

# AGE concern

Birmingham

Support available from Age Concern  
Birmingham during the Coronavirus Outbreak

Support line open  
Mon to Sat  
9.30am to 4pm  
to provide advice  
and help

Well-being calls to  
those who need  
extra support and  
reassurance

A home cooked  
meal delivery  
service from the  
Communittea cafe

Free food bags or  
shopping service  
for those unable to  
shop for food and  
essential items

The above services can be accessed by calling  
0121 362 3650 or emailing  
[info@ageconcernbirmingham.org.uk](mailto:info@ageconcernbirmingham.org.uk)



**Last week we celebrated Volunteers' Week. We want to say a big thank you to all of the volunteers who are part of the team here at Age Concern Birmingham. Whether it's befriending an older person living on their own, helping out with donations in our charity shop or serving customers in our Communita cafe, we couldn't do what we do without them!**

We have kept in touch with all the volunteers from the day centres by phone.

JW who volunteers at Wellington Court says she enjoys her conversations with the girls as staff and volunteers keep in touch. She commented "I look forward to my Friday catch up with PF putting the world to rights over a cup of tea, me in my house and PF in hers."

Angie (Petra) lives at Brookmeadow Court and volunteered in the day centre there until it was suspended until further notice due to Covid 19. Angie is currently looking out for the residents social distancing and having chats with neighbours and ensuring they have essentials. Angie keeps us up to date with regular calls about clients who would come down to the centre for lunch or to join in the activities, sending our best wishes to them all.

Zoe who volunteers for us said "Volunteering with Age Concern has so far been easy and rewarding. I've been really well supported by the team, with appropriate (but light touch) training to begin with and regular friendly contact from their volunteer supporter. I've felt trusted to get on with the volunteering without having to go through lots of hoops and hurdles, but at the same time I have felt supported and reassured by the background structures in place."

Mandy, who does admin for us said she is "really looking forward to coming back to volunteer as I've really missed it."



Debbie said that "popping in to volunteer and being able to chat to the friendly team has really been great."



# Thank you to our amazing volunteers!

*“I really look forward to the chat with my volunteer, it takes my mind off the issues going on around us.....we hear enough of the negative things at the moment, and I want to chat about something different, it really has lifted my spirits”*

*Mrs S*

*“Everyone I have spoken to has been lovely....you all (at Age Concern Birmingham) have really kept an eye on me and there hasn't been one person who I haven't liked. I'm in my 90s, I was one of six children, all my sisters/brothers have died now....and there's only me here in Birmingham. The support has been brilliant and much more than I could have imagined. The lady who phones me is lovely and we've had some great chats and get on well. It makes a real difference and I can't wait to meet face to face and chat over a cup of tea.”*

*Mrs D*

*“I truly really appreciate the time and effort that everyone has put in to provide shopping for me.”*

*Mr AJ*

*“I enjoy my little chats with Peter (volunteer) when he brings me my shopping, such a lovely man”*

*Mrs MP*

thank  
you!

# Volunteering at Age Concern Birmingham

We are extremely lucky to have amazing volunteers here at Age Concern Birmingham and their contribution is invaluable. We asked one of them about her experience with us. Here is **Emma's story**.



“When I started volunteering at Age Concern I had been solo isolating for over 5 weeks and was feeling really disconnected from the world. I was looking for a way to help other people who might be feeling lonely and isolated and was really excited to get asked to come in and meet Claire and the team.

The welcome I got was so warm – all the staff and volunteers were so kind and welcoming to me – and it was just lovely to be near other people.

I’m now helping with shopping, deliveries and befriending calls and am thoroughly enjoying it!

While we are observing all social distancing guidelines to keep ourselves and our clients safe and well, it’s amazing to be able to see other people – even if it’s waving from the end of the drive – and it’s really keeping my spirits up.

The brief weeks I spent alone really brought home to me the reality of isolation for so many people in our community, and the work the team at Age Concern are doing to ease that is really remarkable. It’s amazing to know there is a group of people who care so much about supporting others and I’m hoping to continue to volunteer as we return to a new normal. The humour, resilience and kindness of our clients at such a challenging time has really lifted my spirits and I’m really thankful to get the chance to work with such an awesome team.”

**If, like Emma, you would like to volunteer for Age Concern Birmingham, please contact Claire on 07930 354 885.**



# Volunteering at Age Concern Birmingham

## Zoe's Story

When the call went out for volunteers to support the community during the outbreak of Covid-19 I signed up (via [tiny.cc/suttontgether](https://tiny.cc/suttontgether)) pretty much straight away. Why did I do that when things were pretty stressful and I had a whole load of new challenges on my plate? Well, I've volunteered before with other organisations but many of those volunteering opportunities had dried up due to restrictions around lockdown and yet I knew from past experiences that I really enjoyed that feeling that comes with volunteering – in particular the joy of being part of a bigger thing, being part of a community and helping to strengthen and support it.

I didn't have hours and hours of free time to offer. I didn't have a car, so couldn't offer to do deliveries. I felt nervous about the virus, so wasn't too keen on volunteering in person. But I did have a phone and a comfy armchair with tea and biscuits on tap and so I was very happy to make what are called "welfare calls" from home. This essentially means I call people a couple of times a week to see how they are doing, listen to how they are feeling, and share a few minutes of being together, even if only over a phonline.

After checking my DBS and a brief induction with Age Concern, I was given a list of people to call. The first week it was a little strange – none of these were people I had ever met. They didn't know me from Adam. And all of us were feeling rather strange in the new coronavirus-shaped world. However, very quickly we started to build rapport and trust and now my twice weekly calls are a part of my weekly schedule that I value.

All of the people I chat with are in some way isolated, without anyone else at home with them. Some of them have more complex circumstances than others. Some are having a really hard time in lockdown. All of them, however, seem hugely grateful to have regular chats and to know someone is keeping an eye (or, in this case, an ear) out for them. Over the weeks we are gradually getting to know each other little by little, and sharing stories, experiences and feelings is building trust and a sense of connection. And if there's one thing I've been missing more than anything during this period it is that sense of connection with others.

I hope my volunteering is making a difference to those I'm calling. I think it is, given how I hear voices brighten up when I say my name (and, goodness, what an amazing feeling that is!). What I know for certain is that my volunteering is definitely making a difference to me in these strange times. I feel like I'm making a positive contribution and in a tiny but concrete way I'm nurturing a little hope and optimism and togetherness as a foil to the despair, worry, and weariness that features so heavily in much of everyday life at the moment. Not all the phone calls are easy; realising there are people nearby who are so unhappy and living such a difficult life can make me feel sad. But even those calls that are complex help me feel grateful for the life I have, even if it's not all plain sailing for me either living in the Covid-19 climate.



# Volunteer Opportunity

<b>Volunteer Role Title:</b>	Meet & Greet Volunteer
<b>Organisation:</b>	Age Concern Birmingham
<b>About the role:</b>	Based in our Boldmere Head Office welcoming visitors, answering calls and referring to appropriate staff including Jubilee Citizens UK, Carers Hub and Communita Café.
<b>Key tasks:</b>	Welcoming visitors, taking messages and liaising with staff across the building.
<b>Skills and qualities needed:</b>	Ability to record messages accurately and relaying by phone or in person to appropriate people, answering calls in a sometimes busy environment,
<b>Support and training offered:</b>	Induction, ongoing training and support for role.
<b>Time commitment and location:</b>	Office Hours Monday – Friday 9am – 4.30pm, any amount of hours between those times.
<b>Apply/find out more:</b>	In the first instance please contact Claire Beattie or Vicki Burns on 0121 362 3650 for an informal chat

# Volunteer Opportunity

<b>Volunteer Role Title:</b>	Charity Shop Volunteer
<b>Organisation:</b>	Age Concern Birmingham
<b>About the role:</b>	To volunteer in our Charity Shop for a few hours per week, we are open Monday – Saturday 9am – 4.30pm,
<b>Key tasks:</b>	Sorting and displaying donations, pricing and labelling, till use, general upkeep and tidying of shop.
<b>Skills and qualities needed:</b>	To be customer focused and be able to work in a team with other volunteers.
<b>Support and training offered:</b>	Induction and ongoing training and support.
<b>Time commitment and location:</b>	Boldmere Road.
<b>Apply/find out more:</b>	In the first instance please contact Claire Beattie or Vicki Burns on 0121 362 3650 for an informal chat

# Volunteer Opportunity

<b>Volunteer Role Title:</b>	Grounds Maintenance Volunteer
<b>Organisation:</b>	Age Concern Birmingham
<b>About the role:</b>	We are looking for someone who enjoys being outside, chatting with others doing a little gardening and tidying's to keep our outside café and outside shop area looking neat and tidy.
<b>Key tasks:</b>	To join our friendly team of staff and volunteers, keeping our outside area neat and tidy at our Boldmere building, light duties, for example planting flowers, weeding, sweeping and general tidying.
<b>Support and training offered:</b>	To become part of a friendly team and make a difference in your local community. All tools and equipment / training provided. The role also includes a free food and drink offer for all our volunteers in our Communitéa café.
<b>Time commitment and location:</b>	Volunteering time to suit the volunteer and Age Concern Birmingham's opening hours.
<b>Apply/find out more:</b>	In the first instance please contact Claire Beattie or Vicki Burns on 0121 362 3650 for an informal chat

# Sutton Coldfield Together

Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council and Age Concern Birmingham are working together with the Sutton Coldfield Charitable Trust, and voluntary, community and faith organisations across Sutton Coldfield to ensure that local residents in need are able to access the support and information they need during these unprecedented times. A new Sutton Coldfield Together website has been created where help can be requested, and this also has the details of local organisations and groups offering support and services to those in need. You can access this at:

[tiny.cc/suttontgether](https://tiny.cc/suttontgether)

We know that we have a caring community here in Sutton Coldfield and that many people will want to help out, and so the website also has a facility for those wishing to get involved as a volunteer, as well as advice on how to be a good neighbour in a way that keeps everyone safe.

In addition, the Sutton Coldfield Neighbourhood Network Scheme will be offering support to voluntary and community groups and faith organisations who may need advice and guidance together with access to additional resources to enable them to deliver support and services to residents at this time and you can contact them on [NNS@ageconcernbirmingham.org.uk](mailto:NNS@ageconcernbirmingham.org.uk).

It is important that we all now focus our efforts in line with Government advice and this coordinated local response to give Sutton Coldfield the best chance of fighting COVID-19 together, to safeguard vulnerable people, avoid duplication and share only accurate and up to date information.



St Giles

Hospice Care

## New Virtual Bereavement Help Point

Age Concern Birmingham and St Giles are teaming up to launch a new online service helping bereaved people in Sutton Coldfield during the COVID-19 lockdown.

If you or anyone you know locally are newly bereaved or struggling with issues relating to the loss of a loved one then please call on:

**01543 434536**

**AGE** concern  
Birmingham



Since its launch last week, we have had a great response to Margaret's Mission, a fundraiser led by one of our Trustees, Margaret Birkett to help us to continue to provide support to our most vulnerable older adults at this time of crisis and beyond. 'Margaret's Mission' will enable people to contribute to the work we are doing to support people and will help us achieve two fundamental aims:

- No older person should go a week without a friendly chat or a visit
- No older person should go without food

**You can help us to make a difference and donate online at <https://givi.ng/mqw9> or via telephone on 0121 362 3650**



Remember everything we can raise can make a difference, every little bit counts, so please donate what you can when you can. You can even set up your own fundraising activities for Margaret's Mission, just get in touch with us to see how we can support you to support us.

# Birmingham Carers Hub

delivered in partnership with Forward Carers



## Carers Week 2020 : The launch of Carer Friendly Brum

Carers Week runs from 8<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> June 2020 and because of the Covid-19 crisis it is a little different from normal because it remains impossible to run events and activities which involve people meeting together in a physical place. Many carers we have spoken to during this time have emphasised that they feel isolated in the best of times, so the new Covid-19 restrictions have added to this feeling of isolation as well as presenting new challenges to their caring role, including financial pressures, difficulty getting food, concerns about contracting the virus.

From the start of the crisis, all face-to-face meetings with carers and all carer group activity had to stop to comply with government rules and to try to keep everyone safe. Our team at the Birmingham Carers Hub had to quickly move from working in our office at Age Concern Birmingham and running drop-in and outreach appointments to enabling the team to work from their homes. We want to pay tribute to our staff team for their commitment in continuing the service reasonably seamlessly and also our thanks to the wider Age Concern team and to colleagues at Forward Carers and Ageing Better for their support.

The theme of this year's national carer's week is 'Making Carers Visible' and to celebrate this theme the lead organisation of our partnership, Forward Carers, have launched a mission to make Birmingham a 'Carer Friendly City'. We have seen an increase in innovative ways to provide advice and support to carers in Birmingham. Carers can still register with us by calling **0333 006 9711** or emailing the team on [info@birminghamcarershub.org.uk](mailto:info@birminghamcarershub.org.uk) and we continue to carry out statutory carer assessments over the telephone, as well as giving advice on things like welfare benefits. The team are also pro-actively contacting registered carers to offer safe and well checks and to tell people about how to apply for a free Carers Card which gives lots of discounts and benefits.

Both our Carers Hub advice team and our Ageing Better advisors have worked closely with Age Concern Birmingham and with the Ageing Better team at BVSC to provide advice and support to older carers and older people generally, especially through the ACB helpline on **0121 362 3650**. Our Ageing Better advisors have also been contacting the carer groups who they have supported to offer advice on how to support groups and networks remotely as well as supporting people to apply for the Ageing Better Transition Fund. Contact our Ageing Better advisors on **07852 577251**.

For information, advice and support, carers can call the Birmingham Carers Hub on 0333 006 9711 or to register as a carer visit <https://forwardcarers.org.uk/local-services/carers-register-form/>



# communit<sup>e</sup>a cafe

In response to the self isolation measures introduced by the Government, our aim is to ensure that older people and others who are vulnerable have a healthy meal that can be delivered to their home.

Current choices are:

Mushroom Stroganoff (£4)

Chinese Chicken Curry & Rice (£4)

Sweet & Sour Chicken & Rice (£4)

Cottage Pie with Vegetables (£4)

Fish Pie with Vegetables (£4)

Pork Chop with herby butter, new potatoes and peas (£4)



Free delivery to Sutton Coldfield, Four Oaks, Erdington & Kingstanding.

Meals can be delivered outside of these areas depending on amounts ordered but this will be subject to a delivery charge.

Please do give us a call to have a chat about your requirements as we want to help!

Call the café direct on 0121 630 2462

or email

[communit<sup>e</sup>a@ageconcernbirmingham.org.uk](mailto:communit<sup>e</sup>a@ageconcernbirmingham.org.uk)

# communitēa cafe



Fish and chip Friday

Here at Communitēa Cafe

Served 12 til 2

Fish and Chips £5

Curry Sauce or Mushy Peas 50P

Takeaway Only

# communit<sup>e</sup>a cafe

**\*\*NEW\*\***

**TAKE AWAY MENU 9.30 till 1.30**

**AVAILABLE FROM MONDAY 11TH MAY**

**BACON AND EGG MUFFIN £3.00**

**SAUSAGE AND EGG MUFFIN £3.00**

**\*\*\*MEAL DEAL\*\*\***

**HASH BROWN**

**HOT OR COLD DRINK**

**£4.50**

**BACON OR SAUSAGE SANDWICH £2.60**

**ADD EGG, MUSHROOMS BEANS OR TOMATO 60P**

**TOASTED TEACAKE £1.75**

**FULL BARISTA SERVICE AVAILABLE**



**Call the café direct on 0121 630 2462**

**or email**

**[communit<sup>e</sup>a@ageconcernbirmingham.org.uk](mailto:communit<sup>e</sup>a@ageconcernbirmingham.org.uk)**

**You can find the Communit<sup>e</sup>a café at**

**Age Concern Birmingham**

**76—78 Boldmere Road**

**Sutton Coldfield B73 5TJ**

# commonitea cafe



## Breakfast Box

2 Bacon, 1 Sausage, 1 Egg,  
1 Hash Brown, Mushrooms,  
Beans or Tomatoes

2 Toast

£5.00

Available Monday to Friday 9.30am till 12.30pm

# Ageing Better in Birmingham City Wide Hub & Carers Hub

Do you want to help and reduce social isolation for Brummies aged 50+ during the coronavirus pandemic?

Not sure how to get your idea up and running?

Get in touch with Ageing Better in Birmingham!

**£2,000**  
**THE AGEING**  
**BETTER FUND**  
**REMAINS OPEN**



WE'RE GETTING THROUGH THIS  
**TOGETHER**

**#StaySafe**



**TO APPLY, GO TO**  
[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/AGEINGBETTERFUND](https://tinyurl.com/ageingbetterfund)

# Further information and resources



For the most up-to-date **advice and guidance on the coronavirus pandemic** visit: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

For the latest **health information** on <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

To report **fraud and cyber crime** visit <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/> or call 0300 123 2040

If you are struggling with your **mental health** you can speak to someone from **Birmingham Mind**. Their Helpline is open 7 days a week from 9 am - 11 pm. **Tel: 0121 262 3555**. Or email [help@birminghammind.org](mailto:help@birminghammind.org).

For **bereavement support services**, contact St Giles Hospice on **01543 434536**, **Monday to Friday 9am – 4.30pm and Saturday to Sunday, 10am – 1pm**.

Outside of these hours, you can call the 24/7 advice and support line on **0300 330 9410**.

If you, your staff or someone you know is experiencing **Domestic Abuse**, the **Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid** helpline is 0808 800 0028 (open Mon to Fri during office hours) and the National Domestic Violence Helpline is operating 7 days per week, 24 hours per day on 0808 2000 247. If in danger you should always ring the police. Ring 999.

Men experiencing DV can call the following Helplines: **Respect** on 0808 801 0327 or **Mankind** on 01823 334244

(PLEASE BE AWARE OF SAFETY WHEN YOU GIVE OUT NUMBERS)



**Join us online!**

Website: [www.ageconcernbirmingham.org.uk](http://www.ageconcernbirmingham.org.uk)

Facebook: [@ageconcernbirminghamuk](https://www.facebook.com/ageconcernbirminghamuk)

Twitter: [@ACBirmingham1](https://twitter.com/ACBirmingham1)

Instagram: [ageconcernbirmingham](https://www.instagram.com/ageconcernbirmingham)

To subscribe to our Age Concern Birmingham mailing list and receive a copy of this newsletter electronically please email [\*\*info@ageconcernbirmingham.org.uk\*\*](mailto:info@ageconcernbirmingham.org.uk)