

A life changing service



Our **Postural Stability Instruction (PSI) programme** is a course of **gentle exercise classes** which improve strength, balance and confidence in older people who have had a **recent fall**. The programme is **FREE** to join - **contact your GP** for a referral if you have had a fall in the last 12 months.

Brenda (pictured) was referred to the programme after having **two major falls**, suffering a back injury and being diagnosed with osteoporosis and bone loss, as well as arthritis in her fingers.

Brenda had led an active life, with a passion for **dancing**. She also enjoyed **gardening, walking** and **cooking**. Sadly, keeping up these hobbies was not achievable after Brenda's falls, and her **confidence decreased**, affecting her desire to go out and do the things she loved.

After starting the course, Brenda felt **like a new person**. She had **more energy** and **felt positive** about getting her old self back.

Now Brenda has completed the 20-week programme, she can walk around the house without her stick, including up and down the stairs. She can bend down and pick up things from the floor, and she can wash her hair and dry herself properly - all things she **struggled with before**.

Brenda is now enjoying some gardening again, and doing small tasks in the house. She is much more confident in doing her own cooking as bending down to the oven and carrying pots has become much easier.

Brenda has **not had another fall** since starting the programme. She says the programme was **wonderful** and that she was **so happy** to be part of such a **brilliant experience**. She enjoyed partaking in the exercises as part of a group and she was happy that she made some **new friends** that she plans to keep in touch with.

Brenda says, *"The PSI programme has given me so much confidence and now I can do things that I could not do before. I loved it and I did not want it to end. I would recommend it to anyone."*

Recycle and raise



If you have received this newsletter in the post, you will find a **recycling envelope** enclosed.

This is an **easy** and **FREE** way to raise funds for us, while getting rid of jewellery or old bank notes that have been lying around.

You can put **jewellery or watches** of any material (even if damaged or broken) in them, as well as **banknotes** of any currency (even out of circulation ones).

Seal the envelope and pop in the post (no need for a stamp), and we will receive a percentage of what the contents is worth.

If you did not receive an envelope or you'd like us to send you more, please contact the Fundraising Team on **0121 704 7842** (leave a message) or **events@ageuksolihull.org.uk**

Go to www.ageuksolihull.org.uk for information on our services.

Leave a legacy

It's never easy thinking about **making a Will**, but it is one of the most important things you can do to make sure those closest to you are **taken care of** when you are gone.

Some people decide to **leave a gift to charity** in their Will. This can be as little as **1%** of your estate, meaning that your **loved ones** will still receive a large proportion.

Choosing to remember Age UK Solihull in your Will will mean you'll be helping us to be here for the **next generation** of older people in Solihull.

It is **so simple** to do and can make a huge **and lasting difference**. Simply give the information below to whoever is drafting your Will:

Charity name: **Age UK Solihull**
(Don't forget the "Solihull" bit or it won't come to us as the local charity!)

Address: **The Core, Central Library Building, Homer Road, Solihull B91 3RG**

Registered charity number: **1055887**

Acknowledgments

We are grateful for the support we have received from organisations including:

4th Knowle Cubs	Capitol Mobility	(The) Grimmitt Trust	@Sage Coffee House and Kitchen
Abbott Medical	Chiltern Railways	Home Instead Solihull	Saqib Bhatti MP
Adlington Farm	CPW	Kineton Green Primary School	Saxon Court
Alderbrook Sixth Form	Crowne Plaza, Solihull	Knowle & Dorridge Lions	Shirley Lions
Asda Chelmsley Wood	Damson Wood Nursery & Infant School	Marston Green Infant Academy	Solihull Chandos Choir
Asda Parkgate	Eastcote Park	Morgan Parkes Recruitment	Solihull Fire Station
Balsall Common Lions	Edgar E Lawley Foundation	National Gas Metering	Tesco Shirley
Balsall Common Primary School	Edwards Insurance	Oh So Sweet Candy Trees	Tudor Grange Leisure Centre
Baron Davenports Charity	Energy One	Personal Exercise	Tudor Grange Primary Academy Yew Tree
Belmont Healthcare	Everybody Sing	Pop Voices	Wadsworth Solicitors
Bill Farnsworth	Eveson Trust	Rotary Club of Knowle & Dorridge	Waitrose Solihull
Birchmere House	(The) Forest Hotel		We Are All Making a Difference Charitable Trust
Blossomfield Grange	Freddie Farren		
Blossomfield Rose	(The) Goodenough Charity		

A Dance Class With A Difference!

A new **dance programme for over 50s** is soon to start in Solihull. **Dance to Health** is a fun and creative programme that has been proven to reduce the risk of falls in older people.

Anyone over 50 can express an interest in joining the classes, which will take place **every Tuesday** from **1.30-3.30pm** at **Solihull United Reform Church**, starting on **Tuesday 16 April**. To find out more about how to sign up to the programme, email solihull@dancetohealth.org or call **07470 799 540** or visit dancetohealth.org.



Age UK Solihull Services

Community Advice Hubs 0121 709 7590

Benefits Service 0121 709 7592

Home Support Service 0121 704 7848

Older People's Information and Advice 0121 704 7840

Befriending 0121 704 7846

Clubs and Activities 0121 704 7811

Postural Stability Exercise Service 0121 704 7845

Winter Warmth Helpline 0121 704 8080

Digital Champion Project 0121 704 7851

Stay in touch

Age UK Solihull

The Core, Solihull Central Library, Homer Road, Solihull, B91 3RG

Tel 0121 704 7844 (Office/Admin)

Email info@ageuksolihull.org.uk

events@ageuksolihull.org.uk (Fundraising)

volunteering@ageuksolihull.org.uk

Website www.ageuksolihull.org.uk

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Age UK Solihull Newsletter Issue 24 · Spring 2024

newsletter

Birchmere House · Pensioners Fair · Success Stories · Fundraising · Falls Prevention

Fun at the fair



Meriden MP, **Saqib Bhatti**, recently hosted his first **Pensioners Fair** at Knowle Village Hall.

The event offered the opportunity for older

people and their families to find out about the many **services and initiatives** on offer for older residents of the Solihull borough. Over **100 residents** attended, enjoying hot drinks and biscuits along with the chance to speak to exhibitors and Mr Bhatti himself.

We had a stand where our Advisors offered information about everything from how to keep warm this winter, social clubs and groups, through to benefits available and later life planning.

We were joined by several other organisations that offer services for local older people, including care providers, solicitors, estate agents, cleaning companies and more.

Belmont extends club support

We are delighted that local care provider, **Belmont Healthcare**, have extended their monthly donation towards the **entertainment** at our **Wednesday Afternoon Club**.

The club offers companionship, refreshments, and activities on a weekly basis, as well as entertainment in the form of a singer, speaker or other performer once a month.

Belmont Healthcare began to make donations to

Mr Bhatti says: *"I am so pleased to have hosted my first Pensioners Fair for the Meriden constituency. It is so important to support our elderly community by making sure they have access to all of the wonderful local services available...I am so glad everyone enjoyed the event, and I am very much looking forward to the next one."*

We were honoured to be selected to receive the proceeds from the event, raised through exhibitors' fees and sponsorship. Over **£1,000** was raised in total, which will go a long way to helping us to be here for older residents of the borough.

Our Head of Services, Bernice Jones, says, *"We were thrilled to be a part of Saqib Bhatti's Pensioners Fair, showcasing the support that is available locally to pensioners, both provided by Age UK Solihull and other organisations across the borough."*

"We are grateful that the proceeds from the fair were donated to Age UK Solihull to help us to continue to provide vital advice, companionship and practical support to around 10,000 Solihull residents every year. Thank you to Mr Bhatti and everyone else involved in putting on this event."

cover the cost of the **monthly entertainment** in March last year, planning to continue until December. The monthly support has now been extended until **June 2024**, which we are **so grateful** for, as are our club members, who always **look forward** to the monthly entertainment.



Local charity | Local services | Local people

Registered Charity Number: 1055887

Pass it on! If you have a printed version of this newsletter, don't throw it away after you've read it. Why not pass it to a friend to read or leave it somewhere in the community (but don't litter!) for someone else to find?

Festive Throwback

We had a wonderful **festive period** 2023, both in terms of making it a **joyful time** for our clients, as well as **raising funds** to provide our services.



Members of our social clubs enjoyed a festive **meal and party**, made possible thanks to funding from **Waitrose, The Rotary Club of Knowle & Dorridge**, and the **Household Support Fund**. Our **PSI classes** (pictured) also enjoyed a Christmas party, with gifts donated by the **Balsall Common Lions**.



Over **500 gifts** for our clients were collected or donated by local organisations including **Home Instead Solihull, Morgan Parkes, Abbott Medical, Energy One, Shirley Heath Junior School, Wadsworths Solicitors, Damson Wood Infant School, Blossomfield Rose Care Home, George Fentham School, Our Lady of Compassion School, Pop Voices Choir, Lady Katherine Leveson CE Primary School, Solihull School, and Solihull St Alphege Rotary Club**. In addition, **Solihull Fire Station** collected items to make up hampers, and **National Gas Metering** (pictured) purchased items for luxury hampers for our most vulnerable clients.

We held a **Carol Singing Collection Day** on Solihull High Street with local choirs, **Pop Voices** (pictured), **Everybody Sings** and **Sing Bently Heath Shanty Singers**. Singers and volunteers collected donations totaling over **£850**. **Solihull Chandos Choir** also invited us to their Christmas Concert, where we spoke about the Charity, collected donations and sold Christmas cards and raffle tickets, raising almost **£300**.



We also joined **Shirley Lions' Father Christmas** and his sleigh around the streets of Shirley, collecting donations on three evenings, raising over **£1,150**.



52 chocolate bouquets were raffled off by various companies, groups and individuals, raising over **£2,000** profit—a record year! Our **Christmas Raffle** raised over **£1,200**, and profit from **Christmas cards** sales came to **£365**.

Alderbrook Sixth Form and **Chloe Andrews** both held **Jingle Bakes** festive bake sales, raising over **£400** between them.

Thank you to everyone who **supported us** over the festive period and helped raise this **incredible amount**.

raffle prizes, using his contacts in the catering industry. The coveted top prize was **afternoon tea at the Savoy Hotel**, with rail travel included. Other prizes included an overnight stay at **Eckington Manor**, lunch at The **Restaurant at UCB**, a **Côte at Home** hamper, and passes for the fitness clubs at **The Village** and **Voco St John's** hotels.

Income from the event exceeded **£4,000**, boosted by generous sponsorship from Solihull-based software and services provider, **Energy One**. We were thrilled with this total which will help us to be here for older and vulnerable residents who need us.



An Evening of Celebration

It was great to see so many of our supporters at **"An Evening of Celebration"**, which we held in November to wrap up our **Ruby Anniversary** year, and **raise funds** to support older people in Solihull.



Around **90 guests** attended the event at the **Crowne Plaza Hotel**. The evening consisted of a **dinner, drinks, a Speed Quiz**, and an informative talk by **Bill Farnsworth** about his time as a chef at the iconic **Savoy Hotel**.

Bill sourced some incredible

What's coming up



Comedy Night Fri 19 April
Shirley British Legion B90 3BQ
Get ready to giggle for a good cause with this evening of comedy.

Welcome Wednesdays Wed 24 April
(and the last Wednesday of every month)
Eastcote Park Care Home B92 OJA
Come along for hot drinks, cake and company.

Tandem Skydive Sat 4 May
(or another date of your choice)
Hinton Airfield, Brackley NN13 5NS
Join our other supporters on this Jump Day, or contact us to arrange another date. Entry is FREE*

Knowle Fun Run Sun 19 May
Arden School, Knowle B93 OPT
Enter this 5k or 10k race, or help as a Volunteer Marshal to help us receive some of the funds raised from the event.

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD)

Sat 15 June (or can be done on Friday 14 June)
Wear or do something purple and make a small donation to Age UK Solihull to support our work in safeguarding vulnerable adults.

Inflatable obstacle course Sat 27 July
University Of Warwick, Coventry, CV4 7AL
Bounce your way through this giant obstacle course! Choose a distance to suit you and get ready for the ultimate inflatable adventure!

Bungee jump Various dates
Cliff Lakes Waterpark, Tamworth B78 2DL
One for the daredevils! Soar through the air and enjoy breathtaking views. Entry is FREE*

Run Solihull Sun 11 August
North Solihull Sports Centre B37 5LA
Complete a half marathon, a 10k, or enter the little ones into the junior race, in Solihull.

Slip Into Slippers Tue 1 October
Wear your slippers for the day and donate to Age UK Solihull to mark International Day of Older Persons.

Amsterdam Marathon Sun 20 October
Amsterdam, Netherlands
We are super excited to offer our first overseas challenge. Choose a full or half marathon over this flat and scenic course. Entry is FREE*

Run Alton Towers
Sat 16 & Sun 17 November
Alton Towers Theme Park
Take on a 5k, 10k, half marathon or kids' race. Entry is FREE* and includes ride access!

To find out about these events and activities, contact the Fundraising Team on **events@ageuksolihull.org.uk** or **0121 704 7842** visit **www.ageuk.org.uk/solihull/fundraising** or scan the **QR code**.

*Minimum sponsorship and travel/accommodation costs apply.



A blossoming partnership

Blossomfield Grange Care Home supported us throughout 2023, raising an incredible **£3,000** through events, raffles, donations and match funding from **Care UK**.

This remarkable achievement demonstrates the home's commitment to supporting the local community and enhancing the lives of local older adults. The team plans to continue supporting us in 2024, with **over £600** already raised this year through donations and a Quiz Night.

We are **thrilled** with the amount raised, and the support we have received from the home. We look forward to continuing to work together this year.



Thought of your own fundraising idea? Email **events@ageuksolihull.org.uk** to discuss.

With thanks to our sponsor:

BIRCHMERE HOUSE CARE HOME

Live Safe & Well

Birchmere House Care Home provides a safe and supportive environment where residents can flourish, make new friends, remain part of their local community and live a life of possibility.

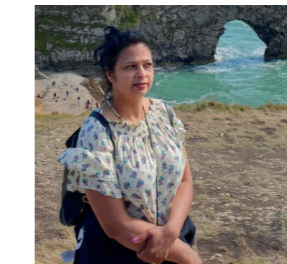
- Residential, nursing and respite
- Nutritionally balanced seasonal menus
- Spacious, beautifully decorated rooms
- Highly trained staff teams
- Stimulating schedule of daily activities and entertainment

01564 621209 averyhealthcare.co.uk

Avery | CHA WINNER 2023
CARE HOME AWARDS

1270 Warwick Road | Knowle | Solihull | B93 9LQ

Counting down the days!



Our **befriending service** is a lifeline for older Solihull residents who live alone, with no family or support nearby.

We match older people with a **Volunteer Befriender**, based on interests and personalities, to encourage **long-term bonds**.

One such successful pairing is **Pooja** (pictured) and **Pam** (stock image used). Pooja has been visiting Pam every Friday for a year, and Pam recently sent us some wonderful feedback.

She says, *"Thank you for putting my Befriender in touch with me. Pooja is a delight to know - she is very sweet, and kind, and a good listener. She has helped me mentally since I lost my husband of 53 years."*

"Sometimes when I feel sad and lonely, I just remind myself that Pooja will be here on Friday for her visit. I have learned from her and look forward to her visits. So thank you Age UK [Solihull] for your help in giving me such a lovely person, Pooja."

And the feeling is mutual! Many of our Befrienders tell us that they get just as much out of volunteering as the older people they visit, and Pooja agrees.

She says, *"Being a befriender at Age UK Solihull has been an incredibly enriching experience. From spending time with Pam chatting away or listening to her incredible stories, I feel great warmth and companionship in her presence. I also count down the days till I get to visit Pam and I look forward to our weekly catch-ups and chats. It is a privilege to call Pam a friend, although it's only been a year since our paths crossed, it feels as if we've been friends for years. I am grateful towards the Age UK Solihull for helping me meet a very kind and wonderful friend and also for their remarkable values and work."*

Can you spare an hour or two to visit a lonely older person? We particularly need Befrienders in **North Solihull**. If you can help, please get in touch on **volunteering@ageuksolihull.org.uk** or **0121 704 7843**.

Every gift in every Will, large or small, helps make a big difference. Visit **www.ageuk.org.uk/solihull/leave-a-gift**

Visit **www.easyfundraising.org.uk** to raise money for us when you shop - at no extra cost to you!