

ISSUE 5

THE Ageing Well MAGAZINE

Better PHYSICALLY Better EMOTIONALLY Better CONNECTED



Lived Experience

Use your life experiences to help shape our programmes



Agewell Awards

All the Glitz and Glam from the Day

Sunshine Stories
Love in Later Years

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Agewell Partnership

Welcome



We are five! Welcome to the 5th edition of The Ageing Well Magazine. The first half of 2024 has been very busy for Agewell Staff and Volunteers who have been hard at work across the Borough.

March brought our very first "Agewell Awards" for Older People, volunteers and community groups across Larne, Carrickfergus and Ballymena. It was a fun filled day at the Tullyglass House Hotel with lots of laughs, giving thanks and celebrating the incredible contributions people make to help people age well across our Borough. Have a look at the pictures and see if you recognise any local people who are making a difference.

Our sunshine story in this edition is sure to make you smile. Amazing Octogenarians, Josephine and Barrie, tell us about their second chance at love when they said 'I do' to each other later in life.

As well as the usual round up of events happening in and around your communities, now we have had the first taste of sunshine we have a special feature on the benefits of getting out and about in the fresh air with some ideas for you to try with friends and family.

Better PHYSICALLY, Better EMOTIONALLY & Better CONNECTED...

Agewell Team

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Meet The Team



Name /Role: Kavita Brownlie
Connect North Link Worker

What you love most about working at Agewell?

I love the fact that I'm helping people, adding value and hopefully enriching people's lives. Knowing that I'm doing something worthwhile gives me immense satisfaction. I also love to meet new people and learning about their life experiences.

What are you looking forward to most in your new role?

I'm looking forward to building strong friendships with my new team at Agewell. I'm also really looking forward to expanding my skill set and delving into new areas of expertise. It's great to have a whole new challenge to get stuck into!

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I have two children who are both competitive dancers. I am a very busy dance mum who taxis them from lessons to competitions. Any spare time I have is spent with family and my dog relaxing.



Name/ Role: Sophie McKinstry
IMPACTAgewell® Officer

What you love most about working at Agewell?

I love spending time with older people, having a chat about what really matters to them, and being able to offer support.

What are you looking forward to most in your new role?

I'm looking forward to meeting more of the organisations/community groups who work in partnership with Agewell.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I like spending my spare time reading or spending quality time with family and friends.

Sunshine Stories!

Every edition we will feature a feel good interview or life story of one of our fantastic members... maybe you could be the next star of our Sunshine Stories!

Love In Later Life

Everyone wants to find love and that doesn't change as we get older. Barrie and Josephine Moore have proven that age is no barrier to finding that special someone.

Barrie literally waltzed into Josephine's life at a local dance she was attending with friends. Having twirled her around the dance floor he was quick to arrange a follow up dinner date with this lovely lady at Belfast Castle. That date was the start of their wonderful romance and the couple say they both felt an instant connection. From then on they have been inseparable and their common love of dancing, walking, bowling and socializing has strengthened their bond.

After a whirlwind six month romance, Barrie proposed to Josephine and they set the date for their big day the following January. Both had been previously married for more than 50 years before losing their spouses and despite having great family and friends, had been feeling lonely. So having a new love and companionship was a real joy for them.

News of the Octogenarian couple's intended wedding spread fast and local retailers were delighted to help



out with the wedding arrangements. Josephine was gifted bespoke jewellery and local businesses were happy to supply free wedding photography, video, food and suits to mention but a few items the couple received.

On the big day itself Barrie and Josephine had a Church wedding with 72 family and friends attending to support and congratulate the happy couple. This was followed by a reception - and of course dancing - at their local Royal British Legion. Amongst other lovely wedding gifts received, the couple were surprised by their granddaughter with an overnight stay in the Europa and were whisked away after the reception to relax and reflect on the great day. Not thinking that anything else could possibly make things more special they were thrilled



that when they checked in, the staff had upgraded their room to the honeymoon suite. A great ending to a perfect day.

Now four and half years on the couple are still very much in love and enjoying their life together in wedded bliss.

Despite the hardships the COVID Pandemic and lockdown have brought everyone, Barrie and Josephine feel blessed to have had each other and that it was a great opportunity to spend quality time together.

Since the end of lockdown the couple have been back out and about and keenly attend their local dances and bowling. Barrie is a very active member of the Royal British Legion and this year following a forthcoming eye operation is

whisking Josephine away on holiday to Canada.

This fun loving couple's attitude is:

"We don't know how long we've got in life so we are going to make the best of it"

And they would encourage everyone no matter what age they are to get out, meet others and be sure to enjoy your life !



Community Roundup

LARNE



THE OASIS: Everyone is welcome at 'The Oasis' **every Tuesday and Thursday 11.30AM-2PM.**

No charge for hot food tea and coffee, freshly baked scones and tray bakes. Prayer ministry if you want/need prayer speak to a volunteer.



'MEN TOGETHER' meet on the **1st and third Monday of each month at 7.30PM.**

All men welcome.



'ASPIRE' is the women's fellowship at Larne Elim. They meet on the **second Thursday of each month at 7PM** All women welcome to be a part of it.



CARRICKFERGUS

GOOD MORNING CARRICKFERGUS is a free telephone befriending service for older and vulnerable adults (18+) within Carrickfergus, Greenisland and Whitehead. We are staffed by volunteers from the local community. There are two volunteers making the calls each morning. Service users can opt for up to five calls per week depending on their circumstances.

In addition to the telephone calls, service users are invited to join us for a monthly ladies' lunch group where we do various activities. We also have a men's breakfast group which meets about every six weeks. This year our Men's group have enjoyed outings to the Somme Heritage Centre and the Andrew Jackson centre.

GMC has been operating, Monday – Friday (8:30- 11) for almost 16 years. We have supported almost 600 people in that time with an average of 17500 calls per year.

Over the years we have been fortunate to win awards for our service. In 2017 we won the 'Queens award for voluntary services in the community' and just this year we have won an Agewell Award for 'Supporting local older people in Carrickfergus'.

The service is open to anyone over the age of 18. There are many ways to get involved.

If you would like more information on joining GMC or to get information on volunteering, please contact our office on **028 9332 6000 / 07734 906242** or email **info@goodmorningcarrickfergus.com**



BALLYMENA



THE HUB, CULLYBACKEY

The Hub Gift shop is located on Main Street, Cullybackey. It operates as a gift shop, however is a useful drop in to find out about local information in the Bann Maine West Cluster area. There are also some activities which run within the gift shop.

Knitting & Crochet Club meet weekly on a Wednesday, 10am-12noon. All welcome to join for a knit and a natter.



Card Making Club meet weekly on a Friday, 10am-12noon. Materials and refreshments are provided. Finished products can go into the Hub gift shop.

Tech Tuesdays – weekly on a Tuesday morning, you can call into the Hub to receive free help and advice on your technology queries. Booking advised.

There are various pop ups scheduled in the Hub gift shops from different local

organisations throughout the year. This is a great opportunity to call in and find out about different support and resources in the Ballymena area.

Bann Maine West also run a monthly Lunch & Learn event at the Wild Duck, Portglenone on the last Thursday as well as a Wednesday's Men's Breakfast Club in the Glarryford Young Farmers' Hall. This is for rural, older men living in the Bannside area. Booking essential for these activities.

The Hub Gift Shop is open Monday – Friday, 9.00am – 3.30pm, you can drop in to speak to staff and volunteers or contact: 028 2588 2281 / admin@bannmainewest.co.uk

The Hub, 86 Main Street, Cullybackey BT42 1BW

Spotlight Interview

Are you an Older Expert?

The first question we ask at Agewell is;

"What matters to you ?" Our work always has the voice of Older People at its heart and now we have brought together some real life experts to help us shape it.

When we are designing projects or services we make sure to speak to our Older People and Community Groups and ask what is important to them. That is the only true way we can get the knowledge and information we need to fill the gaps in the community we work in.

For example our 'Creases for Carers' project was first created when we went out and asked Older Carers what they really needed to help them. They asked for practical help. For something which we could help lift the load for them, so they could spend quality time with the person they care for. From this information we created our volunteer led ironing service for older carers.

To continue this work and make sure we are always thinking of the opinions of Older People and the communities we work in Ballymena, Larne and Carrickfergus we have created our first Agewell 'Lived Experience' Group.

This group is made up of local people who have come into contact with Agewell through various reasons. Perhaps they have used our services, maybe they care for someone who uses our services.

They may represent a community group in our area or they may volunteer for us to help deliver our work across the borough. We also have a couple of staff members in the group who can talk about the work they do every day on behalf of Agewell.

Billy Johnston is a key member of this new group. Billy is 87 years old and lives alone. He previously cared for his wife, May, who lived with Motor Neurone Disease. Billy was supported by IMPACTAgewell in 2021 following the death of his daughter from a brain haemorrhage. Through our support Billy has found his confidence again and being part of this new lived experience group has allowed him to use his first hand of knowledge to shape our services.

Along with another member of our group Rosemary Fee, Billy attended the International Conference for Integrated Care in Belfast with our staff to take part in a workshop and a panel session.



GET IN TOUCH



Better
PHYSICALLY



Better
EMOTIONALLY



Better
CONNECTED

Over the summer our lived experience group will be advising us on our new community consultation. This consultation will look at Older People's needs across Mid and East Antrim and form the basis for our new 2025-2028 Strategic Plan.

Please keep an eye out locally as we will be sending out questionnaires and holding focus groups to gather as many of your voices as possible.



Mid & East Antrim Agewell Partnership

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The Agewell Awards 2024



An exciting awards ceremony took place on Friday 1st March 2024 in Tullyglass House Hotel to celebrate and recognise the diamonds within local communities who support Older People. Community Groups, Volunteers and Local Businesses from across Ballymena, Carrickfergus and Larne came together to find out who had been awarded in each of the twelve exciting categories at The Agewell Awards, sponsored by Pharmacy Plus.

LUNCH CLUB AWARD

sponsored by Subway

Category Winner:

Kells and Connor Senior Citizens Club

Highly Commended:

Broughshane Lunch Club & Good Morning Ballymena



Portglenone Monday Club – Winner of the Friendship Award

FRIENDSHIP AWARD

sponsored by Ryobi Aluminum Castings Ltd

Category Winner:

Portglenone Monday Club

Highly Commended:

LESS ONE Friendship Group & Men United

INTERGENERATIONAL PARTNERSHIP AWARD

sponsored by Linking Generations NI

Category Winner:

Galgorm Care Home & Moorfields Primary School

Highly Commended:

Knockagh Rise Nursing Home and The Den After School Club, Burleigh Hill House Residential Home and Eden Primary School



Good Morning Ballymena – Supporting Local Older People Ballymena

SUPPORTING LOCAL OLDER PEOPLE AWARD: BALLYMENA

sponsored by Radius Housing

Category Winner:

Good Morning Ballymena

Highly Commended:

The Carson Project & Men United

SUPPORTING LOCAL OLDER PEOPLE AWARD: CARRICKFERGUS

sponsored by Victoria Eco Drycleaners

Category Winner:

Good Morning Carrickfergus

Highly Commended:

CHILL Walking Group



The 'This is Me', Dementia Friendly Choir and Mayor Ald Gerardine Mulvenna

SUPPORTING LOCAL OLDER PEOPLE AWARD: LARNE
sponsored by Lyttle Smart Homes
Category Winner:

Glenarm Plough On Group

Highly Commended:

Glynn Community Group
 & The Lunch Box Larne



Judging Panel Representatives & Agewell Trustees at The Agewell Awards

HEALTH IMPROVEMENT AWARD
sponsored by Bluebird Care
Category Winner:

All Saints Men's Group

Highly Commended:

Creative Crafters
 & The Carson Project

CARE HOME IN THE COMMUNITY AWARD

sponsored by DT Carson & Co
Category Winner:

Carrickfergus Manor Nursing Home

Highly Commended:

Redford Residential Care Home
 & Rose Court Residential & Nursing Home

AGEING WELL CHAMPION IN A STATUTORY ORGANISATION AWARD
sponsored by EOS Community Consulting CIC
Category Winner:

Joint Award – The Northern Health & Social Care Trust, East Antrim Social Work Team

AGEING WELL CHAMPION IN A LOCAL BUSINESS AWARD
sponsored Slemish n tha Braid Credit Union
Category Winner:

Ann Thompson of Delacey's Cafe

Highly Commended:

Joan Faith of Joan Faith Hairdressing & Michelle McAuley of FoneJacker

UNSUNG HERO AWARD
sponsored by Bryson Energy
Category Winner:

Colette Walsh of Creative Crafters

Highly Commended:

Angela Whyte of LESS ONE Friendship Group,
 Lilian Barfoot of Good Morning Carrickfergus & PJ Whyte of Agewell

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
sponsored by Audio Care
Category Winner:

Patricia McConnell of Carnlough Community Association

Highly Commended:

Marian Maguire of Glenravel and District Community and Resident's Association & Frank McGreevey of All Saint's Men's Club



Patricia McConnell of Carnlough Community Association – Winner of the Lifetime Achievement Award

THE BENEFITS OF BEING OUTSIDE

With the winter months behind us and a longer stretch in the evenings fast approaching, what better time than now to start getting out and about and enjoy all the benefits of being in the fresh air. Spending time outside is proven to have so many positive effects on your mental and physical health and sense of well being. Whilst there is not any set amount of time recommended to spend in the fresh air, research has shown that only 20 minutes spent regularly being in green spaces can really boost our sense of wellbeing.

Here are a few of the benefits of being outdoors :

- *Improved mood and the reduction in risk of depression and anxiety*
- *Increased physical health and boosts your energy to leave you feeling more active*
- *Improvements in your attention, memory, and problem-solving skills*
- *Increased creativity - being surrounded by nature's sights, sounds, and smells stimulates your senses and gets your creative juices flowing*
- *Improved sleep*
- *Increased relaxation and lower levels of stress*
- *Higher levels of Vitamin D absorbed from being in the sun helps keep bones strong and your immune system well*

- *Reduced loneliness and greater sense of connection to the community and others when you get out and about to chat with others and meet new people*

Enjoyable ways you can spend more time out and about this summer

Getting out into the garden



Potter about in your own garden while watching plants and flowers flourish or even just sit in the garden with a cup of tea or refreshing drink and enjoy your surroundings. There are also a

wide range of 'in bloom' groups, wildlife groups, and town/village improvement groups in the Borough, which provide great opportunity to get outside in the fresh air, meet like-minded people and learn new skills, all while protecting and improving your local green space. Contact your local council office for further information.



Going for a walk

Make time every day to go out for a walk near where you live or in your local park. Playing with your dog outside or taking the dog for a walk is another easy way to spend fun time outdoors or arrange to meet up with a friend for a chat and a walk together.

Relax and enjoy

Enjoy the fresh air and scenery and have the chance to connect with others. Why not visit one of our 15 local "chatty benches" in Mid and East Antrim and meet up with a friend or meet new people looking for a wee yarn.



Picnics

Pack up your favorite snacks and drinks and head off to a local park or beach to enjoy a picnic as an enjoyable way to get outside. We have so many lovely outdoor areas such as forests and beaches in Mid & East Antrim that you are spoilt for choice. Even eating in our own garden among the chirping birds can make a delightful change.



Whatever way you choose to do it make this year a good one for your outdoor adventures!

BUILDING FLOURISHING FRIENDSHIPS

Do you live in the Ballymena, Larne or Carrickfergus area and have an hour a week to spend visiting a socially isolated Older Person in your area? If so, our Building Flourishing Friendships (BFF) Volunteer Program could be just right for you ! We are looking for people to join our expanding group of BFF Befriending Volunteers and brighten up someone's day over a cuppa and a chat in the Older Person's home.



Our BFF Volunteers are matched with local people aged over 60 who have said that they are feeling lonely or isolated and who would welcome regular companionship and a friend to visit. Matches are based on mutual interests and full training will be provided.

What is involved in being a BFF Volunteer ?

- Regular visits in the older person's home (1 hour a week with a minimum commitment of 12 months)
- Chatting and listening
- Providing companionship and helping to reduce loneliness
- As this is a face to face service and visits are in the community, volunteers will need access to car or public transport

So if you are a kind and caring person who enjoys a chat and a laugh and making a difference to someone's day get in touch with us for further information. There's an Older Person in Mid & East Antrim who can't wait to meet you!

Contact Ellen (our Volunteer Coordinator) Mid & East Antrim Partnership for further information and to get volunteer application pack sent out to you today.

Tel: **028 2565 8604**

Email: **ellen.nixon@meaap.co.uk**



Puzzle Time

Tea-time Treats Word Scramble

Below are scrambled words of ten traditional tea-time treats.

Unscramble the words and write the correct treats in the corresponding numbered boxes.

Good luck!

1. "ssonec" - _ _ _ _ _
2. "raortceakc" - _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
3. "akleewbtltar" - _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
4. "gbtrnebeat" - _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
5. "eoznlmdeezlriceka" - _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
6. "muprecst" - _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
7. "fietsfne" - _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
8. "aholcotceeiwnsr" - _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
9. "roviactiespgon" - _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
10. "snglhiemfnufis" - _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

We would love to hear from you, our wonderful readers!

For our next edition of The Ageing Well Magazine, we would love to feature some poetry on the benefits of ageing! So, if you fancy putting pen to paper, pop your poems in the post to **Agewell, Broughshane House, 70 Main Street, Broughshane, BT42 4JW, or by email to admin@meaap.co.uk**



How Can You Help Local Older People?



£10 could provide a befriending visit for an isolated older person.



£20 could provide a telephone counselling session for an Older Person struggling with situations of emotional distress, such as bereavement or anxiety.



£50 could provide telephone support for 21 Older People, every month, that enables connections with local support services, that can improve their health and wellbeing.

How to play YOUR part:

Become a Regular Giver to Agewell: A standing order is a hassle-free way to donate regularly to Agewell. If you give us a call on 028 25658604, we can post you out a standing order form.

Make a One Off Donation: Every little counts when it comes to Agewell and the work we do. A one off donation can help support an Older Person access our counselling service after they have been bereaved.

Leave a Legacy: By leaving us a donation in your will, you can make an impact on local Older People even after you have gone. Contact the Agewell office for more details.

Together we can empower lives and create a brighter future for Older People in the Mid & East Antrim area. Your support can make a world of difference.

For further information on how to support **Local Older People**, contact the Agewell Office on **028 2565 8604**.

Did you know that all money donated to Agewell, is used to support Older People who live in Ballymena, Carrickfergus and Larne? That means your donation will also stay **LOCAL**.