday 14:00 - 16:00 £4

Dancing is a fantastic way to meet new friends and has huge health benefits, exercising without even knowing it! This event is held at Wonford Community Centre, Burnthouse Lane, EX2 6NF - Get those dancing shoes ready!



Digital Workshop

Held Monthly

Join our free digital workshops. Please bring in your laptops, tablets and phones. The Sky team will offer tech support on an individual basis.

For future dates and bookings Call - 01392 20 20 92

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

We are appealing to local business to get involved with Age UK Exeter. We host many fundraising events which are always in desperate need of sponsorships, raffle and tombola prizes, food and drinks, volunteers, participation and donations.

We have 4 events coming up soon and we would hugely appreciate your help and support!



THE GRAND QUIZ

We are looking for people to get involved in teams of Maximum 6

7th March



THE GREAT WEST RUN

We need some volunteers to help with the event on the day

25th May



GOLF DAY

We looking for prizes, sponsorships (motor dealers), auction prizes, teams of 4 to participate and volunteers to help run the event.

26th June



ABSEILING

We need participants (14 places) and for them to fundraise a minimum of £200.

10th August

WHY CHOOSE US?

We are a small local charity and any donations will make a huge difference to us.

Supporting us is a great way to get involved with a local charity and consider choosing us for your charity of the year!

CALL US ON 01392 202092

Sycamore Days: A Safe, Fun, and Enriching Day Service for Older Adults

At Sycamore Days, we provide a welcoming and supportive environment for older adults, particularly those living with mild to moderate dementia. Our service offers a wide range of engaging activities designed to enrich the lives of our guests, giving their family/ carers a much-needed break.

What Happens at Sycamore Days?

- A range of fun, relaxing, and enriching activities, including arts and crafts, games, gentle exercise, and live music.
- Regular outings to places like National Trust properties and the Royal Albert Memorial Museum (RAMM) to engage with memory-related activities.
- Carols at Christmas: Stoke Hill Primary School visit to spread festive cheer with a carol performance.
- Therapy Dog: Our lovely therapy dog, Shadow, visits every week, bringing comfort and companionship to our guests.
- Live Music: Regular music performances create a lively and enriching atmosphere for everyone.
- In response to growing demand, we expanded our opening days to include Thursdays in 2024. This year, in 2025, we plan to introduce Mondays to offer even more flexibility for guests and their families/carers.



Why Sycamore Days Matters?

- For family/carers, Sycamore Days provides valuable respite – a chance to take a break while knowing that their loved ones are in a safe and stimulating environment.
- For guests, it is an opportunity to socialise, take part in activities, and enjoy a fulfilling day out of the home.
- Flexible attendance options - half-day, full-day, or even multiple days per week to suit your needs.
- Sycamore Days offers a safe, enriching, and fun experience for an older adult in your life – whether living with dementia or simply in need of social interaction. Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, 10:00–15:30, with Mondays coming soon.

Sycamore Days is here to help! For more information, give us a call on 01392 202092



Frequently asked Questions



Q. What is Age UK Exeter's Information and Advice service?

A. A free of charge service providing information and advice on a range of topics including welfare benefit checks and subsequent applications, advice on social care, tradespeople, local services and many more general topics.

Q. What kind of advice can Age UK Exeter not advise on?

A. Age UK Exeter cannot give Legal, debt or financial advice as these are regulated; we can however signpost to agencies who can help.

Q. How is the information and advice given?

A. We can provide information and advice via the telephone, email or face to face with an arranged office appointment. We can also post out or email our AUK information guides which cover a range of topics.

Q. When is Age UK Exeter's information and Advice service open?

A. Mon – Wednesday (8am to 4pm) & Thursday (8am to Midday) – Office appointments here at the Sycamore Centre can be arranged for Monday to Wednesday

Q. How many people have accessed the information & advice service?

A. In 2024 Age UK Exeter Information & Advice service have helped over 500 clients, their families and carers.