



MHA Communities - Winchester (formerly MHA Live at Home) was established in July 2000 and currently supports over 380 older people (members) across the Winchester District. We aim to provide that 'little bit of help at the right time' to prevent issues such as loneliness, isolation and increasing frailty becoming triggers for depression and lack of confidence, leading to illness and earlier than necessary admission to hospital and residential care. Our primary aim is to enable

older people to live later life well.

The scheme is designed to be community-based, community-led, and for the benefit of older people, involving older people at all levels of the scheme. The only criteria for membership is a person must be over the age of 60 and living independently, this can be in their own home, with family or in sheltered housing but not residential care.



Under normal circumstances we provide a variety of community based services and activities which promote independence, improve well-being and reduce isolation. This is achieved through a programme of regular groups which includes Exercise Classes, Singing for Wellbeing sessions, a variety of Lunch Clubs, regular outings and an annual holiday. We also provide one-to-one services including at home volunteer befriending and telephone befriending, assistance with transport as well as signposting, advice and advocacy.



Since the start of Covid-19 we have we have rapidly adapted how we operate in order to protect our staff, volunteers and members changing our focus from provision of social activities and at home befriending to services more suited to the current situation. We are currently supporting our members with weekly telephone befriending calls and deliveries of shopping and prescriptions. Alongside this we have developed a programme of remote services which includes Exercise Sessions, Cheerleading, Tai Chi, Cookery Demonstrations, Singing groups and quizzes which can be accessed online or via DVD. We are also delivering craft kits, activity packs and fortnightly lunches.



'Without the support of MHA Communities over the last few months I really feel I could've gone into a deep hole. You have been such a support to people like me who don't have any family living locally, I can't thank you enough' - Member

We provide a number of volunteering opportunities which are open to anyone over the age of 16. We offer training, including and ongoing support to enable our volunteers to deliver the best service to our members. Currently our main need is for volunteer support with telephone befriending, shopping support and meal deliveries.

'It's nice to have the feeling that you're still doing something worthwhile after you retire. I don't think of the members I talk to as just names on a list. They're all individuals, and each one is a different friend. They've all lived very interesting lives and they're very inspiring' - Volunteer

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