



ISSUE ONE | DECEMBER 2023



Winter newsletter for older people

Welcome to the first newsletter for older people from Voluntary Action North Somerset Ageing Well project.

One of the things we often get told by older people is that they don't know where to go to find out information. This newsletter aims to give you information about some key organisations and services that can help you and let you know what other help could be available.

Finding out what is available for people over 50 in North Somerset – where to start.



local services for over 50s

Community Connect is a service for people over 50 living in North Somerset who would like information, advice or guidance to help them stay living independently at home. It also gives people the chance to offer their time and skills at events and groups in local communities.

Community Connect can offer you a wide range of support and advice that's tailored to you.

We can provide:

- Information and guidance over the phone, face-to-face or by email
- Tailored support for people over 50 to stay connected and active in their communities
- Help for you and your community to set up groups and activities that benefit the local area

CONTENTS

Where to get information	Page 2
Helplines	Page 2
Money	Page 2
Keeping Warm	Page 4
Feeling Lonely	Page 4
Transport	Page 6
Warm Spaces	Page 10

- Opportunities to participate and learn a new skill
- Signposting to local services and agencies

The Community Connect service is free of charge to anyone living in North Somerset.

Call 01275 888 803 or 01934 888 803

E: communityconnect@curo-group.co.uk



Age UK Somerset

also cover North Somerset and can offer information and advice over the phone. Information & Advice Monday to Friday 9am - 3pm.

Call 01823 345613

Age UK's Advice Line is a free, confidential national telephone service for older people, as well as their families, friends, carers and professionals. Our team will give you information that's reliable and up-to-date and help you access the advice you need. Lines are open 8am-7pm, 365 days a year.

Age UK Advice Line: 0800 678 1602



The Independent Age Helpline is a free and confidential phone service for older people and their friends, families and carers. Call them for information, to arrange impartial advice from a specialist adviser or to order our free guides.

Call the free Helpline on 0800 319 6789

Lines are open Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5.30pm.

MONEY: Winter Fuel Payments

What is a Winter Fuel Payment?

The Winter Fuel Payment is an annual tax-free payment for households that include someone born on or before 24 September 1957 (for 2023-24). It's designed to help you cover your winter heating costs.

How much Winter Fuel Payment could I get?

If you were born on or before 24 September 1957, you could get up to £600 to help with your bills in winter this year. The exact amount depends on your age and whether other people in your household also qualify. You also have to have been living in the UK during the qualifying week - beginning from the 3rd Monday in September.

How do I claim Winter Fuel Payment?

If you've received it before, you should get your Winter Fuel Payment automatically this year.

If you claim State Pension or another social security benefit (excluding Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, Child Benefit, Universal Credit or a deferred State Pension), you should also be paid automatically.

If you don't receive these benefits, or you live abroad and you're eligible for Winter Fuel Payment, you might need to make a claim directly to receive your payment.

To get started, call the Winter Fuel Payment helpline on :

0800 731 0160

You'll need your National Insurance number and your bank or building society details to hand.



Attendance Allowance

What is Attendance Allowance?

Attendance Allowance is a benefit that you might be able to claim if you need help with care or have an illness or disability. There are two different weekly rates, and the amount you get depends on how much help you need. Any money you do receive doesn't need to be spent on your care.

Is Attendance Allowance taxable?

The money you receive isn't taxable or means-tested – so your savings or income won't affect your claim. Claiming also won't affect any other benefits you receive. In fact, it can actually help you get other benefits such as Pension Credit, Housing Benefit, or Council Tax Reduction.

How much Attendance Allowance could I get?

There are two rates of Attendance Allowance. What you get depends on the care you need. It's usually paid every 4 weeks.

These rates apply from April 2023 to April 2024

Rate	Amount per week	Who gets this?
Lower rate	£68.10	Those who need help during the day or at night
Higher rate	£101.75	Those who need help during the day and at night, or who are terminally ill

Am I eligible to claim Attendance Allowance?

You can claim Attendance Allowance if you meet all the following criteria:

- You're over State Pension age (if you haven't reached it, you may be eligible for Personal Independence Payment instead).
- You have any type of disability or physical or mental illness, including sight or hearing impairments and conditions such as dementia.
- You could benefit from help with personal care, such as getting washed or dressed, or supervision to keep you safe during the day or night.
- You have needed help for at least 6 months. But if you're terminally ill you can make a claim straight away.



**The Attendance Allowance form can be daunting as it is quite long. For help in completing the form, we recommend contacting:
Community Connect: 01275 888 803 or 01934 888 803
Citizens Advice North Somerset Adviceline: 0808 278 7973
Age UK: 0800 678 1602**

Importance of keeping warm in winter

“Keeping warm in winter is especially important as we get older as changes to our bodies often mean cold weather and winter bugs affect us more than they used to”. Age UK

As fuel bills can be expensive, it can be tempting to keep the heating off to save money. However, unfortunately as we age, our bodies are less able to regulate temperature meaning we can become affected by the cold much quicker than when young.

We also can become more prone to colds and other viruses. It is important to:

- Eat well
- Move around
- Get your vaccinations
- Make sure the rooms you use at home are kept warm.

If you are worried about fuel bills or need any other help, please contact Community Connect or some of the other organisations listed at the beginning of this newsletter.

MEDICATION



Remember to order enough medication to see you through Christmas and the New Year if the pharmacy near you won't be open over Christmas

Feeling Lonely

Winter and particularly Christmas can feel lonely with dark nights and bad weather meaning we feel less like going out.

Access Your Care Wellness Service

The Wellness service is a free service based in North Somerset that can offer older people feeling lonely or anxious a regular phone call to check they are safe and well.



Contact 01275 874861

AgeUK Befriending Walk and Talk

The free 'Walk and Talk' service aims to support older people who would like to get out and benefit from fresh air and being more active, but don't feel very confident about going out by themselves or would just appreciate some company.

Friendly Phone Calls

The free Friendly Phone Calls are for anyone aged over 60 in North Somerset who may sometimes feel lonely, isolated, or a bit low, and who would appreciate having a telephone chat with a friendly volunteer every week.

Wellbeing Friends

This free programme, part of the Wellbeing service, matches a friendly volunteer with an older client in their local area for a weekly home visit to provide companionship and a window to the outside world. It's all about new friendships and enjoyable company and conversation to brighten the day.



For information about any of these services contact:

01823 345615

AVOIDING FALLS AT HOME

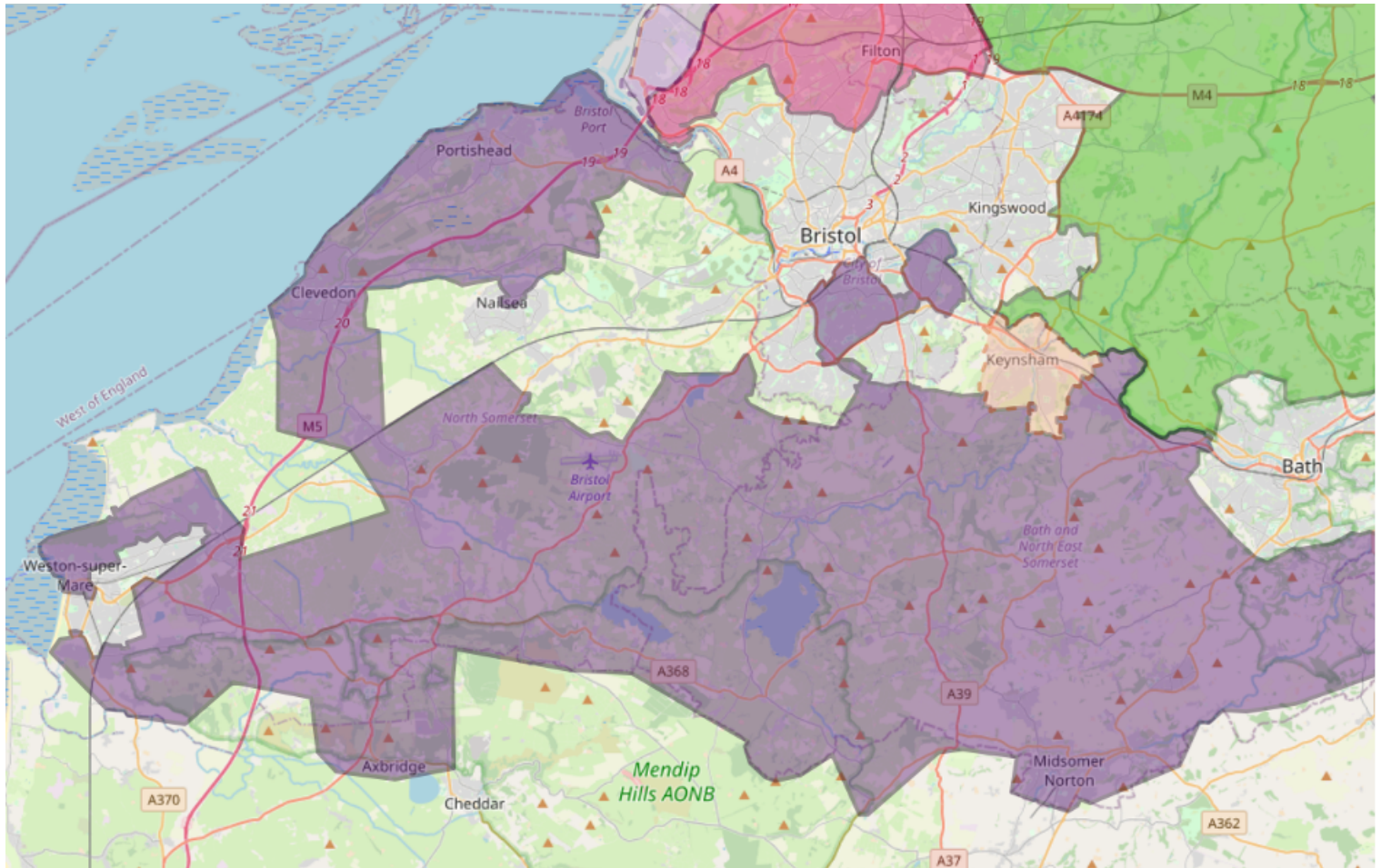
Tips for preventing falls in the home include:

- immediately mopping up spillages
- removing clutter, trailing wires and frayed carpet
- using non-slip mats and rugs
- making sure all rooms, passages and staircases are well lit
- organising your home so that climbing, stretching and bending are kept to a minimum, and to avoid bumping into things
- getting help to do things you're unable to do safely on your own
- not walking on slippery floors in socks or tights
- not wearing loose-fitting, trailing clothes that might trip you up
- wearing well-fitting shoes that are in good condition and support the ankle
- taking care of your feet by trimming your toenails regularly and seeing a GP or podiatrist (foot health professional) about any foot problems





Public Transport in North Somerset can be tricky to navigate. North Somerset Council have introduced the WESTlink service which is an on-demand minibus service that you can book over the phone up to 24 hours in advance. It covers the area in purple.



The service operates 0700-1900 hrs Monday to Saturday and can be booked by calling:

0117 457 8561

When you get through to an operator you'll be asked:

- name and address
- where you'd like to travel
- what time you need to arrive at your destination

You will then wait for a phone call confirming what time you need to be at your chosen bus stop. If you are unable to get to your nearest bus stop because e.g. you have difficulty walking, WESTlink can provide door-to-door transport. The service is free to anyone with an older persons bus pass otherwise the cost is £2.



There are a number of community transport schemes in North Somerset. Depending on what they do they can take people to medical appointments, visit relatives in care homes, shopping and trips. Schemes vary but are generally entirely run by volunteers and will usually ask for a donation towards costs.

Churchill & Langford Minibus Society

They cover Banwell, Burrington, Churchill, Langford, Sandford, Shipham & Winscombe and with regular trips each month. They may also be able to arrange unscheduled trips for your group. Membership is free but they ask for a donation for each journey. They are also looking for more organisers so if you are interested contact Trevor on 01934 852589

Hospital Scheme

The Churchill and Langford Minibus Society now also run a Hospital Transport Scheme to assist people in getting to their hospital appointments.

This scheme aims to connect volunteer drivers from the Churchill and Langford community with patients to provide convenient transport to the region's medical centres. For more information call either Kate or Trevor on:

01934 853081 (Kate)

01934 852589 (Trevor)

Minibus trips

Most days there are trips from the villages to various destinations.

Clevedon Care

A service providing transport to any hospital or medical facility including health centres, dentists and opticians. Areas covered: Clevedon, Tickenham, Kenn and Walton-in-Gordano.

If you are a client or potential client and need transport to a medical appointment, you can contact us by phone on weekdays from 0930-1230 hours - call:

01275 343677

Congresbury Carers

A car scheme taking people to hospital, dentist, hairdresser etc. and occasionally shopping trips. Areas covered: Congresbury, Cleeve, Claverham and Hewish

01934 834 663



Congresbury Community Transport

We are a wheel-chair accessible minibus scheme providing transport for groups and individuals in and around Congresbury. Our minibus is air-conditioned, fully accessible for wheelchair users and a trained driver will be there to help you get on board. Our service provides transport for groups and individuals in Congresbury and the local area including social outings, events and sporting occasions. Serving residents of Congresbury and the surrounding areas.

Contact: 01934 257 247 or email: secretary@congresburycommunitytransport.co.uk

Gordano Community Cars

A voluntary hospital car service providing transport to local hospitals and medical centres. Patients with severe disabilities should be accompanied by a carer. Areas covered: Service for patients of Pill surgery.

Contact: 01275 374 752

Nailsea and District Community Transport

We provide a door-to-door transport service for all shopping, health and leisure trips. Our minibuses are fully accessible for wheelchair users and our friendly team of drivers are there to help you get on board. Our services include weekly shopping trips, dial-a-ride, group hire and a full calendar of day trips and outings. Serving residents of Nailsea, Clevedon, Portishead, Backwell, Long Ashton, Failand and the surrounding areas.

Who to contact:

Telephone: 01275 855 552 E-mail: office@ndct.co.uk Website: www.ndct.co.uk

Nailsea and District Community Transport - Nailsea Available

If you need to book this service, please contact your medical centre.

A car scheme for patients of the Nailsea medical centres providing transport to hospitals, health centres and clinics for elderly or infirm patients with no other way of attending appointments.

Areas covered: The area covered by Nailsea surgery.

Portishead Porters

If you need to book this service, please contact your medical centre.

A voluntary hospital car service providing transport to local hospitals and medical centres. Patients with severe disabilities should be accompanied by a carer.

Areas covered: Service for patients of Portishead medical centre.

Sandford Helpline

A car scheme offering transport to all health-related appointments including dentist and opticians.

Areas covered: Sandford

Who to contact:

Telephone: 01934 822 030

Weston and District Community Transport

We provide a friendly reliable door-to-door transport service for all shopping, health and leisure trips in Weston-super-Mare and the surrounding areas. Our minibuses are fully accessible meaning we can accommodate most manual and electric wheelchairs. In order to use our service we request that you become a member of Weston & District Community Transport. This cost is £15.00 per year per person. Membership forms and further details are available by calling the office.

01934 644 373 (all bookings & enquiries) Monday to Friday 0830-1630 hrs.

Winford Parish Community Transport

A minibus scheme offering shopping trips and outings. Areas covered: Winford and the surround area.

Who to contact:

Telephone: 01275 472 440 Email: longdenjp@btopenworld.com

Wrington Helpline

A car scheme mainly providing transport for medical trips to Weston and Bristol hospitals. Can also provide transport for nursing home visits. Areas covered: Wrington parish, including Redhill, Butcombe, Burrington and Aldwyck.

Who to contact:

Telephone: 07783 046 437

Wrington Minibus Society

A wheelchair accessible minibus scheme for residents and organisations running regular shopping and social trips. Areas covered: Wrington, Redhill, Butcombe and Burrington.

Who to contact:

Telephone: 01934 862 953/01934 862 303



Yeo Valley Lions

As part of Yeo Valley Lions Club service to our community, we operate the 'Big Yellow Minibus', so well-known around some of the local villages. As well as being used by a variety of youth organisations, lunch groups and sports clubs, the minibus is of great benefit to the elderly with scheduled trips to help with shopping.

The regular trip schedule is as follows:

- Every Tuesday morning: Yatton/Claverham/Cleeve to either Clevedon Tesco or Nailsea Precinct
- Every Thursday morning: Yatton/Claverham/Cleeve to Yatton Precinct
- Alternate Friday mornings: Yatton/Claverham/Cleeve to W-s-M Sovereign Centre

There is no charge for these services but donations are always welcome to help cover running expenses. Some of these trips have seats available so if you might be interested in being a regular passenger for further details call:

07551 610514

Winscombe Contact Scheme

A village car scheme offering transport to health-related appointments both locally and to hospitals in Weston, Shepton, Clevedon, and Bristol, Taunton and Bath. Areas covered: Winscombe and patients of Winscombe surgery.

Who to contact:

Telephone: 07888 812 398

Warm Spaces or Community Living Rooms

Warm spaces or Community Living rooms are places where local people can go to keep warm. More than 40 community "living rooms" are open across North Somerset. The spaces are free and offer activities in libraries, community centres and faith groups.

For more information about the one nearest to you contact Community Connect or North Somerset Council: 01934 888 888



Or go to North Somerset Council's website:
<https://n-somerset.gov.uk>
and in the search box, enter:
community living rooms north somerset





Ageing Well in North Somerset



- Get fitter
- Feel better
- Meet new people and have a laugh!



In partnership with



Class Name	Where?	When?	Cost
Action4Pain - Circuit class for those with chronic hip, knee or back pain	Worle	Fri, 9:30am	£5
ESCAPE-pain - Group-based rehabilitation programme for managing hip and knee arthritis.	Worle	Tuesdays & Thursdays	Free
Flexercise - Gentle, fun, chair based exercises.	Wrington	Weds, 2:30pm	£3
	Portishead	Mon, 11:30am Tues, 11:30am	£5
Movement to Music - A fun and lively choreographed class for general fitness.	W-s-M	Mon, 9:45am Mon, 11am	£4
	Worle	Fri, 10am	£5
	Worle	Fri, 12pm	£5
Tai Chi QiGong - Easy to learn gentle movements, to improve balance, flexibility and strength. Good for mind, body and wellbeing. Movements can be done seated or standing.	Bleadon	Tues, 10am	£5
	Clevedon	Tues, 10am	£5
	Kewstoke	Thurs, 3pm	£5
	Nailsea	Tues, 1:45pm	£5
	Portishead	Weds, 2pm	£5
	W-s-M	Weds, 10:30am	£5
	W-s-M Outdoors	Tues, 2:30pm	£5
	Worle	Tues, 10am	£5
Seated Yoga, Breathe, Stretch & Flex - Combines breathing and relaxation movements to balance the mind and improve flexibility.	Yatton	Mon, 11:45am	£4
	Easton-in-Gordano	Mon, 9:45am	£5
Strong and Steady - To improve strength and balance, helping to keep you steady on your feet and avoid falls.	Bleadon, Clevedon, Nailsea, Portishead, Shipham, W-s-M, Worle, Yatton	Call 01823 345614 for details	£5
Strictly Seniors - Dance based exercise session	Clevedon	Thurs, 2pm Thurs, 3:15pm	£5

For more information please call Age UK Somerset on 01823 345624
email: ageingwell@ageuksomerset.org.uk or visit www.ageuksomerset.org.uk

Information correct on: 06/07/2023

Registered Charity No: 1015900

Word Search - Can you find the missing word?

Words can be found in any direction (including diagonals) and can overlap each other. Use the word bank to find all the words - one will be missing from the grid. Once you have identified the missing word, either send or email your answer to us by 29 February 2024, together with your name and address and you could win a £25 High Street voucher. One winner will be selected from all correct entries received. Judges decision is final. Send your answer to: Word Search, Voluntary Action North Somerset, Weston Court, Oldmixon Crescent, Weston-super-Mare, BS24 9AU or email it to: info@vansmail.org.uk

P B W S C Z J E A A V C I I F B J C Z W
C O M M U N I T Y Y H W G B H H O Y T S
X Z N X J V R C Z Z B A I Q A Q S Z N I
L O N E L Y G S G Z W R Y P J Q W S K H
Z J E Z G J A E V C N M P L Y B R U P A
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WORD BANK

AGEING BEFRIENDING HAPPY COMMUNITY MEDICATION WARM LONELY TRANSPORT
EXERCISE MONEY HELPLINES WINTER INDEPENDENT CHRISTMAS WELLBEING FALLS

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