

WiSE Words



Summer 2021

Café reopens and activities to resume as lockdown easing continues

We're really excited to be resuming some of our best loved activities for older people, as coronavirus restrictions continue to ease.

After recently re-opening our WiSE Owl Café in Boston Spa, (pictured), we're now aiming to restart other activities including chairbics and line dancing - with others to follow as government guidelines allow.

WiSE Chief Operating Officer Mark Dobson, said:

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Like so many people, we're cautious about what the next few weeks and months might bring. But at the same time, we're really excited to finally be in a position to hold events which we know bring so much joy to older people- many of whom have had virtually no contact with the outside world for more than a year.

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“The safety of our staff, volunteers and service users will be the number one priority for us ahead of any potential reopening. We're taking things slowly and safely.”



During long months of lockdown, our volunteers and tiny team of paid staff made nearly 5,000 wellbeing calls to people shielding alone, delivered 15 editions of activity packs to keep more than 100 older people entertained and organised dozens of online sessions from line dancing to singing to keep spirits high.

See the back page for our events calendar.



WiSE

Wetherby in Support of the Elderly

Message from WiSE

The last year has been difficult for everyone. But imagine if you'd spent it living alone, unable to leave the house and with TV your only friend.

That's the position so many isolated older people in Wetherby and surrounding villages have found themselves in.

Our charity has stepped up to the challenge in a big way and I'm so, so proud of the lengths our volunteers and staff have gone to to support our service users.

Whether it's been making thousands of friendly phone calls, distributing activity packs, holding online events

or dropping off food and medicine to people who are shielding, I really feel like we've done our bit.

Now, we can't wait to begin safely restoring some of our best loved services and making a real difference to the lives of hundreds of older people in our communities once more.

Mark Dobson
Chief Operating Officer



Service area - Activities



Meet Debbie Todd, our new activities co-ordinator!

Debbie is the newest member of our team and will be responsible for providing social events to older people across Wetherby and its surrounding villages.

Debbie said:

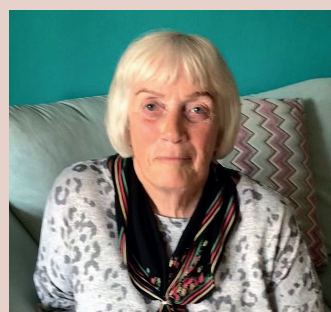
“

I already knew about the excellent work WiSE does for older people and felt I have lots of skills and experience to bring to the role. As coronavirus restrictions continue to ease, I'm really looking forward to restarting the Charity's existing activities and bringing new events to the current programme.

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"I have lots of ideas and would like to get feedback from service users on what their interests are, as well as restarting existing popular workshops safely and in a way which gives people the confidence to attend."

Volunteer showcase



Jackie Heseltine

Jackie, aged 68, has just celebrated her sixth anniversary as a WiSE volunteer and says the best bit about her role is knowing the

difference she makes to an older person's life.

She said: "I decided to volunteer as I was a senior care assistant looking after older people in a care home. I loved the job and, when the home closed, I missed working with the residents. So when I retired and had more time, I saw an advert for volunteers within WiSE and here I am years later.

"The thing I like most about volunteering is helping people who are sometimes forgotten about and to make them feel that somebody does care - and to stop them being alone.

"For people who are thinking of volunteering- just do it. You can do as much, or as little, as you want. It's so rewarding to think that you have helped someone to feel better about themselves."

We would like more people like Jackie to consider volunteering with us as we plan to reintroduce our activities, befriending visits and events.

See the back page for more information.

Isolated older person hails impact of telephone chats

One of our service users says weekly phone calls have given her the strength to keep going during the pandemic.

The lady, who wishes to remain anonymous, began speaking to one of our telephone befrienders Christine Hardman when lockdown first hit last spring.

She said: "I started speaking to Christine soon after the first lockdown in March last year. I now speak to her every week and it's something I've come to rely upon. It's doing me a lot of good simply to talk to someone. It's keeping me strong and keeping me going."

“

Loneliness isn't new to me - I live alone and am housebound by various ailments. I'm lucky to have animals for company and have also recently started taking an interest in the television. I've always considered myself a friendly, sociable person though, so the phone calls have become something of a necessity for me.

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Wetherby shoppers have bagged more than £375 for WiSE

WiSE will benefit from the cash windfall thanks to Co-operative members, who selected us for support after hearing about our memory café for those living with dementia and their carers.

Mark Dobson, Chief Operations Officer at WiSE, said: "They say every penny counts and this fantastic amount raised is the perfect illustration of that fact. All the money raised will be spent right here in Wetherby, enabling us to do even more for dozens of isolated, older people - many of whom have no family or friends to support them during what remains a very difficult time."

Wetherby Co-op members chose WiSE to receive support through the Co-op Local Community Fund.

WiSE boss takes on two races in a day to raise funds



Our Chief Operating Officer, Mark Dobson is taking on a double dose of fundraising dashes in just one day- after a race he'd entered got rearranged.

Mark had already pledged to raise money for us by signing up to the Wetherby 10K in September. But now Mark will take on the Leeds 10K as well - a race which he'd entered last year which later got postponed by the pandemic.

Mark said: "I could hardly believe it when I got the news that the Leeds 10K had been moved to the same date as the one in Wetherby. I'm never one to turn down a challenge though- even though there's less than five hours between the start times!"

The Asda Foundation Leeds 10K takes place on the morning of Sunday 5 September, with the 16th Wetherby 10K taking place in the afternoon on the same day.

If you would like to donate to Mark's cause, visit www.w-ise.org.uk/donate

Events Planner

The WiSE Owl Café	Every Tues / Wed / Thurs	9.00am - 3.00pm	Boston Spa Village Hall
Chairobics	Fridays from mid-July (Dates TBC)	10.30am - 11.15am 11.15am - 12.15am	Methodist Hall
Line Dancing	Thursdays (Fortnightly until September) from 22nd July	10.30am - 11.30am	Sports Association, Wetherby
The History of Gelato	Wednesday 14th July Ticket event	2.30pm	Hosted by Home Instead at The Milk Churn, Scarcroft
Elderberries	Monthly from 21st July	1.30pm - 3.30pm	Entertainment TBC Methodist Hall
Methodist Church Coffee morning	Wednesdays from mid July (Dates TBC)	10.00am - 12.00pm	Methodist Hall
Companionship Café	Hosted by Home Instead Every 1st Tuesday of the month	2.00pm - 4.00pm	St James' Church
A Day at the 'Seaside'	Thursday 12th August Ticket event	2.00pm	Hosted by Home Instead at Boston Spa Village Hall

WiSE activities are all subject to government steps to control the pandemic and some will be restricted numbers. Please check the website to make sure planned activities are still going ahead, and for new ones added, at www.w-ise.org.uk/calendar or follow us on Facebook @wetherbywise Alternatively please phone Debbie at the office, on **01937 588994**.

How to volunteer

Volunteers are the lifeblood of our work. They are central to many of our most important services and we are always looking for more so that we can help even more isolated, older people live happy and fulfilling lives.

The main services we need help with are Befriending, Memory Café, Wise Owl Café, Transport Scheme and Events.

Some people volunteer for just an hour a week as a befriender, whilst others contribute more time.

If you think you can help us and would like to find out more, contact us on **01937 588994**, or email info@w-ise.org.uk

How we use your donations

Any amount of money you raise and donate can go a long way to supporting our work with some of the most isolated people in our communities.

- £10** would buy a gift or activity pack for those isolated or unable to attend events
- £20** would enable us to provide a warm meal for vulnerable clients during winter
- £50** would pay for an entertainer to perform at an event such as elderberries
- £100** would pay for room hire and an entertainer or instructor, for a physical activity like ping-pong, chairobics and aerobics or line dancing

Donation slip

If you would like to make a donation please complete the following slip and return it to us with your donation to: Wetherby in Support of the Elderly, The One Stop Centre, Westgate Wetherby, LS22 6NL

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Email: _____

Telephone number: _____

I would like to make a donation of £ _____
to Wetherby in Support of the Elderly.

Please Gift Aid this donation and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past four years. I am *giftaid it* a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax then the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year, it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Tick to apply ☐

Please make cheques payable to: Wetherby in Support of the Elderly. Do not send cash. Or visit our website: www.w-ise.org.uk and donate online.