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# A guide for older people

Useful information and activities, health and well-being 2011



*"You can't help getting older,  
but you don't have to get old."*  
George Burns



# Introduction

Thank you for picking up this guide. It contains information and contacts within Cambridgeshire to help you to enjoy living your life to the full as you get older. There's advice and contact details should you need further support.

Many people find that life gets better as they get older because they finally have the time to do things they have wanted to do in the past but were too busy.

A positive attitude to life means taking the time and effort to do the things you enjoy, keeping as healthy and active as possible and making the most of what's on offer.

Older people are staying healthier and more active now. Although for some this may not be possible, there are still things you can do to maintain your health and independence and this booklet gives you helpful ideas and suggestions.

You may want to make the most of leisure activities in your area, plan a new career, take up a new hobby or study. You could contribute to the work of the community via Cambridgeshire Adult Social Care, NHS Cambridgeshire, your local District Council or voluntary organisations. All contact numbers are included in this booklet.

Whether you live in a town, village or a rural setting, Cambridgeshire is enriched by a diverse cultural society. It does not need to cost you money to enjoy the many beautiful parks and gardens that the public can visit free of charge or places of interest or reference like your local library.

We hope that you enjoy reading this booklet and find it useful. We welcome your views, comments and suggestions.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Claire Bruin'.

**Claire Bruin**  
Service Director Strategy and  
Commissioning (Adult Social Care)  
Cambridgeshire County Council






A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mandy Renton'.







**Mandy Renton**  
Executive Nurse  
NHS Cambridgeshire

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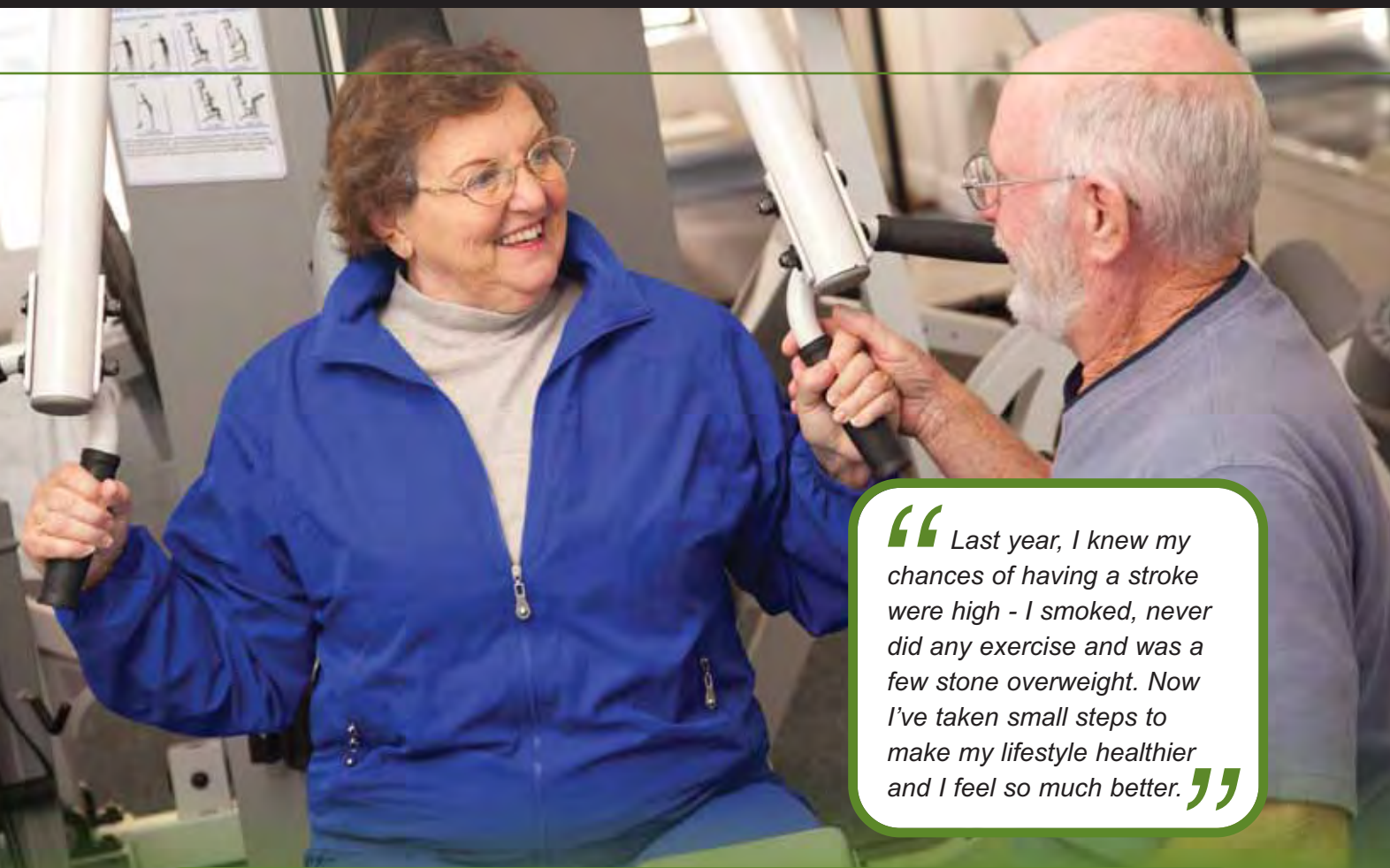
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“ Last year, I knew my chances of having a stroke were high - I smoked, never did any exercise and was a few stone overweight. Now I've taken small steps to make my lifestyle healthier and I feel so much better. ”



## Looking after your health

- Know what medicines you are taking and what they do for you
- Have regular check-ups including eye tests and dental appointments
- If you're a smoker, giving up is the best thing you can do to improve your health
- It's never too late to improve your health

As a society we are living longer and we now have far more time to enjoy our retirement. It is important to remember that it's never too late to start to make changes to your lifestyle and routines in order to improve your health and well-being and ensure that your later years are not hampered by ill health.

If you think you may have some hearing impairment you should visit your GP as soon as possible. Your GP may do some simple tests, such as asking you to cover one ear, then speaking at different levels or using a handheld sound generator, to see how you respond to sounds at different volumes.

### General health

Accessing the right type of local health service support at the right time for you is important. A complete tear-off section informing you about how to find the health service or professional you need can be found after page 44.

Your GP may refer you to an Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) specialist or (particularly if you're over 60) an audiologist, who will test you further to determine the cause of your hearing loss and work with you to find the best possible treatment. You may have to wait a few weeks for your first appointment. The Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID) hearing check line is a quick and easy way for people to take action to deal with a potential hearing problem.

### Sight

People over 60 are eligible for a free NHS sight test every two years - annually if you're over 70. If the test shows that you need glasses, you may also be eligible for help with the cost. Some opticians will visit you at home. NHS Direct can provide a list of opticians in your area.

### CAMTAD - Cambridge Services

Regular clinics are held throughout Cambridgeshire. Hearing Help Sessions in local areas offer:

- Free batteries and hearing aid care and maintenance for NHS hearing aid users
- Advice on hearing loss and the best use of hearing aids
- Demonstrations of, and advice about environmental equipment and how these can improve quality of life. Environmental equipment can be made available on loan to try-before-you-buy
- CAMTAD also visit people who live in sheltered housing, residential homes or are housebound.

### Hearing

Unfortunately a hearing loss at any age can have a huge impact on personal, social and working lives if it's not dealt with. Research shows that people sometimes wait up to 15 years between the onset of hearing loss and seeking advice about it. However, it can be better to find out about hearing aids sooner rather than later as getting used to amplified sound is harder if you've already got used to a 'quieter world'.



#### Awareness

Have you had a Medicines Review in the last twelve months? Talk to your GP or pharmacist to arrange one.



#### Action

Check the expiry dates on the medicines that you have in your cupboards. Just like foods, medicines have a 'shelf life' and should not be taken after the use-by-date. Return any out-of-date or unused medicines to your pharmacist and always tell your GP or pharmacist if you have stopped taking any of your medicines. Do not order more than you need.



#### Talk to

Always discuss problems with your GP, pharmacist, dentist or optician. Some conditions can be treated and not all aches and pains are a consequence of getting older.



#### Prevention

Do not wait until you are ill to register with a local doctor. Have regular dental and sight check ups. Talk to your pharmacist about any concerns that you may have, it may still be necessary to see your GP on occasion but information and advice may be all that is required in some instances. If you are over 65 years old ask your doctor about receiving the flu vaccination.



#### Contacts

- Age UK Cambridgeshire 01354 696650
- Society of Chiropractors and Podiatrists 020 7234 8620
- NHS Direct 0845 4647 (24 hours)
- CAMQUIT 0800 018 4304 or Text KICKBUTT to 80010
- Cambridgeshire County Council Sensory Services Team 0345 045 5221
- Come and be Heard 01354 695317
- Lip Reading Services 01480 860401
- Cambridge Hard of Hearing Club 01223 312107

**WEBLINKS** [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk) • [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk) • [www.camquit.nhs.uk](http://www.camquit.nhs.uk)

**Contact**

- Contact the office for details on 01223 416141 for these services (open 9.00am-12.30pm Mon-Fri)

**CAMTAD - Fenland Services**

Provide clinics, usually in GP's surgeries, at Chatteris, Manea, Whittlesey and March and there is a service in Wisbech by request. The service includes exchanging batteries, re-tubing, carrying out repairs and giving advice on equipment for the hard of hearing. An equipment clinic is held on the first Thursday of the month at Doddington Community Hospital, to demonstrate and advise on equipment in the home. The service is free to any member of the public, the hard of hearing and their families.

**Contact**

- Contact the office for details of local clinics and how to get support on 01354 693062 or email: [mroyce@talktalk.net](mailto:mroyce@talktalk.net)

**Medicines**

Your high street pharmacist will be able to advise you on a range of medicines and remedies for everyday illnesses. You don't need to make an appointment and advice and information will be provided free of charge.

**Medicines reviews**

Many of us rely on medicines to keep us fit and well. If you're taking a number of different medicines it can be difficult to remember what each one is for and when to take them. Ask your GP or pharmacist if you have any questions or need help with your medicines.

If you're taking regular prescription medicines or suffer from a long-term illness you should have a regular review of your medicines at least once a year.

The review may be carried out by a pharmacist, a GP or a nurse. It will give you the opportunity to ask questions, talk about anything that is worrying you and explain how your medicines are working for you. Ask for a leaflet at your GP's surgery or the local pharmacy.

**Repeat dispensing**

Ask your GP or pharmacist about 'repeat dispensing' if you are taking regular

medicines. You may be able to collect monthly supplies of your medicine from your local pharmacy without needing to obtain a repeat prescription from your GP each time. Under this scheme, your pharmacist will review your medicine use before each new prescription is supplied.

Remember to only order the medicines you are taking and tell your GP or pharmacist if you've stopped taking any of your medicines.

**Dental treatment**

Regular dental check-ups are very important, even if you have no natural teeth. Your dentist will tell you how often you should go, this may be anywhere between six months and two years. If you're on a low income or receiving certain benefits you may be entitled to free treatment. Always check the cost of treatment in advance, as it may be expensive. NHS Direct can provide details of dentists in your local area (see tear-off form after page 44).

**Ageing feet**

Footcare is one of the most important aspects of personal healthcare whatever your age. However, painful and uncomfortable feet needn't simply be something to 'put up with' as we grow older.

If you experience any pain something is most likely wrong. It's important to seek prompt treatment, particularly if you have diabetes. People suffering from diabetes often suffer from poor circulation and loss of sensation in their feet, meaning that problems may go unnoticed unless they examine their feet regularly. You may prefer to visit a private registered podiatrist (chiropodist) for information, advice and/or treatment. To find one near you contact the Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists on 020 7234 8620.

**Arthritis**

Osteoarthritis is the most common form of arthritis. Cartilage (connective tissue) between the bones gradually wastes away and this can lead to painful rubbing of bone on bone in joints, most commonly in the hands, spine, knees and hips. Rheumatoid arthritis is a more severe but

less common condition. The body's immune system attacks and destroys the joint, causing pain and swelling. It can lead to reduction of movement and the breakdown of bone and cartilage.

Arthritis can be life changing but there are many ways that can help you manage your condition and lead a full and active life:

- Weight bearing exercises such as walking will help to prevent osteoarthritis by increasing the strength of the muscles that support your joints
- Good posture can strengthen healthy joint structures
- If you're overweight, try to control your weight to ease pressure on your joints
- Physiotherapy and use of a walking stick or cane can help prevent worsening of existing conditions.

**Your hormones**

One of the female hormones is oestrogen and in younger women production of this hormone plays an important role in maintaining bone strength.

Once women reach the menopause, oestrogen levels drop and this protective factor is lost.

Although women are more likely to have osteoporosis, men can also have it, especially if they have low levels of the male hormone, testosterone. Bone mass also decreases as we get older and in some people it may be very low. This can mean that they have osteoporosis and are at risk of fractured bones if they have a fall. Keeping physically active can help to maintain bone and muscle strength. Eating healthily is also important so include foods with calcium and vitamin D in your diet, such as dairy foods, sardines, soya products and green leafy vegetables. If you've had a fall or a bone fracture, speak to your GP, who will advise if you need extra calcium and vitamin D.

**Continence**

Around 5-9% of the adult population have significant problems with urinary incontinence and the majority of these could be successfully treated/cured (DH Good, Practice in Continence Service, 2000). Urinary and faecal incontinence are common problems affecting both women and men of all ages.

**Making you feel better**

Do you have a problem?

Most people consider their toilet habits to be 'normal', but are they?

- Do you go to the toilet to pass urine 4-6 times each day?
- Do you have dry pants at all times?
- Do you pass 300-400mls of urine at a time? (A mug holds about 250ml)
- Do you pass urine easily, without straining or pain?
- Is your urine light in colour and odourless?
- Do you always make it to the toilet in time without having to rush?

If the answer to the questions above is 'yes', you have no problems. However, if you've answered 'no' to any of the above you should seek help before things become any worse.

**Who can help?**

You can ask your GP or any health care professional about referral to the Continence Service. You can also contact the Continence Service direct and make a self-referral.

**What happens then?**

A full continence service assessment will be carried out to obtain a clear history of your complaint. This may include a bladder scan, bladder diary and urine testing. Following this a personalised treatment plan will be given to you and will be regularly reviewed.



**What can you do to help yourself?**

- Don't go to the toilet just in case
- Don't hover over the toilet. Sit down properly
- Reduce your intake of tea, coffee and fizzy drinks
- Don't stop drinking water
- Seek help.

**Contacts**

- Princess of Wales Hospital  
Lynn Road, Ely CB6 1DN  
01353 652268
- Hinchingsbrooke Hospital  
Hinchingsbrooke Park, Huntingdon  
PE29 6NT  
01480 416734
- The Bladder and Bowel Foundation  
Nurse Helpline  
0845 345 0165

**Stroke prevention**

**Reduce the risk**

You're more likely to have a stroke if you're over 65; you smoke; you drink too much alcohol; someone in your family has had a stroke; you're a man or you're of Asian, African or Afro-Caribbean origin. If you are overweight you are more likely to get high

blood pressure, heart disease or diabetes. These illnesses can increase your chance of having a stroke. Small changes can make a big difference.

**What is a stroke?**

Every five minutes one person in the UK has a stroke. A stroke is when the blood supply to the brain is cut off and can leave a person paralysed, feeling weak on one side of their body and unable to talk. Having a healthy lifestyle is the best thing for reducing your chances of having a stroke.

**How is your diet?**

Saturated fat in your diet can lead to your arteries narrowing. Try to reduce your intake of red meat, full fat cheese, cream, butter, lard, ghee and processed foods like meat pies, sausages, cakes, biscuits and pastries.

Increased amounts of salt can lead to high blood pressure. Reduce your salt intake to one teaspoon a day. Avoid processed food and adding salt to meals and use garlic, herbs and/or lemon juice in its place to add flavour.

Aim for five portions of fresh or frozen fruit and vegetables each day; increase oily fish to 1-2 portions a week and include nuts and

seeds as a snack if needed. Choose wholegrain bread, cereals e.g. porridge, Shredded Wheat, Weetabix and pasta as healthier choices.

**Smoking**

Smoking raises your blood pressure and makes the arteries narrower, so it can lead to a stroke. Giving up can reduce your risk of a stroke by half.

**How much do you drink?**

Drinking too much alcohol can raise your blood pressure. The recommended limit for women is 2-3 units a day and for men 3-4 units a day. Remember to try and include an alcohol free day each week.

**How's your blood pressure?**

Get your blood pressure checked regularly by your GP. If you're a woman who's taking Hormone Replacement Treatment (HRT) remember that this may raise it too. A healthy range is 140/90mmHg.

**Are you stressed?**

Stress can also raise your blood pressure, so try to find out what's making you feel stressed and get some help. Many people find that yoga or meditation make them feel calmer and it can also help to talk through your problems with someone else.

**Are you active?**

Taking regular exercise helps you stay healthy and makes you feel better in yourself. Anything that gets your heart beating faster and leaves you slightly out of breath is good.

Your GP can prescribe medication if you are at risk of having a stroke. By giving up smoking you can also halve your chances of having a stroke.

**Contact**

- The Stroke Association Helpline  
0303 3033 100 or 999 in an emergency  
[www.stroke.org.uk](http://www.stroke.org.uk)

**Physical activity**

**Active ageing**

Active ageing can make a significant contribution to the quality of your life. The physical, mental and social benefits of being physically active can reduce your risk of injury or stroke and increase your independence.

For general health benefits, adults should aim for 30 minutes a day of moderate physical activity on five or more days of the week.

If you want to talk to someone about how to get started, you could contact your local Sports Development Team or leisure centre. Most have exercise specialists who could advise on what's best for you and the kind of exercise opportunities which would most suit your level of fitness. You can obtain details about your local Sports Development Team by either phoning or looking on the website of the District Council area in which you live.

You may want to increase your levels of physical activity by integrating this into your everyday living, for example brisk walking, cycling, gardening and use of the stairs. By making contact with your local Sports Development Team you may find that in your area there may be opportunities such as health walks, specific exercise classes for older people and dancing for better health and fun.

**Healthy eating**

Eating and drinking is part of our everyday lives. Food is something to enjoy, as well as to eat for health. Sometimes we can get confused about what to eat, especially if we have one or more long-term conditions. There are many conflicting messages about food and health in the media, so if you are confused, check out the British Dietetic Association for impartial, professional



advice. If you have a health concern and you want dietary advice, ask your GP about the list of programmes below.

The Community Health Improvement Programme (CHIP) is a community-based weight loss group for adults wanting to re-think their approach to nutrition and physical activity levels. The 12 week course is available to adults with a BMI of 30+ and is free and confidential and you will be supported in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. Ask your GP about this.

The 'Weigh to Go' programme is based in GP practices and offers one to one support for up to 12 weeks to help you lose weight and live a healthier lifestyle. You'll also get help and advice for some months afterwards. Ask your GP if this is available. (Currently available for people living in Cambridge City or South Cambridgeshire).

Your local dietician can offer one-to-one and group support. If you have never seen a dietician and think that you need to, you can be referred via your GP, practice nurse or hospital consultant, depending on the nature of your condition. In the first instance contact your GP's surgery.

Personal health trainers are here to support and encourage you towards better health. They work with you, for up to a year, to set

and achieve realistic goals. They cover, healthy eating, stopping smoking, drinking less alcohol and exercising more. Health trainers are available in a limited number of surgeries across Cambridgeshire. For more information visit the personal health trainer website [www.personalhealthtrainer.org.uk](http://www.personalhealthtrainer.org.uk)

**Contacts**

- CHIP 01353 865364
- Dietician and Diabetes group education (GP surgery)
- [www.bda.uk.com/foodfacts](http://www.bda.uk.com/foodfacts)

**The benefits of quitting smoking**

It's never too late to stop smoking! Giving up smoking increases your chances of living a healthier and longer life. Once you've stopped, your body begins to repair the damage and you start to feel the benefits. Your health improves, you feel better and you have more money to spend on other things. Since 2007 CAMQUIT have helped over 7,500 people to stop smoking.

**Living with a long-term condition**

Long-term conditions are chronic illnesses that can limit the lifestyle of patients living with them.

Examples include:

- Diabetes
- Heart disease
- Asthma



- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD).

NHS Cambridgeshire is developing a number of things to help people with long-term conditions:

- Ensuring early diagnosis of illness
- Improving the quality of services and care for patients
- Making services more convenient and closer to patients' homes
- Commissioning services and education to enable patients to understand and manage their conditions
- Helping people in Cambridgeshire to live healthier and longer lives
- Ensuring people living with a long-term condition are offered a Personal Health Plan.

**Personal Health Plan**

The Personal Health Plan is a tool which has been developed specifically for people with long-term conditions to help them to adapt to life and to take control of their care. The Personal Health Plan is owned by the individual and it is up to each person what information they wish to include in their Plan. Some people may decide not to use a Personal Health Plan but may reconsider this at a later date. The Personal Health Plan can be completed in stages or all in one go. People can decide to complete some sections and leave others blank for the time being. The content of the Plan is likely to change over time. When used properly, the Personal Health Plan will enable you to go to the right place for the information and services that you need.

**Continuing Healthcare**

**What is Continuing Healthcare?**

NHS Continuing Healthcare is the name given to a package of care, which is arranged and funded solely by the NHS for individuals outside of hospital who have ongoing healthcare needs. You can receive continuing healthcare in any setting,

including your own home or a care home. Whether someone has a 'primary health need' is assessed by looking at all of their care needs and relating them to four key indicators:

- **Nature**  
This describes the characteristics and type of the individual's needs and the overall effect, including the type of interventions required to manage those needs.
- **Complexity**  
This is about how the individual's needs present and interact and the level of skill required to monitor the symptoms, treat the condition and/or manage their care.
- **Intensity**  
This is the extent and severity of the individual's needs and the support needed to meet these needs, which includes the need for sustained/ongoing care.
- **Unpredictability**  
This is about how hard it is to predict changes in an individual's needs that might create challenges in managing them, including the risks to the individual's health if adequate and timely care is not provided.

**Contact**

- The Complex Care Management Team on 01223 725429 at NHS Cambridgeshire



“ I realised my memory wasn't as good as it used to be, so I made an appointment with my GP to find out why I was being so forgetful. ”



**Awareness**

Dementia is a general term used to describe a range of illnesses with a variety of symptoms that affect the brain. Dementia may involve difficulties in thinking clearly, understanding words, recognising people or common objects as well as loss of memory. The symptoms get worse over time, but every person's experience of living with dementia is different depending on which areas of their brain are most affected.



**Action**

Confusion or forgetfulness does not mean someone has dementia. Other conditions such as common infections can cause similar problems so seek advice from your GP. Help and support is there when it is needed.



**Talk to**

The first step is to visit your GP if you suspect you or someone you know may have dementia.



**Prevention**

If your GP finds no reason for the symptoms they may want to refer you to Mental Health Services for older people, who are the dementia specialists.

**WEBLINKS** [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk) • [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk) • [www.dementiauk.org](http://www.dementiauk.org) • [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org)



**Contacts**

- Your GP in the first instance who will assess the situation and may refer you to local specialist Mental Health Services
- Alzheimer's Society Cambridge and Ely 01223 884031 Fenland and Marshland 01945 580460 Huntingdon 01480 415235
- Dementia Helpline 0845 300 0336
- Age UK 0800 169 6565
- Age UK Cambridgeshire 01354 696650
- Rethink 0845 456 0455



# Dementia

- If you're worried see your GP
- It's important to have an early diagnosis to rule out any other condition that could be causing memory problems
- If you have a diagnosis of dementia you can still continue to take an active part in the community and enjoy life

**What is dementia?**

Dementia is a general term used to describe a range of illnesses with a variety of symptoms that affect the brain. There are many kinds of dementia but the most common are Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia. What all types of dementia have in common is that they damage brain cells, so that the brain cannot work as well as it should.

**What causes dementia?**

Medical researchers all over the world are working to find causes and develop treatments. Alzheimer's disease damages individual brain cells one by one, so that the brain can't work as well as it used to. In vascular dementia there are problems with the blood supply to brain cells. For example, some people have tiny strokes (or infarcts) which damage small areas of the brain.

**What are the symptoms?**

Every person with dementia is different. The following list gives some general guidance on common symptoms:

- Loss of memory, for example forgetting the way home from the shops, being unable to remember names and places, or what happened earlier that day
- Mood changes, depression and emotional upsets

- Difficulty planning and completing simple tasks, for example making a meal
- Difficulty understanding what other people are saying or in finding the right words
- Difficulty concentrating and becoming easily distracted
- Difficulty in identifying common objects.

**What should I do if I'm worried?**

Confusion or forgetfulness does not mean someone has dementia. Other conditions such as infections can cause similar problems, so visit your GP as soon as you can.

If your GP finds no reason for the symptoms, they may want to refer you to Mental Health Services for older people, who are the dementia specialists. Some treatments may be available which may help some people with the symptoms of some forms of dementia, particularly Alzheimer's disease - and research is progressing all the time. Get the help and support you need. There is practical and emotional advice available providing options, including equipment, that can support you and your family to get on with day to day living.



“ I enjoy an occasional drink with my friends, but I know my limits. ”



### Awareness

As you get older it becomes more important to know your limit and stick to it. Alcohol can help us 'wind down'. However, if it is used without addressing an underlying problem, alcohol is likely to be used more frequently, with increasing amounts needed to produce the same effect. If you take drugs - illegal or over the counter - you need to be aware that natural ageing processes can lead to additional risks, even from drugs you may have been taking for some time. There is no shame in seeking help to address these problems.



### Action

Follow the recommended guidelines for alcohol consumption, and be sensible about your drinking. For example, never drink alcohol on an empty stomach. The best option may be to stop drinking altogether. Illegal drugs are often highlighted as dangerous, but using prescribed drugs, over-the-counter medicines and buying drugs over the internet, also carry risks.



### Talk to

If you are worried about your own, or someone else's drinking or drug use, confidential advice and support is available from a number of services in Cambridgeshire (see Contacts). It is usually a good idea to talk to your GP first as they can refer you to specialist services.



### Prevention

Drinking sensibly will allow you to continue to enjoy alcohol but also to stay safe and healthy. Try to avoid using alcohol with any drugs - especially illegal drugs or medicines. Always check with your GP if it is safe to use alcohol with prescribed drugs.

### WEBLINKS

[www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk) • [www.addaction.org.uk](http://www.addaction.org.uk) • [www.drinksense.org](http://www.drinksense.org) • [www.al-anonuk.org.uk](http://www.al-anonuk.org.uk) • [www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk) • [www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk) • <http://refuge.org.uk> • [www.downyourdrink.org.uk](http://www.downyourdrink.org.uk) • [www.adfam.org.uk](http://www.adfam.org.uk)



### Contacts

- Age UK  
Cambridgeshire  
01354 696650
- Speak to your GP or practice nurse
- Addaction Referrals  
0800 021 3064  
Cambridge  
01223 723069  
Huntingdon  
01480 424289  
Wisbech  
01945 469035
- Drinksense  
01733 555532
- Drinkline (24 hour confidential advice)  
0800 917 8282
- Al-Anon (for families and friends of problem drinkers)  
020 7403 0888
- Alcoholics Anonymous  
0845 769 7555
- National Domestic Violence Helpline  
0808 2000 247
- Adfam (helpline for families and parents of drug users)  
020 7553 7640



## Alcohol and drugs

- Stick to the recommended guidelines for sensible drinking
- Talk to your GP if you are concerned about your own or someone else's drinking
- Keep a note of all medicines or remedies you take regularly
- Avoid buying medicines, preparations or remedies over the internet

### Reducing the risk of harm

Although most people tend to drink less as they get older, some people still drink more than the recommended safe limit. One unit of alcohol is the equivalent of one pub measure of spirits, a half pint of lager, a small glass of wine or a small sherry. However, the measures that you pour at home are likely to be larger than pub measures and thus contain more units of alcohol.

It is recommended that men should drink no more than four units a day and women no more than three. Try to have one alcohol-free day a week. Drinking more than this can lead to significant health problems. Older people may be more vulnerable to the effects of alcohol, so drinking less is recommended. If you are drinking in company, pace yourself. You don't have to keep up with everyone else! Whenever a GP, nurse or pharmacist recommends a medication you should tell them what you take already so they can give advice about possible interactions. When taking any kind of drug or medicine check that it is safe for you to drive or handle machinery.

### What are the long-term effects of alcohol and drug taking?

As with alcohol, drugs can be misused when they are taken regularly without trying to address the underlying problems. Short-term effects of taking medicines or drugs without medical supervision can be falls, low mood, confusion, apathy and poor appetite.

Long-term effects can include ulcers, nutrition deficiency, organ failure and depression. Illegal drugs carry additional risks.

### Can I drink when I am taking medication?

Many tablets and medicines cause problems with alcohol and you may need to stop drinking altogether. Painkillers and sleeping tablets are particularly affected by alcohol. Always check with your GP or pharmacist before drinking if you are taking medication. If you feel you need help please contact your GP or one of the agencies listed in the Contacts section.

### Worried about the drinking or drug-taking of a friend or relative?

You may be worried that someone close to you is drinking too much or misusing drugs. This may make you feel alone, angry or ashamed.

Sometimes, having someone in the family who is drinking or misusing drugs causes problems such as arguments, physical fights or problems with money. If this is the case you may feel torn between loving the person and hating what they are doing to themselves and the family. People in this situation often find it very helpful to have someone who is outside the family to talk to about their concerns or feelings.



“ Being in charge of our own care and support and having control back in our lives is what we all strive for. ”



## Care and support with daily living

- **Self-Directed Support puts you in control of your social care**
- **It gives you more choice and control over the support you receive and what you do**
- **If you want, you can take the money for your care and support as a Direct Payment and manage it yourself to meet your needs**

We want people who need social care support to have more choice and control over the services they receive and how these are delivered. We want them to be able to live independently, stay active and healthy, be part of their local community and have the best quality of life irrespective of illness or disability.

Self-Directed Support means that instead of the care and support you need being decided for you, you will be able to choose the support you receive. You will have access to a wide range of services to meet your support needs and to help you achieve the things you want to do.

### Personal Budgets

If you are eligible to receive support from the Council and its partners\* you will be given an indicative budget which is used as the basis of your Self-Directed Support Plan. This says how you will use the money you receive to meet your care and support needs and to do the things you want to do. This might be something like getting out and about to see more people, going for a walk to stay fit and healthy, or staying in your own home for as long as possible. Once your Plan is agreed you will be allocated a Personal Budget. You can have your Personal Budget:

- As a Direct Payment. This is a cash sum for you to manage your own care and support. Cambridgeshire Direct Payments Support Service (see Contacts page 16) can help you if you decide to do this

- Managed for you by the Council or an agreed third party who will pay directly for the support you have chosen in your Plan
- As a combination of both of these options.

There are few constraints on how you use your Personal Budget as long as it is legal and keeps you safe and healthy. If you need it, you can have help to make your Support Plan and to manage your Personal Budget. In some cases you may be expected to make a contribution towards the cost of your social care support.

### Funding your own support

If you fund your own care and support, Cambridgeshire Direct (see Contacts page 16) may be able to tell you about organisations that may be able to help you with your daily living.

### Local Involvement Networks (LINKs)

LINKs are made up of individuals and community groups who work together to improve local Health and Care services. Call Cambridgeshire LINK on 0300 365 1245 to find out about getting involved.

### Cambridgeshire User Led Organisation (ULO)

The ULO is run by and for people who need care and support with their daily living. They help to shape and direct the services they need to live the life they choose. Visit the ULO website [www.cambsulo.org.uk](http://www.cambsulo.org.uk) to find out about getting involved.



#### Awareness

To give people who need care and support with their daily living more choice and control over the services they receive, the Council and its partners\* have introduced Self-Directed Support. This is an upfront sum of money to enable you to plan and choose the support you need and the things you want to do to keep you safe and healthy.



#### Action

To find out if you are eligible to receive social care support you should contact the Council by phoning Cambridgeshire Direct and asking for an assessment. If you think you need help with mental health issues you should contact your GP in the first instance.

If you already receive social care support you will be transferred to Self-Directed Support at your next review. If your needs are being met under the Care Programme Approach your Care Co-ordinator will be able to advise you about when you will be transferred.



#### Talk to

Ask your Care Manager or Care Co-ordinator about Self-Directed Support or contact Cambridgeshire Direct.

**EMAIL** [in.controltotal@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:in.controltotal@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

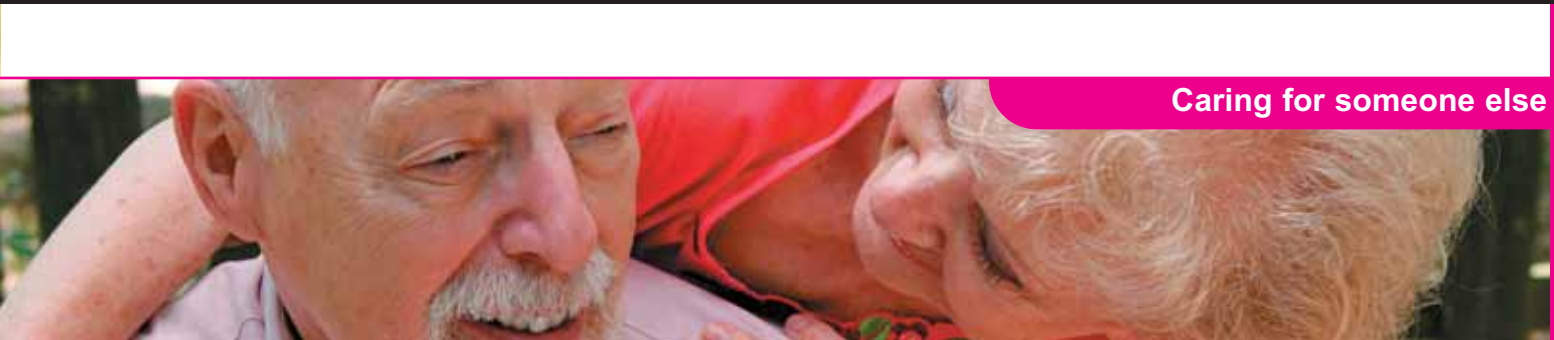
**WEBLINKS** [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk) • [www.cambsulo.org.uk](http://www.cambsulo.org.uk) • [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/social](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/social) • [www.cambridgeshirelink.org.uk](http://www.cambridgeshirelink.org.uk)



#### Contacts

- Age UK Cambridgeshire 01354 696650
- Cambridgeshire Direct 0345 045 5202
- Cambridgeshire Direct Payments Support Service 01245 392328
- Cambridgeshire LINK 0300 365 1245

\* Council's partners:  
NHS Cambridgeshire, Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust



“ My husband and I have a wonderful relationship - but we've both had to adapt to our changing roles. Since my stroke he feels more like a nurse than a husband, while I feel helpless rather than being in control. ”



**Awareness**

Being a carer has its rewards but is also hard work. Make the most of any support offered by family, friends, social services or relevant organisations and other carers. There are specific rights for carers including employment rights.



**Action**

Don't feel you have to cope alone. If you are caring for someone you may be entitled to benefits and services provided by the Council and other local organisations (see Knowing what you are entitled to). Cambridgeshire County Council produces a Carers Support Directory providing information about the wide range of help available. For a copy contact Cambridgeshire Direct.



**Talk to**

You can contact Cambridgeshire Direct and speak to the carers support manager, or you can call the community-based carers support manager in your local area. They can advise you on what help you may be entitled to and provide details of other helpful organisations. Local support groups, such as those organised by Crossroads Care, are great places to meet people in similar situations for emotional and personal support. Age UK Cambridgeshire provide an older carers support service, contact them on 01354 696650.



**Prevention**

Looking after another person who is ill or disabled can be very stressful. If you feel under pressure, contact the carers organisations offering support and information (see Contacts).

**WEBLINKS** [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/social/carers](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/social/carers) • [www.crossroads.org.uk](http://www.crossroads.org.uk) • [www.direct.gov.uk/carers](http://www.direct.gov.uk/carers) • [www.carers.org](http://www.carers.org) • [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org) • [www.nhs.uk/carersdirect](http://www.nhs.uk/carersdirect) • [www.nec.ac.uk/caring-with-confidence](http://www.nec.ac.uk/caring-with-confidence)



**Contacts**

- Age UK Cambridgeshire 01354 696650
- Cambridgeshire Direct 0345 045 5202
- Community-based carers support managers  
Cambridge City and South Cambs 01223 712055  
East Cambridgeshire 01353 652205  
Fenland 01354 750010  
Huntingdonshire 01480 420617
- Crossroads Care Cambridgeshire 0845 241 0954
- Cambridgeshire LINK 0300 365 1245
- VoiceAbility 01223 555800
- Princess Royal Trust for Carers 0844 800 4361
- Carers Direct 0808 802 0202

## Caring for someone else

- **Get support from family, friends and other carers**
- **Ask for an assessment to determine your entitlement to services and support**

### Adjust to your changing role

Becoming a carer can mean making major changes to your life and the life of the person you care for. You will be faced with issues that you may not have had to deal with before and it can be hard to adjust to your role as a carer and having someone dependent on your support. A spouse or partner who has always been independent may need constant attention, you may be finding it more difficult to cope with caring for a son or daughter, or be looking after a parent, friend or other relative because of sickness or disability. Other people's perceptions of you may be different as they see you just in your role as carer and not as the individual that you have always been.

### Getting support and taking a break

The role of carer is often a difficult one and it is natural at times to feel resentment, anger or guilt. Carers often need support themselves, not only to get help with the workload but to deal with their own associated problems such as stress and depression. Make the most of support from family, friends and local organisations. Take a break when you can - even a few minutes to yourself can sometimes help. Try to continue doing previous hobbies and interests. Look after yourself by eating a healthy, balanced diet and try not to take on more than you can cope with. Tell your GP that you are a carer so that they can support you in looking after your own health. Many GP's across Cambridgeshire are participating in a project offering enhanced services for carers and/or a pilot project

offering 'prescribed' breaks for carers. Further information about carers breaks, which can range from a few hours to several weeks, is available from Cambridgeshire Direct (see Contacts page 18).

### Making practical changes

Lifting or handling the person you care for may be physically difficult for you and needs to be done correctly to prevent you from injuring yourself. You may need to make some practical changes such as adaptations and improvements to the home. Cambridgeshire Direct can provide advice on equipment and the best way to move and handle people.

### Coming out of hospital

It can be a very worrying time when someone comes out of hospital and can no longer care for themselves. There can be a lot to organise. Carers UK and Cambridgeshire Direct can provide more information about hospital discharge.

### Carers emergency planning

The Cambridgeshire Individual Carers Emergency Respite (ICER) scheme helps carers plan for situations when an unexpected emergency prevents them from carrying out their caring role. The scheme is available for adults who provide a substantial amount of care on a regular basis to an adult or older person who is eligible for services and needs some support to manage safely at home over a 48-hour period. Information about the scheme is available from the carers support manager at Cambridgeshire Direct.



“ I'd feel completely helpless if it weren't for my friends and family who are there to support me. ”



**Awareness**

Feelings of loss or being confused about what you can or will need help with can start before someone dies. There are health and social care professionals, voluntary organisations and your family and friends who can all support you. If you know someone is ill and dying you may want to be with them, but are unsure what may happen. The NHS End of Life Programme website has a series of support sheets offering information including those on the Dying Process, about the way care during this time is delivered through The Gold Standard Framework and Liverpool Care Pathway and what to do after a death. Ask your GP or nurse about these or visit: [www.endoflifecareforadults.nhs.uk/care-pathway](http://www.endoflifecareforadults.nhs.uk/care-pathway) and [www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/dwp1027.pdf](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/dwp1027.pdf)



**Action**

Many people find practical tasks help them cope with sorrow. As does dealing with the practical aspects of your new life.



**Talk to**

Getting used to the loss of a loved one is not easy. Talking about death and the person who died helps too. If you continue to find it very difficult then speak to your GP. Cruse can put you in touch with Bereavement Support Services.



**Prevention**

Grief may affect your emotional, physical and mental health. Slowly you can find a new way of living whilst remembering the person you've lost.

**WEBLINKS** [www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk) • [www.nafd.org.uk](http://www.nafd.org.uk) • [www.the-bereavement-register.org.uk](http://www.the-bereavement-register.org.uk) • [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk) • [www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk](http://www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk) • [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)



**Contacts**

- Your GP or practice nurse
- Cambridge Cruse 01223 302662
- The Pension Service 0845 60 60 265
- National Association of Funeral Directors 0845 230 1343
- The Bereavement Register 01732 467940
- Age UK 0800 169 6565
- Age UK Cambridgeshire 01354 696650
- Cruse Bereavement Care 0844 477 9400
- Samaritans 08457 90 90 90 (24 hour)

## Coping with loss

- Look after yourself in your grief and get as much support as you can
- Help those closest to you by preparing legal matters and wills in advance
- Ask your funeral director for advice on arrangements
- Expect emotional mood swings; grieving takes time

### Your feelings

Losing someone close to you is a highly traumatic event. Although each person will deal with loss in their own way, there are several recognisable emotions and reactions that people go through. This is an entirely normal part of grieving

You may think you should be able to cope, especially if the death was expected, but you still find you can't. You may think you've done all your grieving and then find you haven't. You may think that having other people who care for you will make everything alright but it doesn't. If other people were not aware of the nature of your relationship with the deceased you may feel excluded.

Anger is a common part of grieving - anger at yourself, anger at the person who died, anger at friends and family, anger at the system and/or anger at your God. Talking helps. Allow yourself to express your feelings and talk about the person who has died. Dealing with the practical aspects involved when someone dies can also help.

Grief is a natural process; take as long as you need to come to terms with your loss.

### Being practical

There are a number of practical things to be done following a death. If you can, ask a family member or friend to help out.

- A doctor will need to issue a death certificate

- You should appoint a funeral director to make the arrangements. You may be entitled to help with funeral expenses
- You must register the death within five days. You will need to take the death certificate with you to the Register Office
- Tell family members, friends and colleagues
- There may be organisations to notify too. If the deceased was receiving welfare benefits you should inform the Benefits Office. Other organisations to inform are the DVLA, the UK Passport Agency, the Inland Revenue and any bank or building societies.

You may also need to contact their personal or occupational pension provider, insurance companies, mortgage provider, housing association or council housing office, social care services and utility suppliers.

- It can be upsetting to continue to receive post, especially junk mail, in the deceased person's name. You may want to register the name and address of the deceased person with the Bereavement Register that tries to stop post being sent to people who have died
- Read the will if there is one.



“ We had a bit of money in the bank, so we didn't think we would be entitled to anything. But we got assessed by the benefits adviser and now the little extra money we get each month makes a big difference to our quality of life. ”

## Knowing what you are entitled to

- You may still be entitled even if you have savings
- Many older people are not claiming their entitlements

### The benefits are out there

There are many benefits, allowances, discounts and concessions you may be entitled to, even if you have personal savings. Some benefits are based on your financial circumstances (but not the value of your home). Others are based purely on your age, and some are based on your care needs.

### Attendance Allowance

This is a tax-free benefit for over 65s who have an illness or disability and need help with personal care. Getting Attendance Allowance may increase other benefits that you are already getting.

### Disability Living Allowance

This allowance can be claimed by people who need help in caring for themselves or in getting around because they are ill, disabled or terminally ill. You are not eligible to make a new claim for Disability Living Allowance if you are over 65. In this case you should claim Attendance Allowance instead.

### Council Tax reductions

You are entitled to a reduction of 25% in your Council Tax if you live alone. You may also be able to claim a reduction to your bill if your home has been adapted for a disabled person.

### Benefits for carers

If you provide substantial and regular care to someone for whom the Council may provide social care services you are legally entitled to a Carer's Assessment to find out your needs and the services that may be available to assist you. You may also be eligible for an assessment if the person you care for has refused an assessment for services themselves. The Carers Support Directory available from Cambridgeshire Direct (see Contacts page 22) contains full details of the grants and benefits that you may be entitled to.

### Transport

You may be eligible for a concessionary bus pass (see Transport for more information). If you receive Pension Credit you may also be able to get a refund on reasonable travel costs to hospital appointments. Contact organisations such as Age UK Cambridgeshire, the Citizens Advice Bureau or Cambridgeshire Direct (see Contacts on page 22) for advice.

### Understanding your entitlements

There may be other benefits you are unaware of so ask your benefits adviser to check for you. These may include:

- Pension Credit
- Working Tax Credit (if you have not retired)
- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Benefit
- Social Fund (such as Winter Fuel Payments, or to help cover extra costs, such as paying for a funeral). You may be entitled to financial allowances if you need someone to help care for you, if you have a physical or mental disability, or if you are a carer. At 60, you will also be entitled to other concessions such as reduced entry to leisure centres or adult education classes.



#### Awareness

Many older people are not getting the entitlements they are due because they haven't looked into whether they are eligible or not. Don't miss out - even a small extra payment each week can make a big difference.



#### Action

The pension and benefits system can be very complex. Rather than trying to work out on your own what you may be entitled to, and how your savings may affect this, you should seek specialist advice.



#### Talk to

It's easy to find out what benefits you may be entitled to. If you live in one of Cambridgeshire's villages, then contact the Village Benefits Advice Service (see Contacts). Alternatively you can call Age UK Cambridgeshire or the Citizens Advice Bureau for a confidential discussion. The Pension Service can also provide advice (see Contacts).



#### Prevention

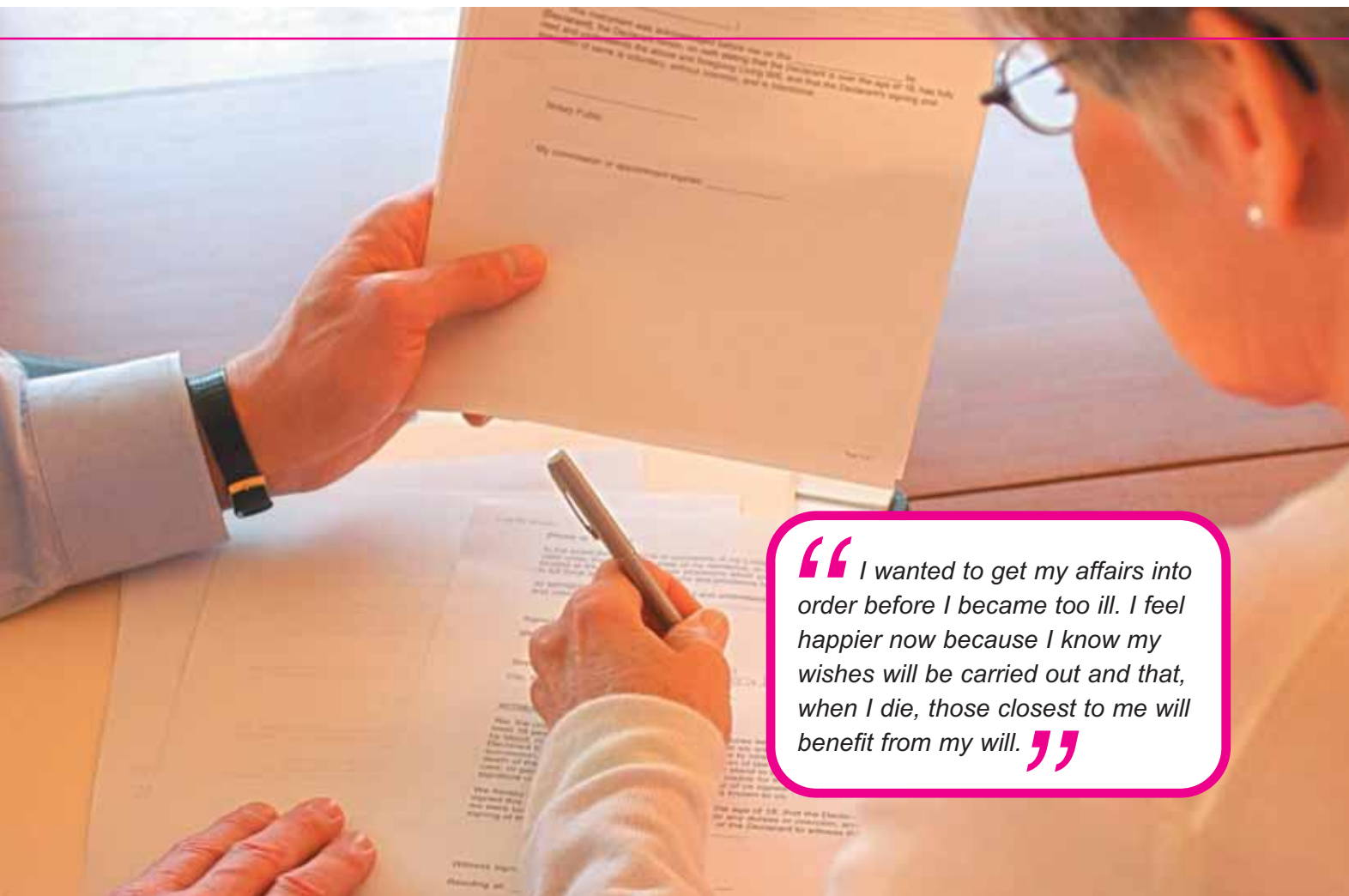
Many people find it difficult to make ends meet because they are not claiming the benefits they are entitled to. All you have to do is ask to see if you qualify for more benefits.



#### Contacts

- Cambridgeshire Direct  
0345 045 5202
- Citizens Advice Bureau  
0844 848 7979
- Age UK  
Cambridgeshire  
01354 696650
- Village Benefits Advice Service  
01353 666990
- The Pension Service  
0845 60 60 265

**WEBLINKS** [www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk) • [www.cambridgecab.org.uk](http://www.cambridgecab.org.uk) • [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk) • [www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk)



*“ I wanted to get my affairs into order before I became too ill. I feel happier now because I know my wishes will be carried out and that, when I die, those closest to me will benefit from my will. ”*

## Organising your will and legal matters

- Your wishes will be known and followed
- Drawing up a will doesn't have to cost a lot
- Get financial help for legal matters
- A living will states your wishes for future treatment
- Organising your legal matters will help your family

### Why make a will?

Even if you feel you do not have much to leave, it is important that what you do have is left to those you care about. If you do not make a will, this means you die 'intestate'. Your spouse will be the main beneficiary unless stated otherwise. If you are not married to your partner they will not automatically be a beneficiary, so make arrangements in advance. The absence of a will causes lengthy delays so organise things in advance.

### Other legal matters

Visit [www.lawsociety.org.uk](http://www.lawsociety.org.uk) or [www.sra.org.uk](http://www.sra.org.uk) to find details of a suitable local solicitor. Some solicitors may have funding schemes to help with the cost. Remember to check in advance what fees will apply.

### Making your wishes known

Age UK provides a document that gives details on your wishes for funeral arrangements. It has spaces where you can fill in information so your family and friends understand your wishes after your death. This document should be given to a trusted family member for safekeeping. It cannot be used as a will.

Call freephone 0800 169 6565 and ask for the form headed 'Instructions to my next of kin'.

### Living will

A living will, also known as an 'advance directive', usually takes the form of a written statement setting out what types of medical treatment the maker of the will does or does not want in specific circumstances should

they be incapable of giving or refusing consent. It must be signed whilst the maker is mentally competent.

### Lasting Power of Attorney

A Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) is a legal document by which one person ("the Donor") gives another person ("the Attorney") the power to act on his or her behalf and in his or her name. This can be drawn up at any time while you have mental capacity to do this but has no legal standing until it is registered with the Office of the Public Guardian. You can grant the Attorney power to make property and financial or health and welfare decisions or you can grant both types of authority noting any exclusions that are important to you. The Attorney can then carry out your wishes and/or make decisions in your best interest if you become unable to do so. Enduring Power of Attorney (EPA) can still be used if they were in place by 1 October 2007. These only give decision making power for financial and property matters.

### Partnership rights

If you and your partner are not married you should seek advice. Different rules apply around bereavement and registration of death, inheritance, 'next of kin' status and incapacity, pension provision, tenancy and wills and intestacy (if you die without leaving a will).

### Organ donation

If you wish to become an organ donor contact the NHS Organ Donor Line on 0300 123 23 23 (24 hours).



#### Awareness

Writing a will helps save your family from worry in the future, and means your wishes will be met. If you have an illness that may lead you to be mentally incapacitated and if you have views about the kind of treatment you receive and for how long, it makes sense to think about writing an advance statement or directive - a 'living will'.



#### Action

Contact one of the organisations listed to get more information on writing a will or a living will. For fact sheets on all related subjects contact Age UK on 0800 169 6565.



#### Talk to

Discuss with a solicitor or your local Citizens Advice Bureau about making a will and the fees involved. A solicitor does not need to be involved in writing a directive, but you should discuss your wishes with your family and your GP.



#### Prevention

Settling your legal matters in advance will give you peace of mind and will also make things a lot easier and less stressful for your family if you become ill or when you die.



#### Contacts

- Law Society  
020 7242 1222
- Public Guardianship Office  
0300 456 0300
- Age UK  
0800 169 6565
- Age UK  
Cambridgeshire  
01354 696650
- Citizens Advice Bureau  
0844 848 7979
- NHS Organ Donor Line  
0300 123 23 23  
(24 hours)

**WEBLINKS** [www.lawsociety.org.uk](http://www.lawsociety.org.uk) • [www.publicguardian.gov.uk](http://www.publicguardian.gov.uk) • [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk) • [www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk) • [www.organdonation.nhs.uk](http://www.organdonation.nhs.uk)



“ I'm really happy with the way they look after him and he knows he can talk to me if he is unhappy about anything. I sleep well at night knowing he is well cared for. ”



**Awareness**

Abuse of older people has been called a 'hidden and often ignored problem in society'. It can be defined as a single or repeated action against an older person.



**Action**

Explain your concerns and ask for action to be taken. Never feel embarrassed about highlighting abuse. Don't be afraid to complain or make a fuss if something doesn't feel right. You can ask an advocate to speak out on your behalf. If it's a care home or care agency get a copy of their complaints policy and tell the registered manager what's wrong. If the abuse involves physical or sexual assault, racial harassment or theft you should involve the Police. If you are concerned that someone you know is experiencing abuse or neglect, whether it is you, a member of your family or someone living near you, contact Cambridgeshire Direct on 0345 045 5202. In an emergency always dial 999.



**Talk to**

Somebody you trust like your GP, a relative, friend or carer, or an organisation like Age UK. Or contact the Police, Cambridgeshire Direct, or Action on Elder Abuse.



**Prevention**

The earlier abuse is spotted, the less long-term harm can be carried out. Always trust your instincts, if you feel someone is not being treated in the way they should be.

**WEBLINKS** [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk) • [www.elderabuse.org.uk](http://www.elderabuse.org.uk) • [www.cambridgecope50.org](http://www.cambridgecope50.org) • [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org) • [www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk) • <http://refuge.org.uk> • [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk) • [www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)



**Contacts**

- Cambridgeshire Direct  
0345 045 5202
- Age UK  
Cambridgeshire  
01354 696650
- Action on Elder Abuse  
0808 808 8141
- Cambridge Older People's Enterprise (COPE)  
01223 364303  
(10am-4pm)
- Carers UK  
0808 808 7777
- National Domestic Violence Helpline  
0808 2000 247
- Care Quality Commission  
03000 616161



## Recognising and supporting vulnerable adults

- Abuse of older people has been called a 'hidden and often ignored problem in society'
- Abuse isn't common and you can do a great deal to keep safe
- Both older men and women can be at risk of being abused
- Abuse can happen anywhere
- The abuser is often well known to the person being abused

Abuse can happen by accident, or it may happen when someone doesn't realise that they are not caring for you appropriately. The strain of caring for someone, especially on a long-term basis, can lead people to act in ways that they shouldn't, leading to a one-off or occasional act, or there are systematic attacks or deliberate acts of intent to harm. These may be triggered by a relative or carer having their own physical or mental problems, the break down of the relationship or the carer's inability to provide the level of care needed. In nursing homes or residential care, abuse can occur when staff are inadequately trained or supervised and have little management support or guidance.

**Forms of abuse include:**

- Physical abuse - causing physical harm either deliberately or by rough or thoughtless behaviour
- Psychological or emotional abuse - behaviour that makes you feel anxious, frightened or intimidated including verbal abuse, demeaning, threatening, or intimidating language
- Financial abuse - includes theft, fraud, exploitation or putting pressure on you to use your money in a way that you don't want or isn't in your best interests

- Neglect - including ignoring or failing to meet your medical or physical care needs, or the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating
- Sexual abuse - involves someone making you do something you don't want to, didn't or couldn't consent to
- Racism and sexism - being treated less favourably because of your colour, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, status etc.

**What to do about it**

Abuse stays hidden because people are afraid to speak out. If you are vulnerable you can ask an advocate to speak out for you or to help you speak out for yourself.

**Carers perspectives**

Abuse can happen because someone is struggling to manage their caring role or isn't receiving the support they need. They may not be aware that their actions are abusive and believe that they are caring for the person to the best of their abilities. If you care for someone it is important that if you feel you need more support you contact someone who can help you find ways to manage the situation (see Contacts on page 26).

“ I may be older but that doesn't mean I have to sit in a chair all day, staring at the TV. I like to get out, meet new people and have a good old chat. I'd get depressed if I stayed at home on my own. ”



#### Awareness

Life is what you make it and it doesn't have to stop just because you're getting older. Think about your interests and hobbies and plan for your future years.



#### Action

Visit your local volunteer centre or library to find out what's going on in your area. There may be many local events and organisations that you have not been aware of. Many organisations are looking for volunteers and support - so get in touch.

If you have access to the internet, try visiting [www.do-it.org.uk](http://www.do-it.org.uk) which is a national database that allows you to search over 800,000 voluntary opportunities from around the UK.



#### Talk to

Talk to friends and neighbours about what they've found locally. Talk to local organisations and find out about local day or community centres. Cambridgeshire.net includes a database of voluntary and community organisations that may be seeking volunteers or have a range of activities for you to participate in. Your local library can also provide more information.



#### Prevention

Growing older is inevitable, but your outlook on life, health and lifestyle can make the difference between slipping into old age or embracing it and all it has to offer!

**WEBLINKS** [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk) • [www.cam-volunteer.org.uk](http://www.cam-volunteer.org.uk) • [www.cambridgcope50.org](http://www.cambridgcope50.org) • [www.cambridgeshire.net](http://www.cambridgeshire.net) • [www.age-net.co.uk](http://www.age-net.co.uk) • [www.seniority.co.uk](http://www.seniority.co.uk) • [www.silversurfers.net](http://www.silversurfers.net)



#### Contacts

- Age UK Cambridgeshire 01354 696650
- Cambridge and District Volunteer Centre 01223 356549
- Cambridge Older People's Enterprise (COPE) 01223 364303 (10am-4pm)
- Cambridge Older People's Reference Group (COPRG) 01223 208915



A positive attitude

## A positive attitude

- Older or not, life is what you make it
- A positive attitude makes a big difference
- There are financial advantages to being over 60
- Make the most of the time retirement brings
- You're entitled to have fun!
- Use the internet and join other 'silver surfers'

You can't stop getting older, but that doesn't mean you have to stop doing the things you enjoy. A positive attitude means making the effort to do the things you enjoy, keeping healthy, active and making the most of opportunities. It's important to maintain existing support networks but now may also be a time to meet new people and try new things. Many people find that they finally have the time to do all the things they couldn't do in their younger, working days.

#### The benefits of becoming 60+

There are lots of financial benefits once you hit 60, though some depend on your financial status. Further details are in this handbook but these include:

- Free prescriptions and eye tests
- An increase in tax allowances (at 65) and other money benefits
- Winter fuel payments
- Concession schemes
- Assisted transport and free bus travel.

#### What's on offer

There are plenty of things to do that are free, or don't cost much. These include visiting local parks, museums, galleries and libraries. Your local library should have information about places of interest, events and groups you might like to join. There are now many websites aimed specifically at older people (see weblinks listed on page 28).

#### Local services

Local organisations, including those which are culturally-specific, can offer plenty of help and advice. There are community centres, which give you the chance to meet people, try new activities and go on trips. If you find it hard to get out and about, or are worried about meeting new people, local organisations can help. If you're active and keen to help others, volunteering can be stimulating and rewarding.

#### Older people's forums

Older people's forums are independent organisations led by older people that bring seniors together to take forward ideas and projects in their local communities. They also comment on services and policies that affect older people's quality of life.

#### Cambridgeshire Older People's Enterprise (COPE)

This is your forum in Cambridgeshire. Membership is FREE, and open to anyone aged 50 or over. Contact COPE for details on 01223 364303.

#### Cambridgeshire Older People's Reference Group (COPRG)

An organisation linking older people's community groups across Cambridgeshire. Contact COPRG for details on 01223 208915.



“ I didn't want to stop working just because I'd reached 60. I loved my job and I didn't see why I had to suddenly give it all up. Luckily, my company felt the same way and I'm still there, aged 68! ”



**Awareness**

Be aware that retirement is a major life change and may take time to adjust to. Consider the pros and cons of retiring or whether you can continue working. It may be possible to reduce your hours or the amount of responsibility you have in your current job.



**Action**

If you are retiring, plan ahead so that you have plenty to keep you occupied. Think long-term and keep up hobbies and interests that you have always had, or try something completely new, like learning a new language.



**Talk to**

Talk to your employer about retirement plans and whether it is possible to continue working if you wish to do so. If you are interested in volunteering there are many organisations and websites that can give advice and information.



**Prevention**

Suddenly finding yourself with no job, too much time and too little idea of what you want to do for the next few years can be daunting and demoralising. Make sure you plan ahead, so that retirement is something you look forward to.



**Contacts**

- Age UK  
0800 169 6565
- Age UK  
Cambridgeshire  
01354 696650
- The Pension Service  
0845 60 60 265

**WEBLINKS** [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk) • [www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk) • [www.primeinitiative.org.uk](http://www.primeinitiative.org.uk) • [www.do-it.org.uk](http://www.do-it.org.uk) • [www.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk) • [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/social/older](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/social/older)



## Choosing retirement

- Discuss whether there is a mandatory retirement age at your company
- Think about the benefits of retirement
- Retirement is a major life change - plan for it
- Find a new job - life doesn't stop at retirement
- Volunteering - giving up some time to help others

### Doing what you want to do

As of April 2010, the current age men and women can start drawing their state pension changed to 65, regardless of whether they are still in employment or not. If you have the choice to continue working or to retire, there are a few factors you may want to consider before deciding.

### Choosing retirement

Many people spend their whole lives working towards retirement. Once you retire you will have more time to spend with your spouse or partner, your family and friends. You can pick up old hobbies and interests or take up new ones. You will have more time to travel, whether it's further afield or just exploring your local area. You can catch up with old friends and make new ones. It is a time when you can finally relax and do what you really want to do.

But there can be downsides to retiring. This is a time for major changes in your life. Your income will probably drop. You may question your self-identity and self-worth now you are no longer seen as part of 'employed society'. You and your spouse or partner may find it difficult suddenly spending so much time together. Also, if you haven't planned for retirement properly, and don't keep mentally and physically active you may find yourself with endless hours to fill, feeling bored, and possibly depressed.

### Continuing to work

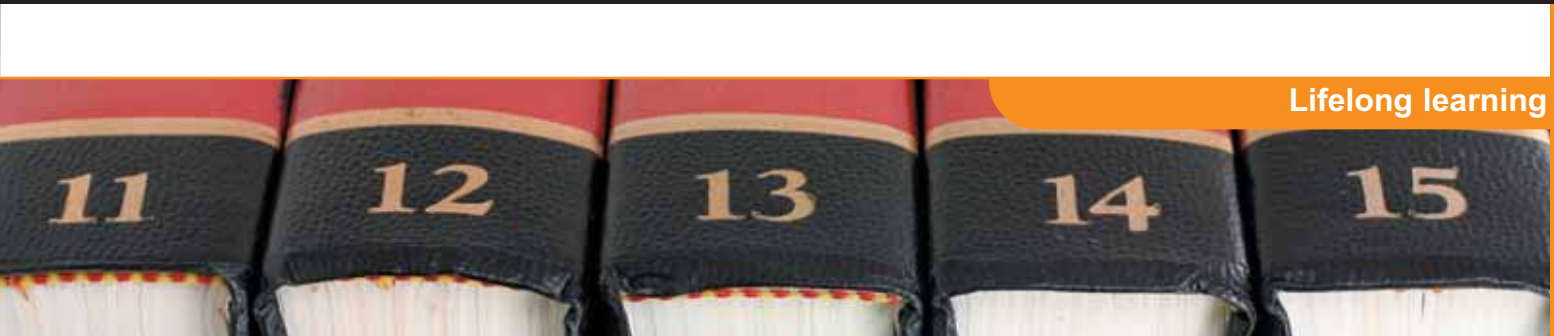
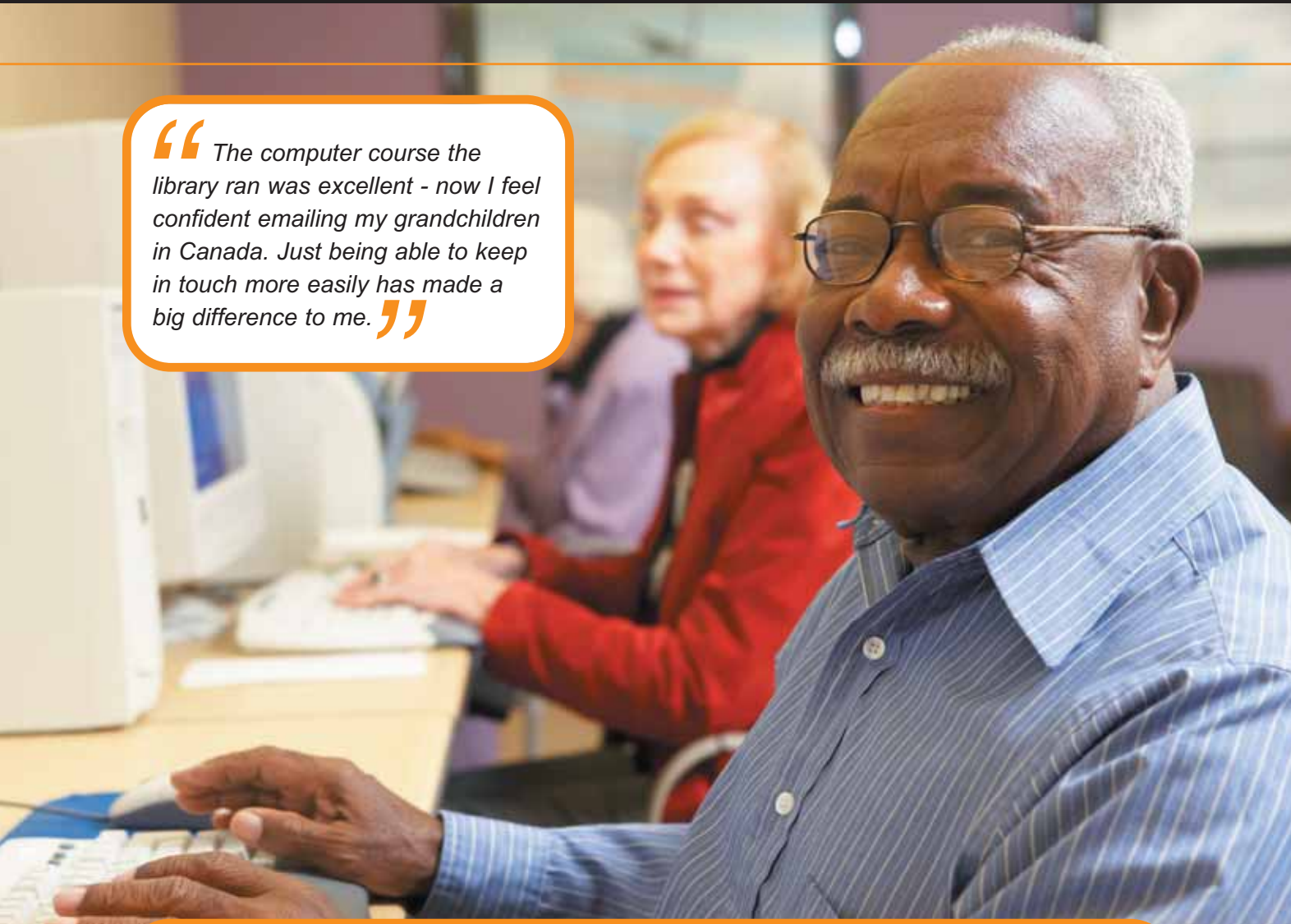
These days, some people over the state pension age continue to work. Many feel that just because they are drawing their pension, they don't want to give up a job they enjoy and that brings in an income. Many companies also like older employees as they are more reliable, and less likely to go sick or go for another job. Even if you have retired from your job, you may want to find another one with fewer hours and less responsibilities. There are many organisations that can give you help and advice to find jobs, taking into account your interests, skills and any qualifications.

### Voluntary work

Around 22 million people in Britain do voluntary work because it is a rewarding way of helping others while helping yourself to keep active. Voluntary work isn't paid, although expenses, such as meals and travel costs will be met, and in some cases, it does lead to a paid job. Many volunteers find the work they do gives them a huge sense of satisfaction and self-worth.

### Getting involved

The County Council offers opportunities for older people to contribute to policies and decisions through the Older People's Partnership Board. Cambridgeshire Celebrates Age is a programme of events running throughout the year. To find out more about getting involved visit [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/social/older/getinvolved/](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/social/older/getinvolved/)



“ The computer course the library ran was excellent - now I feel confident emailing my grandchildren in Canada. Just being able to keep in touch more easily has made a big difference to me. ”



**Awareness**

Don't let age be a barrier to learning something new, or taking up an old hobby. Most people find that the more their days are filled with doing things that interest them, the more they remain active.



**Action**

There are many ways to learn. Your local library will have information about local activities and courses. You can also check local and national newspapers or log on to the Learndirect or BBC websites for advice on online learning.



**Talk to**

Phone or visit your local adult education or community college for advice and information, or ask at your local library or Council office.



**Prevention**

Keeping your mind active can help reduce the risk of conditions such as Alzheimer's disease and depression, as well as helping you to get out and about and make new friends.



**Contacts**

- Cambridgeshire Libraries  
0345 045 5225
- Niace - Promoting Adult Learning  
0116 204 4200/4201
- Learndirect  
0800 101 901
- Open Age  
020 8964 1900
- Open University  
0845 300 60 90
- Age UK  
0800 169 6565
- Age UK  
Cambridgeshire  
01354 696650

**WEBLINKS**

[www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/leisure/libraries](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/leisure/libraries) • [www.cambridgeshire.net](http://www.cambridgeshire.net) • [www.niace.org.uk](http://www.niace.org.uk) • [www.learndirect.co.uk](http://www.learndirect.co.uk) • [www.openage.co.uk](http://www.openage.co.uk) • [www.open.ac.uk](http://www.open.ac.uk) • [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk) • [www.bbc.co.uk/learning/adults](http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/adults) • [www.nec.ac.uk](http://www.nec.ac.uk) • [www.wea.org.uk](http://www.wea.org.uk)

## Lifelong learning

- Learning will keep you mentally active
- Gaining knowledge will keep you interested - and interesting!
- Learn at home, college, library or community centre
- Classes give you the opportunity to make new friends

### You're never too old to learn

Don't let age be a barrier to getting as much as you can out of life. The old saying that 'it's never too late to learn' is true - many people in their 60s, 70s and 80s are taking courses and gaining degrees. But remaining mentally active doesn't mean having to sit exams. Taking up chess, doing the crossword puzzle or reading can be equally stimulating.

### Choosing what to do

There are many activities and courses available, you have to choose what you would like to do. Take into account your interests, skills and budget and then find out what's on offer.

### Where to look

Your local library is a good source of information and will have leaflets and directories about local activities. Local newspapers will also list activities or events going on in your area. Contact your community or adult education college or the Open University for advice and information on what courses may suit you.

There's a mobile library service that serves rural communities across Cambridgeshire, bringing the library service to every community. A Home Library Service (the Doorstep Service) operates for people unable to visit a library due to frailty or disability. If you prefer audio there are audio books on tape or CD, if you are visually

impaired you may be eligible to receive tapes in the post from the Postal Tape Service. Libraries are also a good source of information for people who want to find out more about local or family history. They also provide free access to computers.

You can access the library catalogue remotely from a computer - library staff will give you a Personal Identification Number (PIN) to do this. You can reserve and renew books online as well as look at online databases.

There's a wide range of activities available in local libraries - ask about 'Engage' morning and afternoon events and free training on how to use computers.

Exercising our minds as well as our bodies is important. By learning a language, joining a Book Group or playing bridge, you're keeping mentally active. This can help keep you mentally healthy for longer. If you're going out to a class or centre, you'll also be meeting new people and making new friends, which is stimulating in itself. You'll probably find you have lots in common with other people you'll meet as your interests will be similar.

The Cambridgeshire Older People's Newsletter is produced quarterly and is an interesting mix of information and events relating to older people in Cambridgeshire. Visit [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/social/older/getinvolved/](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/social/older/getinvolved/)



“ Because of my limited mobility I find it very hard to get out and about. Now I know about community transport, life will be much easier and more fulfilling. ”



**Awareness**

There are lots of options for travel in and around Cambridgeshire including for those with mobility difficulties.



**Action**

Contact the numbers listed on this page for details of the schemes and options available to you.



**Talk to**

If you are applying for a Concessionary Travel Scheme or a Blue Badge, ask whether you will need a mobility assessment first or if your GP needs to send information to support your application.



**Prevention**

It can be isolating and depressing if you find it hard to get out. See the following page for assisted transport services available to help you.

**WEBLINKS**

- [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk) •
- [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/communitytransport](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/communitytransport) •
- [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk) •
- [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk) •
- [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk)



**Contacts**

- Age UK Cambridgeshire 01354 696650
- Cambridgeshire Direct, Blue Badge Applications 0345 045 5204
- Community Transport information 0345 045 1151
- Dial-a-Ride Cambridge City and South Cambs 01223 506335 Ely Soham and area 01353 661161 Fenland (March, Chatteris, Wisbech, Whittlesey) 01354 661234 Huntingdonshire Ring-and-Ride 01480 411114 Newmarket and area 01638 608080 Peterborough and area 01733 394545 Ramsey Warboys and area 01487 815543 South East Cambs (Linton, Haverhill) 01440 712028
- Shopmobility Cambridge 01223 457452 Cambridge Grafton Centre 01223 461858 Huntingdon 01480 432793
- National Rail Enquiries 08457 48 49 50
- Traveline Public Transport Information 0871 200 22 33



# Transport

## Bus travel

If you have limited mobility, many public buses have easy-access and low-floors, reducing the height between the pavement and the bus entrance. They also have space for wheelchair passengers.

Concessionary bus passes enable holders to travel free of charge on off-peak local bus services anywhere in England, Cambridge Park and Ride services (after 9.30am), and at reduced rates on certain Dial-a-Ride services. To travel at discounted rates you must show your bus pass to the driver of every bus you use. You may be eligible for a concessionary bus pass if you have a disability, have been refused a driving licence for medical reasons, or based on your date of birth, if you are aged 60 or over. Application forms are available from your District Council.

## Community Transport

Community Transport is a network of services that can provide essential journeys for those who have difficulty accessing conventional public transport.

## Dial-a-Ride

Provides door-to-door transport for members of the Dial-a-Ride scheme operating in their local area. Local journeys need to be booked with at least 48 hours notice. The Dial-a-Ride minibus will collect you from your door and take you to your chosen destination. There is usually a charge for this service. Information about becoming a member is available from your local Dial-a-Ride service. Concessionary bus pass holders may be able to travel at reduced rates on certain Dial-a-Ride services (see Contacts on page 34 for more information).

## Community Car schemes

Offer organised lifts to those needing to make essential journeys where no public

transport services exist and to anyone with mobility difficulties. There is usually a charge for this service.

## Shopmobility schemes

These schemes lend manual wheelchairs and powered scooters to anyone with limited mobility to shop or visit leisure and commercial facilities within the town, city or shopping centre.

## Taxicard schemes

Provide assistance towards the cost of taxi journeys for people who have difficulty getting to or using public transport.

## Rail travel

If you're 60 or over, you can buy a Senior Railcard and save a third on Standard and First Class rail fares throughout Great Britain for a year. Railcards can be purchased at staffed train station ticket offices, from your District Council or online from [www.senior-railcard.co.uk](http://www.senior-railcard.co.uk)

## Blue Car Badge schemes

If you can't walk very far you might be eligible for a Blue Car Badge, available for both drivers and passengers. It means you can park nearer to your destination and in certain restricted parking areas. Blue Car Badges are part of a nationally recognised disabled parking scheme but cannot be issued for a temporary mobility problem. To apply for a Blue Car Badge contact Cambridgeshire Direct on 0345 045 5204.

## Medical appointments

Contact your hospital or GP's surgery if you are having trouble arranging transport to an appointment. You may be entitled to hospital transport or financial assistance to help you get to your appointment.

“ I was worried I would have to leave my lovely home as I had no savings to repair it and make it safer and more comfortable. But I found out this wasn't the case and was able to get a grant to help with the costs of some of the adaptations. ”



**Awareness**

Many people think more about where they live as they grow older. As this has a great effect on our lives look at the options carefully.



**Action**

Seek advice and information about alternative ways of remaining independent in your home, maintaining your home or moving to another home. Talk things through with family and friends, or someone you trust such as your GP or care manager.



**Talk to**

Talk to your local Age UK, Citizens Advice Bureau, or contact your local District Council Housing Office. National organisations like Age UK and Counsel and Care produce fact sheets and run a helpline. Their advice includes renting and purchasing options. Council or housing association tenants can talk to their Housing Officer at their local District Council Housing Office or Housing Association.



**Prevention**

It is better to think ahead rather than making a decision in a crisis. Choosing where and how you live should be your decision with support from people you trust. If you are facing the possibility of losing your home you should contact your local District Council Housing Office.



**Contacts**

- Age UK  
Cambridgeshire  
01354 696650
- Age UK  
0800 169 6565
- Counsel and Care  
0845 300 7585
- Warm Front Scheme  
0800 316 2805
- Energy Saving  
Advice Service  
0800 512012
- Local District Council  
Housing Offices  
Cambridge City  
01223 457000  
Huntingdonshire  
01480 388388  
South  
Cambridgeshire  
03450 450 051  
Fenland  
01354 654321  
East Cambridgeshire  
01353 665555

**WEBLINKS** [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk) • [www.counselandcare.org.uk](http://www.counselandcare.org.uk) • [www.housingcare.org](http://www.housingcare.org) • [www.anchor.org.uk](http://www.anchor.org.uk) • [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk) • [www.managenergy.net](http://www.managenergy.net) • [www.intouchsupport.co.uk](http://www.intouchsupport.co.uk) • [www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk) • [www.cambridge.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/housing/](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/housing/) • [http://huntingdonshire.gov.uk/Housing/Pages/default.aspx](http://http://huntingdonshire.gov.uk/Housing/Pages/default.aspx) • [www.scambs.gov.uk/Housing/default.htm](http://www.scambs.gov.uk/Housing/default.htm) • [www.fenland.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/housing/](http://www.fenland.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/housing/) • [www.eastcambs.gov.uk/housing/housing](http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/housing/housing) • [www.communities.gov.uk/housing/housingolderpeople](http://www.communities.gov.uk/housing/housingolderpeople)



# Housing matters

- You may be able to get advice and help with paying for repairs, alterations and adaptations in your home
- Choosing where and how you live should be your decision

## Home improvements

Your home may need repairs to be safer or more comfortable. If you are a homeowner with savings, you may have to pay for this yourself. However, if you are a homeowner or private tenant aged 60 or over, with repairing obligations and you are on a low income or receiving a means tested benefit you may qualify for a grant. Contact your local District Council Housing Office (see Contacts on page 36 for more information).

## A warmer home

The Warm Front Scheme provides grants to make homes (owned or privately-rented) warmer, healthier and more energy-efficient for people receiving benefits.

## Handyperson schemes

Handyperson schemes offer a small repair service for people over the age of 60 living in East Cambridgeshire, Fenland, South Cambridgeshire, Cambridge City and Huntingdonshire who are owner-occupiers, private and council tenants. Work includes minor adaptations and repairs to people's homes. This is a low-cost service, or free if you receive benefits.

## Changes to your home to maintain independence

A community alarm and sensors around the home (Telecare), grab rails, or more major adaptations such as a level access shower, may help to assist with keeping you safe and maintaining your independence. Your local Care Management Team can provide

information on sources of help for all of these. Contact them and ask for an assessment of your needs.

## Council and housing association tenants

If you live in a council or housing association property larger than you need, you may be interested in swapping homes or moving to another area. Please contact your landlord for advice.

## Retirement housing or sheltered housing

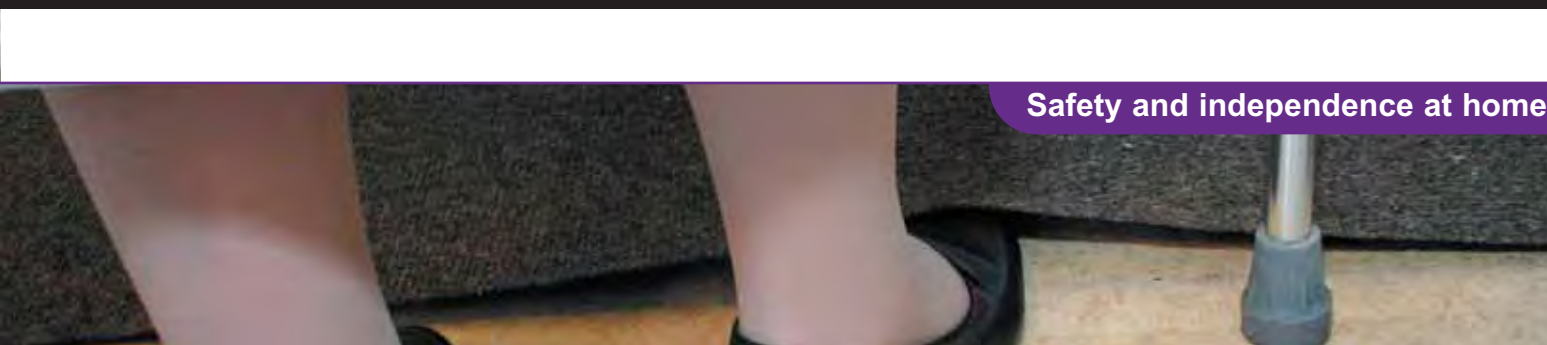
Self-contained flats specifically designed for older people are available to rent, with on-site or visiting support. Contact your local District Council Housing Office for more information (see Contacts on page 36).

## Extra Care housing

Extra Care housing offers self-contained flats with 24 hour care and support on-site, and usually some meals. Contact your local District Council Housing Office or Social Care Team (see Contacts on page 36 for more information about renting).

## Care homes

Care homes provide 24 hour personal care and some provide nursing care. Your local Care Management Team can advise you on quality, cost, and suitability for your needs. You can also contact Counsel and Care or Age UK (see Contacts on page 36).



“ Slipping on the wet bathroom floor gave me a nasty shock. It could have been a lot worse, if I'd broken my hip instead of just bruising it I could have been there for hours. Now I'm a lot more careful. ”



**Awareness**

The more aware you are of the potential risks the less likely they are to happen to you.



**Action**

Check locks on doors and windows. Check to see how you can make your home safer room by room. Take time to think when doing tasks that may be risky.



**Talk to**

The Fire Brigade can give you free advice about keeping yourself safe. The Falls Prevention Service and Assistive Technology Team can support you to protect and improve your health, mobility and independence. Tell your GP or nurse if you are anxious about falling, or if you have had a fall ask for advice on Osteoporosis. Tell Trading Standards if you are concerned about a doorstep caller or purchase you made.



**Prevention**

People over 60 are less likely to be victims of crime than any other age group. However it is still important to minimise the risks.



**Contacts**

- Age UK Cambridgeshire 01354 696650
- Age UK 0800 169 6565
- NHS Direct 0845 4647
- Service Directory Assistive Technology 01223 883756  
Email: [c-pct.asst.teltech@nhs.net](mailto:c-pct.asst.teltech@nhs.net)
- Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue 0800 731 7480
- Falls Prevention 01223 883710
- Trading Standards 0845 404506

**WEBLINKS** [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk) • [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk) • [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)  
[www.cambscommunityservices.nhs.uk](http://www.cambscommunityservices.nhs.uk) • [www.cambsfire.gov.uk](http://www.cambsfire.gov.uk)

## Safety and independence at home

- Take sensible precautions to keep yourself safe, though statistically you are at less risk than other age groups
- Secure your home so you feel safe. Do not let strangers into your home without verifying their identification first
- Check your home for any potential hazards
- Always tell someone like your GP if you have had a fall

### Staying steady on your feet

There are many simple things that you can do to help stay steady on your feet. The Cambridgeshire Falls Prevention Service encourages healthy active ageing, whether you're fit and active, have mobility problems or are worried about falling. We can offer both practical advice and exercise resources that help maintain independence.

Falls are often the result of a number of factors. Make sure you are aware of the following:

- **Exercise**  
Regular physical activity such as walking, gardening and fitness classes for older adults can help keep you fit and healthy. There are also specific exercises to strengthen the muscles of your legs and improve your co-ordination and balance. These exercises are one of the most effective ways to reduce the risks of falling.
- **Checking your eyesight**  
Vision plays an important role in your sense of balance. It is a good idea to have your eyes checked regularly - preferably each year. Remember that bifocal or varifocal lenses can make objects appear closer than they really are, which can cause you to trip or lose balance. If you think this could be a problem, ask your optician for advice.
- **Managing your medicines**  
Some medicines can make you feel faint or unsteady. Let your GP know if you ever feel like this. If you take four different types of medicines, ask your GP or pharmacist for a regular review.
- **Looking after your feet**  
Foot problems can have a major affect on mobility, balance and stability. It is important to wear shoes that fit you well - generally, an enclosed shoe with high sides, thin soles and a good grip is best if you are unsteady. Avoid loose slippers or those with no backs, sandals and high heels.
- **Osteoporosis**  
The health of your bones can make a big difference to the effect of a fall. Eating a diet rich in calcium and vitamin D and taking regular weight bearing exercise is important.
- **Home safety**  
Think twice when doing tasks, such as standing on a chair or reaching too high. Always take care on the stairs and consider an extra banister or handrails. Keep the floor free from clutter, which you may trip over.



**• In the bathroom**

Test your bath water to prevent scalding. Use a non-slip rubber mat to stop you sliding when you get into the bath. A handrail is useful if you need extra support. It's a good idea to leave the door unlocked in case you need help.

**• In the bedroom**

Always switch off your electric fire or blanket before getting into bed and check their cords regularly for scorch marks. Have your electric blanket tested annually. Before getting into bed, check anything you need is within easy reach - a lamp, drink and medication. It's also a good idea to have a torch by your bedside. If you feel dizzy when you first sit up, wait a couple of minutes before standing up.

**• In the living area**

If rugs are frayed, it is safer to remove them. To prevent having to bend, make sure everyday objects, such as the telephone or remote control are kept within easy reach. Secure trailing wires round the edge of the room. Have fire and gas equipment checked regularly. Consider having a personal alarm so you know you can summon help whenever you need it in your home and garden. It is very common to feel anxious if you have had a fall or feel unsteady. Taking positive action to stay steady on your feet can help reduce anxiety and does not mean you have to place restrictions on everything you do. On the contrary, it should allow you to be more active and give you greater freedom and confidence. REMEMBER, the purpose of taking steps to stay steady and prevent falls is to protect and improve your health, mobility and independence - not to take it away!

**Assistive Technology and Telehealthcare**

**What is it? And how it can help you?**

The service provides and uses a range of assistive, telecare and telehealth devices to support people and their carers to address challenges to everyday living in their homes across the county. Anyone can refer to us if they think we can help. All our technology is loaned for the duration of need following a

'Needs Led Assessment' and should be returned to us when it is no longer required. We can assist with many situations or difficulties, medication management, falls alerts, (day/night) wandering, time orientation, prompts and reminders. Do you have a long-term condition which may inhibit your independence? Perhaps our technology may help you and your family or carer to increase confidence whether or not you live alone.

Some of our technology is programmed into your Life Line/Community Alarm (so long as you have one) so that you don't have to remember to press 'that' button. The sensors will automatically send that alert for you, we call this type of technology 'Telecare'. Some of our more simplistic 'stand alone' devices might be just what you're looking for to support those annoying little memory issues within the home. Clinicians after 'an assessment' can also prescribe another form of technology called 'Telehealth.' This technology monitors your vital signs for example your blood pressure from your own home. The information is then downloaded using a normal telephone connection to our NHS secure computers for viewing by a Clinician to assess and manage your condition/s. It can measure blood pressure, SpO2, blood glucose, pulse rate, temperature, weight and soon to have ECG and hopefully INR recorders.

**Keeping safe**

**Doorstep selling**

"The moss on your roof needs removing otherwise it will cause damage."  
"We were working at your neighbours when we noticed."

Sound familiar? These may be just some of the claims made by uninvited doorstep callers to persuade you to pay for services you don't want or need. Very often their claims are untrue. Every year Cambridgeshire Trading Standards receives many complaints from people who have been conned by doorstep callers.

**Remember**

Doorstep callers are trained in high pressure sales techniques. They will catch you unawares. They are polite, persistent and

persuasive and they will rush you to make a decision. Say "No thank you" and then immediately close the door. If the person won't go away, contact the Police or Trading Standards.

**Don't**

- Believe all callers are genuine - they are not
- Believe 'scare stories' - they are rarely true
- Believe genuine companies have loads of tarmac left over - they don't!
- Allow strangers to have access to your property
- Sign anything or pay for anything until you are sure about it.

**Do**

- Check a 'Caller's Identity' - ask to see an Identity card (ID). Consider if you really need the work done. Shop around for the best deal. Consider how you will contact the trader if anything goes wrong. Ask for information to study at your leisure. Remember you often have a short time to cancel a contract after a cold call. Always remember that reputable businesses generally don't knock on doors to find customers. There are laws that seek to protect you from unscrupulous traders for goods and services supplied following an unsolicited visit to your home.

Most contracts made at your home require that you're given a seven-day cooling off period. The trader should give you a cancellation notice explaining your rights and they must not start work within these seven days, unless you write a letter to the contrary. It is against the law for you to be coerced or harassed to the point where you make a transactional decision, which you would not have done under normal circumstances. If you suspect someone may be a rogue trader, please report it to the Police on 0345 4564564 and to Consumer Direct on 08454 04 05 06. If a trader threatens to come back, start work without authorisation or you feel worried about your own safety call 999.

**Prevention**

If you need a door chain, window locks or similar, contact the Cambridgeshire Bobby Scheme on 07866 602100 who may be able to help. Always use your door chain even if you think it's a caller you are expecting. For a 'We're Not Buying It' sticker contact Consumer Direct on 08454 04 05 06.

**Identity checks**

Some utility companies run a 'password scheme' for older or vulnerable people. Any caller from a company, which you have set one up with, will identify themselves with your unique password as well as their identity card. A genuine caller will be happy to wait while you confirm their identity.

**Phone and mail scams**

The telephone and mail preference services can reduce the amount of junk mail and phone calls you receive. Remove your name and address from any junk mail and put it straight in the recycling bin. Remember you can't be a winner of a competition you have not entered. Premium rate telephone numbers start with a 09 prefix. You can get calls to these numbers blocked by calling your telephone service provider.

**Registered Trader Scheme**

If you need work doing around your house or garden a list of registered traders checked by Trading Standards is available from Age UK Cambridgeshire on 01354 696677 or 01354 696650.

**Fire safety**

Test your smoke alarm weekly. Press the test button, if you cannot reach this easily or safely a broom handle can do this or ask a friend. For FREE advice and a Fire Safety Check of your home contact Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue on 0800 731 7480 or visit [www.cambsfire.gov.uk](http://www.cambsfire.gov.uk)



*“ I had peace of mind having the leak fixed by someone I found using the Cambridge Trading Standards Trader Approval Scheme. ”*



## What to do in an emergency

- Try to remain calm, think before acting and try to reassure others
- Make sure 999 has been called if people are injured or if there is a threat to life
- Know where and how to turn off water, gas and electricity supplies in your home
- If you are at home and an emergency happens, try to gather together some essential items such as keys, cash and a list of useful phone numbers



### Awareness

For an immediately serious situation, don't hesitate to call 999. What about the less serious but still very worrying things that can occur at any time? It's helpful to have an idea of what to do as well as a list of some useful numbers you might need.



### Action

You can prepare for some emergencies by having a box of essential items kept in a place you can easily locate. The box could include a torch and batteries, candles and matches (not to be used if you suspect a gas leak!), a list of essential telephone numbers for family, friends and your GP surgery, small first-aid kit, and spare hat and gloves in case your heating fails. Have a plan, written down or in your mind, about what you would do if your property were to flood, catch fire, spring a leak, or need emergency repairs.



### Talk to

Discuss what to do in different kinds of emergencies with family members or friends. Think about how you might get to a place of safety.



### Prevention

Planning and being prepared for an emergency helps to reduce the feelings of panic and fear. Reduce fire hazards in your home by fitting smoke detectors - at least one on every floor. The Community Safety Team may be able to provide these free of charge. Make contact with your local Council or Fire Service for more information.



### Contacts

- Age UK Cambridgeshire 01354 696650
- Ambulance, Fire Brigade, Police and Coastguard dial 999
- Leakline 0800 771 881
- Floodline 0845 988 1188
- National Gas Emergency Service 0800 111 999
- Power cuts EDF Distribution 0800 7838 838
- NHS Direct 0845 4647
- Cambridgeshire Direct (8am-8pm Monday-Saturday) 0345 045 5202
- Social Care Emergency Duty Team (5pm-9am Monday-Friday, Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays) 01733 234724

**WEBLINKS** [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk) • [www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk) • [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

### How to stay in control of an emergency situation

Don't panic! Staying calm means the emergency services can get the information they need from you more easily. Summarise the situation briefly and clearly. Try to use a landline telephone rather than a mobile so the services can locate you if you get cut off. If there's a fire call from a safe distance.

The emergency services, local authorities and providers of residential accommodation would be on hand to assist in the event of a flood or other serious emergencies.

If you find yourself outside the coverage area of your mobile network and there is an emergency, dial 112. The mobile will search any worldwide network to establish the emergency number for you.

### What to do if you smell gas

Open the windows to clear the air. This should reduce the smell, as well as any danger. If it's dark, don't turn on lights (to avoid the risk of sparks) and never use a naked flame to see your way.

It may not even be a leak; check your gas cooker or fire has not been accidentally turned on. If not then shut down all your gas appliances and turn off your gas at the mains supply. Do you know where that is? It's probably under the stairs or near the door.

### Flooding

Changes in our climate, such as more severe storms and wetter winters, will increase the risk of flooding. To find out if you are at risk please check on the Environment Agency website [www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk) or call the Floodline on 0845 988 1188. A free telephone warning service is also available.

### What to do when a pipe bursts

Do you know where your mains stop tap is? If not, try looking under the sink or where the pipe comes into your home. Turning it clockwise will shut down the supply. It could take a few moments for the water to stop. Call the Leakline on 0800 771 881 (for water and sewage leaks).

### Electricity dependency

If you are dependent on electricity for medical purposes, such as chronically unwell, essential equipment for mobility or health treatment, medication kept in the fridge, sensory impairment etc. EDF have an answerphone 0800 169 9970 for you to leave your name and phone number and they will call you back so that you can register as dependent on electricity. Alternatively, you can email them [psr@ukpowernetworks.co.uk](mailto:psr@ukpowernetworks.co.uk)

## Keeping well in winter

It's important to keep warm during cold weather. There are useful tips in leaflets from organisations like Age UK or from local 'Keep Warm Keep Well' campaigns. Details of this scheme are on the website [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk) or ask at Age UK or your local Council.

Ask your doctor about the flu vaccination - if you're over 65, or have a long-term medical condition such as asthma or diabetes. Flu can be a serious illness and older people are more susceptible to its effects. It's important therefore to take up the opportunity to be vaccinated each year.

You may be in receipt of benefits that qualify you to receive loft or cavity insulation. There are also national and local grant schemes that you may be able to access. For further information please contact [www.energysavingtrust.org](http://www.energysavingtrust.org) or freephone 0800 512012.

## Heatwave - be prepared

Make sure you know how to look after yourself and others if a heatwave occurs.

### Why is a heatwave a problem?

The main risks are:

- Dehydration (not having enough water)
- Overheating can make symptoms worse for people with heart or breathing problems
- Heat exhaustion
- Heatstroke can make people very ill and can sometimes be fatal.

A heatwave can affect anyone, but most vulnerable are:

- Older people, especially those over 75
- People with chronic conditions, i.e. heart or breathing problems
- People with mobility problems
- People with serious mental health problems
- People on certain medication which may affect sweating and temperature control
- People who misuse alcohol or drugs.

### To reduce the risk:

- Avoid the heat. Stay out of the sun and plan ahead so you don't go out between 11am and 3pm (the hottest part of the day)
- Avoid excessive physical activity, or do it later in the day
- Keep rooms as cool as possible with shades or reflective material external to the glass, if this is not possible close pale coloured curtains. Metal blinds and dark curtains can make the room hotter
- Keep windows closed while the room is cooler than it is outside. If safe to do so, open windows at night when the air is cooler
- Have cool baths or showers and splash yourself with cool water
- Drink water or fruit juice regularly, avoid alcohol, tea or coffee
- Wear loose, cool clothing and a hat when outdoors.

Listen out for information on the radio or TV. If an amber alert is issued, there's a 60% chance that a heatwave will occur within the next few days. A red alert is issued when a heatwave is happening.

If someone feels unwell, get them somewhere cool to rest and give them plenty of fluids to drink. If symptoms such as breathlessness, confusion, weakness, dizziness or cramps get worse or don't go away, seek medical help.

## Social Care emergencies

If you are experiencing abuse or neglect, or if you are concerned about a vulnerable adult, you should contact the Adult Safeguarding Team at Cambridgeshire Direct or the out-of-hours Social Care Emergency Duty Team. If the person is in immediate danger or needs medical treatment you should call the police and/or an ambulance.



# What to do in an emergency

## Medical advice

If you become unwell or are injured make sure you choose the right NHS service to ensure you get the best treatment. There are a range of NHS services on your doorstep.

## Self-care

Self-care is the best choice to treat very minor illnesses and injuries. A range of common winter illnesses and injuries can be treated at home simply by combining a well-stocked medicine cabinet with plenty of rest.

### Self-care essential information

Ensure your medicine cabinet is well stocked with:

- Paracetamol or aspirin
- Anti-diarrhoeal medicine
- Rehydration mixture
- Indigestion remedy
- Plasters and a thermometer.

## NHS Direct

For internet information on all aspects of health and health care, visit [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk). It allows you to check your symptoms, check hundreds of conditions and treatments and find telephone numbers and addresses for most NHS organisations, including hospitals and GP's.

Alternatively, call 0845 4647 for confidential health advice and information around the clock. Calls cost a maximum of five pence per minute from a BT landline. Calls from mobiles and other networks may vary. Your service provider may charge a minimum cost per call. A confidential interpretation service is available in many languages.

## Pharmacist

Your local pharmacist can provide you with free confidential advice on common winter illnesses, skin conditions and stomach upsets and the best medicines to treat them. They are also specialist smoking advisors.

### Pharmacist essential information

To find your local pharmacist, including details of opening hours:

- [www.nhs.uk/servicedirectorios](http://www.nhs.uk/servicedirectorios) or call NHS Direct on 0845 4647
- For details on pharmacy services during bank holidays please visit [www.cambridgeshire.nhs.uk](http://www.cambridgeshire.nhs.uk)

## Your GP

If you have an illness or injury that just will not go away, make an appointment with your local GP. They provide a range of services by appointment, including medical advice, examinations and prescriptions. When absolutely essential, GP's can also provide home visits out-of-hours.

### GP essential information

To find your local GP surgery:

- [www.nhs.uk/servicedirectorios](http://www.nhs.uk/servicedirectorios) or call NHS Direct on 0845 4647
- NHS Cambridgeshire PALS on 0800 279 2535 or 01223 725588

## Walk in Services

Walk in Services at the Doddington, Wisbech and Ely Minor Injuries Units (MIUs) are run by NHS emergency nurses who can treat a range of minor injuries such as sprains, minor head injuries, eye problems, burns, bruises, stings and dislocated fingers. You can also get emergency contraception.

The St Neots Health Centre is a new walk in GP practice with extended opening hours. You do not have to register to receive treatment from a GP here.

For more information go to:

- [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)
- North Cambridgeshire Hospital, The Park, Wisbech PE13 3AB  
01945 488068  
8.30am-6.00pm Mon-Fri
- Princess of Wales Hospital, Lynn Road, Ely CB6 1DN  
01353 656675  
8.30-6.00pm Mon-Sun
- Doddington Community Hospital, Benwick Road, Doddington PE15 0UG  
01354 644243/644241  
8.30am-6.00pm Mon-Fri and  
9.00am-5.00pm Sat and Sun
- St Neots Health Centre, 24 Moores Walk, St Neots PE19 1AG  
01480 219317  
8.00am-8.00pm Mon-Sun

## Accident & Emergency (A&E)

Accident and Emergency departments should only be used in a critical or life-threatening situation. A&E departments provide immediate emergency care for people who show the symptoms of serious illness or are badly injured. Dialing 999 and stating a medical emergency will result in a response vehicle being sent to your location.

Your nearest A&E department is situated at:

- Addenbrooke's Hospital, Hills Road, Cambridge CB2 0QQ  
01223 245151  
[www.cuh.org.uk](http://www.cuh.org.uk)
- Hinchingsbrooke Hospital, Hinchingsbrooke Park, Huntingdon PE29 6NT  
01480 416416  
[www.hinchingsbrooke.nhs.uk](http://www.hinchingsbrooke.nhs.uk)

## Dental

To find a local dentist visit [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) or call PALS NHS helpline free on 0800 279 2535 or from a mobile 01223 725588.

If you require urgent dental treatment and do not have a regular dentist you can contact one of our Dental Access Centres where they will be able to treat you.

- Dental Access Centres  
Cambridge 01223 723093  
Huntingdon 01480 363760  
Wisbech 01945 465919
- Out of Hours Emergency Treatment  
01223 471798

## Advice and Support

If you have a problem with any of your local NHS services such as, hospital, dentist, GP or local community services, you can call NHS Cambridgeshire Patient Advice and Liaison Services (PALS) team. They will help you resolve the problem. Freephone 0800 279 2535 or from a mobile dial 01223 725588. They are there to listen and help, please call.

## Advocacy Service

An Advocate will help you to access information that you need, or go with you to meetings, as a supportive presence. An advocate will listen to what someone wants and then support them in getting their voice heard and having their views acknowledged. An advocate might write letters on your behalf, or speak for you in situations where you don't feel able to speak for yourself. An advocate is independent and will represent your wishes without judging them or putting forward their own personal opinion.

- Age UK Cambridgeshire  
Advocacy Service 01354 696541

## Summary of contacts

### Age UK

Cambridgeshire 01354 696650

### Alzheimer's Society

Cambridge and Ely 01223 884031  
Fenland and Marshland 01945 580460  
Huntingdon 01480 415235  
[www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

### Cambridgeshire County Council Sensory Services Team

0345 045 5221

### Cambridge Cruse

01223 302662

### Cambridge and District Volunteer Centre

01223 356549 [www.cam-volunteer.org.uk](http://www.cam-volunteer.org.uk)

### Cambridgeshire Direct

0345 045 5202 [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

### Cambridgeshire Direct Blue Badge Applications

0345 045 5204

### Cambridgeshire Direct Payments Support Service

01245 392328

### Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue

0800 731 7480 [www.cambsfire.gov.uk](http://www.cambsfire.gov.uk)

### Cambridge Hard of Hearing Club

01223 312107

### Cambridgeshire Libraries

0345 045 5225  
[www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/leisure/libraries](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/leisure/libraries)

### Cambridgeshire LINK

0300 365 1245

### Cambridge Older People's Enterprise (COPE)

01223 364303 (10am-4pm)

[www.cambridgecope50.org](http://www.cambridgecope50.org)

### Cambridge Older People's Reference Group (COPRG)

01223 208915

### Come and be Heard

01354 695317

### Community-based carers support managers

Cambridge City and South Cambs  
01223 712055  
East Cambridgeshire 01353 652205  
Fenland 01354 750010  
Huntingdonshire 01480 420617

### Community Transport information

0345 045 1151  
[www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/communitytransport](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/communitytransport)

### Crossroads Care Cambridgeshire

0845 241 0954 [www.crossroads.org.uk](http://www.crossroads.org.uk)

### Dial-a-Ride

Cambridge City and South Cambs  
01223 506335  
Ely Soham and area 01353 661161  
Fenland (March, Chatteris, Wisbech, Whittlesey) 01354 661234  
Huntingdonshire Ring-and-Ride  
01480 411114  
Newmarket and area 01638 608080  
Peterborough and area 01733 394545  
Ramsey Warboys and area 01487 815543  
South East Cambs (Linton, Haverhill)  
01440 712028

### Lip Reading Services

01480 860401

### Local District Council Housing Offices

Cambridge City 01223 457000  
[www.cambridge.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/housing/](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/housing/)  
Huntingdonshire 01480 388388  
<http://huntingdonshire.gov.uk/Housing>  
South Cambridgeshire 03450 450 051  
[www.scambs.gov.uk/Housing](http://www.scambs.gov.uk/Housing)  
Fenland 01354 654321  
[www.fenland.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/housing](http://www.fenland.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/housing)  
East Cambridgeshire 01353 665555  
[www.eastcambs.gov.uk/housing/housing](http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/housing/housing)

### Service Directory Assistive Technology

01223 883756  
Email: [C-pct.AsstTelTech@nhs.net](mailto:C-pct.AsstTelTech@nhs.net)

### Shopmobility

Cambridge 01223 457452  
Cambridge Grafton Centre 01223 461858  
Huntingdon 01480 432793

### Social Care Emergency Duty Team

01733 234724 (5pm-9am Monday-Friday, Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays)

### Village Benefits Advice Service

01353 666990

### VoiceAbility

01223 555800

**English**

If you would like this information in another language or format please contact us.

**Czech**

Pokud byste požadovali informace v jiném jazyce nebo formátu, kontaktujte nás

**Gujarati**

જો તમને માહિતી બીજી ભાષા અથવા રચનામાં જોઈતી હોય તો, કૃપા કરી અમને વિનંતી કરો.

**Italian**

Se desiderate ricevere informazioni in un'altra lingua o in un altro formato, siete pregati di chiedere.

**Lithuanian**

Jei norėtumėte gauti informaciją kita kalba ar formatu, kreipkitės į mus.

**Polish**

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo uzyskać informacje w innym języku lub w innym formacie, prosimy dać nam znać.

**Portugese**

Se deseja obter informação noutro idioma ou formato, diga-nos.

**Urdu**

اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھئے۔

**Contact details:** 0800 279 2535, [pals@cambridgeshire.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@cambridgeshire.nhs.uk) or FREEPOST, RSCR-GSGK-XSHK, NHS Cambridgeshire, Lockton House, Clarendon Road, Cambridge CB2 8FH

