Midlothian Older People's Newsletter

Issue 5: 2024

Welcome to YOUR newsletter...

We hope you find this newsletter useful. Perhaps it may even inspire you to try something new!

This newsletter aims to support your wellbeing and social life this winter, to keep you as active as you can be and connected within your community. It has positive ideas, links to local organisations, tips to reduce the risk of falling, and suggestions for support if you're worried about energy prices or the cost-of-living.

We hope this season will be positive and social. A cheerful time where you connect with people, perhaps within a social group, enjoying the warmth of human interaction, friendship, support

and lots of fun and laughter. Fresh air and a walk can be important - perhaps with a neighbour or friends to brighten your spirit. If you're able and active, think about helping others, reach out and in doing so, feel better yourself!

This year let's all pull together, keep connected and help ourselves and others traverse the winter season.

Be well. Reach out. Keep connected. Take care. Be social. Keep talking. Smile. Think of others!







Support with the cost of living

If money is tight at the moment there are many places that might be able to help.



FOOD

Community Food Pantries

Pantries stock a range of food that you can choose from. You can join as a member for a few pounds each week and in return shop for groceries worth more.

MAEDT Community Pantry,

Mayfield & Easthouses, 14-15 Bogwood Court,

Mayfield, Dalkeith, EH22 5DG.

0131 663 5317.

Central Dalkeith & Woodburn Pantry, The MARC Building, 10 Woodburn Road, Dalkeith, EH22 2AT. 07384 376156.

Penicuik, Food, facts, friends, 42 John Street, Penicuik. EH26 8AB. 01968 675417

Gorebridge Beacon Community Pantry, The Beacon, Hunterfield Road, EH23 4TT. 01875 816320.

Newtongrange Pantry, 67 Gardiner Place, EH22 4RT. 07821 631975.

TRAVEL

Free bus travel

If you are over 60 you can travel for free on buses. www.transport.gov.scot/concessionary-travel/60plus-or-disabled

BENEFITS

The Welfare Rights team at Midlothian Council or Citizen's Advice Bureau can give you advice about benefits you might be entitled to such as Pension Credit, Carer's allowance supplement, funeral support payments or adult disability payments. They can also give you information about grants such as the Scottish Welfare Fund for people in crisis.

Citizen's Advice Bureau Penicuik
01968 675 259 bureau@penicuikcab.org.uk
Citizen's Advice Bureau Dalkeith
0131 660 1636 bureau@dalkeithcab.org.uk

Welfare Rights Team, Midlothian Council 0131 270 8922

CHANGEWORKS.

AFFORDABLE WARMTH

Changeworks is Scotland's leading environmental charity delivering solutions for low carbon living and supporting people keep affordably warm at home.

They work in Midlothian to help people tackle fuel poverty and can help with: energy efficiency, billing issues, debts, warm home discount applications, and more!

If you would like help from a Changeworks Energy Advisor, you can fill out the online referral form www.changeworks.org.uk/referral or call (freephone) 0800 870 8800, 9am – 5pm, Monday – Friday.

STAYING WARM

Changeworks and Midlothian Council offer advice on saving energy bills. They can offer support around managing heating in the home and putting in renewable technologies. changeworksindalkeith@changeworks.org.uk 0131 555 4010 www.changeworks.org.uk

Warmer Homes Scotland Fund 0808 808 2282 www.homeenergyscotland.org Ofgem www.ofgem.gov.uk



Green health prescriptions

Keeping well in nature

Midlothian has many beautiful landscapes and green spaces and being in nature is a brilliant way to boost your mental health and wellbeing. This could be going for a walk, gardening or simply by sitting in a green space and enjoying your surroundings. Spending time outdoors has been shown to help people's physical health, mental health and help manage long term conditions.

Health professionals may offer you a Green Health Prescription alongside or instead of traditional treatments. Talk to a wellbeing practitioner in your GP surgery, look for the Green Health noticeboard in your GP surgery or visit www.midspace.co.uk and search 'green prescription' for more information.



Immunisations for Older Adults

Vaccination is the safest way to protect against an infectious disease. Once you have been vaccinated, you will be able to fight the disease if you come into contact with it.

Find out more about these vaccines and how they work:

www.nhsinform.scot/healthy-living/immunisation

Up-to-date information on vaccination clinics can be found at www.midlothian.gov.uk/mid-hscp/info/3/what-we-do/74/vaccinations or by calling 0300 790 6296.

COVID and Flu vaccines

Full information about eligibility and winter vaccines can be found at NHS Inform's winter vaccines pages.

All Covid and flu enquiries, or any changes to appointments should be directed to the National Call Centre on **0800 030 8013** or the booking portal: www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/covid-19-services/covid-19-vaccination

Eligible patients will be contacted either by letter, text or email depending on their preferences. Patients are advised to wait until they are contacted.

Housebound patients have received a letter already, advising that they don't need to call. The vaccination team have started these visits, which will continue in the New Year if required.

Winter Flu and COVID-19 vaccinations are being offered to people who are eligible.

Flu can be serious for some people. This year's vaccine gives you the best possible protection against the flu viruses likely to be circulating this season. The coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccines helps to build up your immunity to the virus, so your body will fight it off more easily if it affects you.

Invitations to book or attend an appointment are now being sent. Letters inviting you to get the vaccine will be sent to the address you've registered with your GP.

Look out for your invitation.

For more information scan the QR code or visit: www.nhsinform.scot/winter-vaccines

If you're aged 65 years
or over, make sure
you get your flu and
COVID-19 vaccines.

Public Health **
Scotland S

Midlothian Vaccinations Clinics

Clinics are closed on public holidays & lunchtimes: 12.30pm - 1.15pm

Midlothian Community Hospital, 70 Eskbank Road, EH22 3ND Monday – Sunday: 8.30am – 4.30pm

Dalkeith Medical Practice, 24 - 26 St Andrew St, Dalkeith EH22 1AP Monday - Friday: 8.30am - 4.30pm

Eastfield Medical Practice, Eastfield Farm Road, Penicuik EH26 8EZ Monday 8.30am – 5pm; Friday: 1pm – 5pm

Reduce your risk of falling

- Have you had any unusual dizziness, light headedness, headaches or pain?
 Tell your GP if you do or if you have had a fall.
- Are you on the right medication?
 Ask your pharmacist or GP to check.
- Is your sight and hearing OK?
 Many opticians can test both free of charge.
- Do your shoes or slippers fit well?
 It is a good idea to have shoes or slippers with a back which covers your heel rather than ones you 'slide' into.

- Is your home well lit and do you have enough space to walk around?
 It is a good idea to move any rugs from the floor.
- Are you drinking enough and eating a balanced diet?
 Eating foods with calcium and vitamin D can help maintain healthy bones.
- Are you getting enough exercise?
 Being as active as you can help your strength and balance. Everyday tasks around the house can help, as can joining a local group.

What to do if you fall in your home

If you are injured, call 999 and ask for an ambulance. If you are not injured, call 111 and ask for help.

- **Try to get help** this could be by your community alarm or phoning a relative, friend or neighbour. Did you know you can ask your smart speaker to do this?
- Try shouting, or banging on a wall to attract your neighbour's attention.
- If you can, reach for a blanket or clothing to keep warm.
- After moving gently, if you think you can get up safely, follow the steps below (from the NHS Inform website).



1. Roll onto your side



2. Push onto your hands



3. Push onto your hands and knees to crawl



4. Side on to solid furniture strongest leg next to it foot flat to ground



5. Push up and turn slowly



6. Rest – and check for injury again

Ageing Well

The Ageing Well project was set up 25 years ago to improve the physical and mental health of older people in Midlothian, improving their quality of life through a varied programme of activities.



Trained volunteers are the key to the success of Ageing Well. They're responsible for running and supporting a range of free or low-cost activities in their local area, as well as encouraging, assisting and inspiring their peers in adopting a more active and healthier lifestyle.

There are currently 68 volunteers, who are active in developing the weekly Be Active activities programme of over 60 sessions or classes each week. These include singing, indoor bowls, dancing, tai chi, badminton, table tennis and pickleball.

BEST STEP FORWARD CLASSES

Build up confidence with trained members of staff to support you with strength and balance exercises.

NEW AGE KURLING

New Age Kurling, like curling without the ice, is suitable for all abilities as well as being a lot of fun. There are groups in Bonnyrigg, Newtongrange, Gorebridge, Penicuik, Millerhill and Loanhead.

FUNCTIONAL FITNESS TESTS

These free six-part tests are organised by trained volunteers and can measure your fitness compared to other people the same age.

Email: ageingwell@midlothian.gov.uk or phone Vivian on 07825 356478

WALKING GROUPS

A mainstay of the Be Active programme is the walking programme, attended by approximately 200 people each week.



As well as larger events such as Walk The Line, which this year attracted over 100 walkers, there are numerous free weekly sessions for different levels of fitness.

Levels offered including best step forward, for those who have lost confidence in their balance, then walk and talk, strollers, striders, and a monthly challenging trekker walk.

For more information on any of the walking groups please call Mark on **07768 554378**

None of these activities would be possible without the enthusiasm and commitment of Ageing Well's volunteers so a big thanks to them all.

Walking groups currently offered:

DAY & TIME	LOCATION	MEETING POINT	LEVELS
Monday 9.30am-10.15am	Penicuik	St Mungo's Church Hall	Strength & balance
Monday 1pm-1.45pm	Bonnyrigg	King George V Park	Strength & balance
Tuesday 12.30pm-1.15pm	Pathhead	Callander park Pavilion	Strength & balance
Tuesday 1pm	Gorebridge	Arniston Rangers Car Park	Stroller/Strider
Tuesday 1.30pm	Dalkeith	St Nicholas Church Hall	Stroller/Strider
Wednesday 10.30am-11.10am	Dalkeith	Dalkeith Art Centre	Strength & balance
Wednesday 11am	Mayfield	MAEDT Pavilion	Walk and talk
Thursday 10am	Loanhead	Loanhead Leisure Centre	Stroller/Strider
Thursday 11am	Newtongrange	Newtongrange Library	Walk and Talk
Thursday 11.30am	Woodburn	Grassy Riggs	Walk and Talk
Friday 9.45am	Penicuik	St Mungo's Church Hall	Strider
Friday 10am	Roslin	The Original Rosslyn Inn	Stroller
Friday 11am	Mayfield	MAEDT Pavilion	Walk and talk
Friday 11am-11.45am	Newtongrange	Newtongrange Leisure Centre	Best step forward
Friday 1.30pm	Rosewell	Rosewell Church Hall	Stroller/Strider
Sunday 1.30pm	Bonnyrigg	Lasswade High Centre	Stroller/Strider





Dial-A-Ride and Dial-A-Bus... getting you from A to B!

If you find it hard to get out and about, HcL might be able to help. They provide supported door-through-door transport to help you get out and about, do your shopping, or attend appointments and social activities.

Dial-A-Ride

Choose where you want to go – a medical appointment, the shops, a visit to friends or family, to church, the cinema or theatre.

Dial-A-Bus

Hop on an HcL Bus to local shopping centres including: Cameron Toll, Tesco Eskbank, ASDA & Sainsbury's Straiton, Tesco Penicuik and Morrison's Dalkeith.

You can use your concessionary bus pass!



Their drivers pick you up from your front door and can support you to leave your house and on the bus if you need a bit of extra help. They can help you put your coat on, lock your house and help carry your shopping home. Each bus can carry two wheelchair passengers. You can use the service on your own or bring a friend or carer.

For more details on the cost and how to register and book, call:

Dial-A-Ride: **0131 447 9949** Dial-A-Bus: **0131 447 1718**

Email: edinburgh@handicabs.org.uk

NHS Pharmacy First Scotland

NHS Pharmacy First Scotland is an NHS service provided by your local community pharmacy. If you have a minor illness, a pharmacy is the first place you should go for advice.







Further details: **0800 22 44 88** (free from landlines)

or visit: www.nhsinform.scot

Get the right care when and where you need it:



Self Care

Hangovers, coughs, colds, grazes, small cuts, sore throats plus many other minor illnesses and injuries can be treated at home with over-the-counter medicine and rest.





Acne, allergies, athlete's foot, backache, blocked or runny nose, cold sores, constipation, cough, cystitis (in women), diarrhoea, earache, eczema, headache, headlice, haemorrhoids (piles), hay fever, impetigo, indigestion, mouth ulcers, pain, period pain, shingles, some skin conditions such as cellulitis or insect bites, sore throat, threadworms, thrush, urinary tract infections (utis), verrucas, warts, plus advise and treatment for various minor health concerns and symptoms. No appointment is needed and most pharmacies have a private consulting area.



GP/Doctors' Surgery

Arthritis, asthma, back pain, vomiting, stomach ache. GPs & nurses deal with a range of health problems.



Minor Injuries Units

Non-urgent services for conditions such as: cuts, sprains, strain, bruises, itchy rash and minor burns. They are usually led by nurses. No appointment is needed.



A&E/999

Severe bleeding, breathing difficulties, severe chest pain, unconciousness. A&E or 999 is for emergencies, serious or life-threatening situations.

If you're unsure which service best suits your condition and you wish to get advice from a medical professional, call 111 or visit 111.nhs.uk

VOCAL Carer Support

If you are supporting a family member, child, partner or friend to manage a long-term condition, disability, physical or mental health condition or addiction – then you are a carer.



VOCAL supports carers by providing information and advice on practical issues, offering emotional and social support, and by helping them to take a break from their care responsibilities.

Examples of support:

- Creating your Adult Carer Support Plan
- Planning for the future and emergencies
- Help with benefits and financial planning
- Counselling

Call **0808 196 6666 (option 2)** or visit: www.vocal.org.uk/carer-support

Carer events and activities

VOCAL offers a range of events, activities and social groups for unpaid carers. View all sessions, courses, events and activities at:

carerstraining.co.uk

Wee Breaks

VOCAL can help you plan a break by arranging replacement care and helping with travel arrangements, funding options and more. There are also 3 short breaks properties available to carers for free breaks. Find out more at https://weebreaks.com

Midlothian Carer Assistance Fund

VOCAL received funding from the Midlothian Health & Social Care Partnership to support carers facing financial difficulties due to their caring role. The Midlothian Carer Assistance Fund gives carers a one-off grant to meet the rising costs associated with their caring role.

To be eligible, carers must provide care for someone in Midlothian and must be registered with VOCAL, or be willing to register.

Grants may include providing funds to support:

- Costs of setting up Power of Attorney
- Energy costs associated with having your heating on more frequently
- Travel costs due to health-related appointments
- Food costs as a result of the person you care for requiring a special diet

- Sitter service to help you attend health-appointments
- Personal hygiene or continence products
- Specialised clothing
- Specialist equipment or white goods which support the caring role

Grants are not limited to the examples provided, but the funds must support costs that are directly related to the caring role and the rising cost of living.

If you would like to apply, please visit: www.vocal.org.uk/midlothian-carer-assistance-fund

Dalkeith CAB Older Persons Project

Dalkeith CAB operates an Older Persons Project. Heather Ferguson is the Project Lead and is well known in Midlothian as she worked as a Disability Officer at Dalkeith JCP for many years.



Heather works Monday – Wednesday and operates a drop-in clinic from St Johns Church, Dalkeith on Mondays, 10am – 12.30pm. The Older Persons Project is available to all Midlothian Residents over the age of 55. Heather deals with AA forms, Blue Badges, energy worries and Pension Credit applications. If you need help contact Heather via: www.dalkeithcab.org.uk or 0131 660 1636.

TELECARE - ANALOGUE TO DIGITAL UPGRADE

By the end of 2025, all telecommunications providers will have upgraded their systems to new digital technology.

Existing telecare alarms may not work as well on these new ditial telephone lines.



WHAT DO TELECARE CLIENTS NEED TO DO?

You can continue to use your telecare equipment as normal. The Midcare Team will call you to arrange an upgrade your equipment in the next few months

Please get in touch with the Midcare Team if you have:

- changed your telephone line provider
- updated or changed your telephone or internet service package
- been asked by your existing provider to switch your old telephone line to a new digital one.

Email midcas_alarms@midlothian.gov.uk or call 0131 270 5691

PLEASE BE AWARE OF SCAMS

The Midcare Team will never ask you for your bank details over the phone or for payment prior to installing or replacing equipment. If someone calls and asks you to pay them, do not give them your details and end the call.

Improving the Cancer Journey

Macmillan has funded a service that can support people with the impact cancer has on day to day life, such as money, work, family and emotional and practical issues.

They are open to families and carers too and offer everyone time to talk about what matters to them, help them access local supports and services and are a listening ear / point of contact.

Give them a call – they usually see people within 2 weeks of hearing from them.



Email: loth.icj@nhs.scot or call: 0131 537 1500



Shining a light on...



LBRARIES



There's much more through our doors than books...

www.midlothian.gov.uk/libraries

Midlothian Libraries are warm, welcoming and free for everyone.

You can borrow books and audiobooks, use computers and Wi-Fi, and more. You can also apply for blue badges and bus passes - and get new hearing aid batteries.

There are lots of groups and events held in Midlothian Libraries, including reminiscence groups, craft and sewing groups, and book groups.

Many Libraries hold help and advice sessions from a range of organisations, including the Citizen's Advice Bureau and Social Security Scotland.

Newtongrange Library has a pop-up Post Office every Monday (except Bank Holidays) from 11am – 3pm.

Braw Blether

Braw Blether groups come together in Midlothian Libraries to help support mental health and wellbeing.

They use short stories, poems, articles from magazines and other forms of words, sometimes writing, to spark connection and conversation. The groups are open to all.

Call: 07771 345294

Email: Bibliotherapy@midlothian.gov.uk

Or speak to your local library.



Our Lend + Mend Hubs

Danderhall, Gorebridge and Loanhead Libraries, have Lend + Mend hubs where you can access equipment such as sewing and embroidery machines to repair, reuse, and upcycle everyday items FREE of charge.

Visit: www.midlothian.gov.uk/libraries for more information or call: 0131 271 3980



Grassy Riggs

The Grassy Riggs drop-in service for over 65s at the Woodburn Community Hub offers homemade soup and scones, social activities and friendship on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10am.

Everyone over 65 is very welcome to come along and meet new friends on these days.:

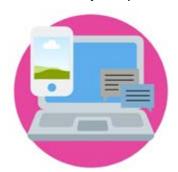
- Tuesday mornings Memories group/braw blether.
- Wednesdays Connect online/knitting group.
- Thursdays Walk and talk group: meeting at 11.30am for a short walk.

Grassy Riggs, Woodburn Community Huib, 10c Woodburn Rd, Dalkeith, EH22 2AT. **0131 654 1770.**

Get connected online

Connect Online groups can help with technology like smartphones, tablets or laptops.

Volunteer Midlothian offer drop-in sessions and home visits if you are housebound or a carer. If you don't have your own device you can borrow a tablet/ iPad and they can provide free internet access.



You can drop into sessions at:

- Dalkeith, St Mary's Church, Tuesdays 2pm – 3.30pm
- Loanhead Library, Wednesdays 11am – 12.30pm
- Rosewell Development Trust, Wednesdays, 1.30pm – 3pm
- Penicuik, Food Fact Friends, Thursdays 10.30am – 12 noon
- Penicuik Library, Thursdays, 2pm – 3.30pm

Call: **07856 573694** or email: **una@volunteermidlothian.org.uk**

Do you have NHS hearing aids?

Dalkeith and Penicuik Libraries host monthly hearing aid clinics, delivered by RNID.

Friendly volunteers offer support with hearing aid maintenance, hearing checks, repair and more.

- **Dalkeith Library:** 4.30pm 6.30pm, 3rd Tuesday of every month.
- Penicuik Library: 10.30am 12.30pm, 4th Tuesday of every month.

To find out more, contact the branch: https://ow.ly/rJP550TSpla

Warm and Well Hubs

Midlothian council has 4 Warm and Well Hubs providing cost-of-living support throughout the county in: Danderhall, Lasswade, Loanhead and Newbattle libraries.

Hot food and drinks

Our Warm & Well Hub cafés offer warm spaces with free hot drinks, soup and bread.



(Our staff will know what you mean.)

Plenty on offer

Library staff will be on hand to provide advice and access to cost-of-living support information. Residents can access free wi-fi, books and games.

More warm spaces

A full list of warm spaces, community cafes and other support provided by the council, voluntary groups and churches across Midlothian can be found here:

www.midlothian.gov.uk/midlothiancares

Coat Collections

A coat collection is in operation at Dalkeith and Loanhead libraries. There are coats for adults and children and anyone can take one if needed. Good quality donations are also welcome.

Council Leader, Councillor Kelly Parry said:

"The four Warm and Well Hubs are here to help residents through this challenging winter.

Staff are on hand to not only provide a welcoming space but a supportive local community too.

No one should feel they have to struggle alone at home, so we're encouraging residents to come in from the cold and enjoy the warm atmosphere at our libraries. Whether you need free hot drinks and soup, or just friendly chat, you can find both at our hubs.

Please drop-in, you're assured of a warm welcome."



British Red Cross can help you get support and services if you support someone with Dementia?

Are You a Carer?

Do you provide unpaid help and support to a family member, partner, relative or friend living with dementia, who could not manage without you?

If the answer is yes - You are a Carer

Your caring role could be as simple as getting the shopping once a week, taking them to medical appointments or you could be responsible for all their everyday needs.



What British Red Cross aim to do

They provide advice, information, and practical support to unpaid carers supporting people living with dementia in Midlothian. They do this by discussing issues affecting you in your caring situation and how to achieve the best outcomes.

Advice and Information

- Your rights as an unpaid carer
- Adult Carers Support Plan
- Benefits
- Wee breaks
- Transport
- Council tax credits
- Emergency Care Plan
- Support Groups
- Information on Power Attorney.
- Respite

Practical Support

- Making referrals to appropriate specialist organisations.
- Help with form filling.
- Support you to attend activities.
- Support you to link with other unpaid carers.
- Listening and helping you plan.

Working closely with other organisations

British Red Cross work closely with many organisations and can make referrals on behalf of unpaid carers including:

VOCAL (Voices of Carers across Lothian)

Alzheimer's (Scotland)

Midlothian Dementia team

Midlothian Social work

Referrals for dementia carers support

Anyone can make a referral to their service (self-referrals, neighbours, family members, friends). However, the person being referred must agree to the referral being made.

Dementia Support Practitioner

Sandie Edmond: Dementia support practitioner sandieedmond@redcross.org.uk
Mobile 07715858084 or 0131 654 0340



The British Red Cross Society, incorporate by Royal Charter 1908, is a charity registered in England and Wales [22094] and Scotland [SCO37738] (Last updated Feb 21)

POWER CUT? CALL 105

Many people don't know they should contact their local electricity network operator if they have a power cut. They mistakenly call the supplier they pay bills to.

That's why electricity network operators have introduced 105 - an easy to remember number to the people who can help.

Health emergency

In an emergency call 999

For non-urgent health concerns call **111**

Supported transport

HcL Dial-a-ride 0131 447 9953

Staying connected

The Silverline **0800 470 8090** (FREE)

Friendship calls and advice 24/7

Ageing Well 0131 561 6506

A range of low level activities

Mental health

Breathing Space 0800 83 85 87 (FREE)

Confidential support if you feel low, anxious or depressed

Samaritans

116 123 (FREE)

Confidential listening line if you need someone to talk to

Sensory impairment

Order hearing aid batteries: batteries@midlothian.gov.uk or 0131 270 7500

RNIB

0303 123 9999 helpline@rnib.org.uk

Deafblind Scotland 0141 777 6111 wr@dbscotland.org.uk

Dementia

Alzheimer Scotland 0808 808 3000

24/7 help and guidance. **0131 654 1114**

(Mon – Fri, 9am – 5pm**)** Midlothian Dementia Advisors:

Michael Huddleston
 07831 859490
 mhuddleston@alzscot.org

National Dementia Advisor Service 0300 373 5774

Mon – Fri, 9am – 5pm help and guidance ndas@alzscot.org www.alzscot.org

Carer support

VOCAL Midlothian 0131 663 6869

LGBT

LGBT Helpline Scotland 0300 123 2523 helpline@lgbthealth.org.uk

Domestic violence

Women's Aid 0131 561 5800 info@womensaideml.org

If someone is at risk of harm

Adult Social Care 0131 271 3900 Emergency Out of Hours 0800 731 6969

British Red Cross

British Red Cross 0131 654 0340 www.redcross.org.uk