Your guide to living independently at home

Community  Getting out and about  Support at home  Staying healthy  Mobility and falls prevention  Care

Information to help you keep safe, secure and well
About this booklet

This booklet is your guide to living independently at home. It provides you with information on the range of services available to help you keep safe, secure, happy, well and independent in your own home. It also offers guidance on services which can support you after a period of illness or a hospital stay, helping you to return to independence.

This useful guide covers everything from help with household tasks and assistance with claiming welfare benefits, to making the most of easy to use technology, offering peace of mind at all times.

As a council we are working hard to ensure that all older people, as well as people who may be vulnerable for any number of reasons, are able to find support from a whole host of prevention services. These are known as prevention services because they work to support people to stay safe and well at home and prevent them from having accidents, becoming ill, lonely or isolated and losing their independence. These services are often free of charge and don’t require a referral, you can ask for help directly yourself.

Home really is the best place to be, and we want the people of Dudley to remain in their homes for as long as possible. This brochure highlights the support available from a huge range of services to enable you to stay independent.

**This guide is for everyone!** Anyone who wants to get the most out of life; anyone preparing for the future; and anyone who wants to deal with the challenges of life before they become problems will find this guide is for them.

You will find information about things like:

- Help at home
- Alarms and technology-enabled care to keep you independent and connected
- Safety and security in the home
- Help with keeping mobile
- Home adaptations
- Housing options for later life
- Support for carers
- Dementia services
- Help to return you to independence
- Online services to help you live well
- Community support
- Help with keeping healthy

Contact details for all services are listed clearly on each page in the **HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?** section.
Your guide to living independently at home

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Community support at home

A range of practical help, advice and support is on offer for older people (aged over 60) in their homes. It is intended for people who live at home but who need a little extra short-term support and guidance to enable them to continue living independently.

The enabling community support service aims to improve the quality of life, happiness, health and wellbeing of older people living in the community. The service works to help any person over 60 experiencing difficulties with living independently at home.

Support provided from this service might help to improve a person’s health and wellbeing, their financial situation, their confidence, address loneliness, or develop independent living skills.

Examples of help on offer includes things like support with achieving good health and hygiene (avoiding illness and hospitalisation); help with claiming the correct benefits and grants; managing money and benefits; help completing forms and paperwork; supporting you when returning home from a hospital stay; or support with managing at home with daily living skills and keeping happy and well.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?
Call our access team on 0300 555 0055

Enabling community support

The enabling community support service provides a range of practical help, advice and support to older people, aged 60 plus, in their homes. It is intended for people who live at home but who need a little extra support on a short-term basis, to live independently, happily and successfully.

A tailored assessment / support plan will be produced for each person. This will state how often a support officer will visit, for how long and what support and advice will be provided to help the individuals concerned.

The service aims to improve the quality of life, happiness, health and wellbeing to people while living in the community. The service also provides a useful holiday visiting service for carers.

Support provided might help to improve a person’s life in several ways including, development of physical & mental wellness, hygiene in the home, financial form filling & money management, help reading post, addressing feelings of loneliness and building on social interaction skills or support to meet a person’s spiritual or faith needs. Overall, helping the person to develop independent living skills.
Living Well Feeling Safe

Living well, feeling safe is all about keeping you safe, secure, happy and well in your own home.

The Living Well, Feeling Safe service is a partnership made up of the council and other organisations and charities working to support vulnerable or older people to keep well and safe in their homes.

The service focuses upon helping people to age well - that means staying healthy, independent, happy, well and living at home. Support services are provided that can make a huge difference to people's lives, ensuring they can continue to live independently and comfortably.

By working together the partners (which include Age UK, West Midlands Police, Victim Support and West Midlands Fire Service, among others) can offer a more complete service suiting a range of needs.

A free home visit is always on offer, regardless of circumstances. Here a member of the Living Well team will have a chat about your circumstances, any things which worry you, or that you might be struggling with. They will then organise the products and services which suit your needs and help you be safer, more secure and support your independence.

Living well is ideal for anyone who is feeling vulnerable, isolated, older and in need of support, or is simply concerned about their home's safety or their personal safety.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?

For further information, or to ask for a free home visit, call 01384 817743 or email livewellfeelsafe@dudley.gov.uk or visit www.dudley.gov.uk/lwfs
Living well, feeling safe online

The Living Well service also offers a useful online tool which helps people who may be struggling a little with managing at home.

We encourage anyone to take a look and find out what equipment and services could help them to remain independent.

The tool can be found at www.lwfsonline.org.uk It is based around a self-assessment questionnaire which asks the user key questions about their health, any struggles they are experiencing around the home, or with daily activities.

A unique, personalised report is then produced which suggests equipment, aids and support services that can help. There are also online purchasing options for the aids and equipment.

Advice, support, products and services are offered by focussing upon areas such as:

• health issues (things like medication management, hearing, vision, memory, walking)
• your home (bathroom, toilet, bedroom, kitchen, stairs, living room)
• daily activities (such as preparing meals, shopping, dressing, gardening, help in emergencies)

The website has been developed with the Disability Living Foundation (DLF), a national charity which has been providing impartial advice and information on independent living since 1969.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?
Visit www.lwfsonline.org.uk
Do you look after someone?

DO YOU PROVIDE CARE OR SUPPORT TO A PARTNER, CHILD, PARENT, RELATIVE FRIEND OR NEIGHBOUR WHO HAS AN ILLNESS, DISABILITY, OR ADDICTION?

You may be caring for:
• a frail and elderly parent
• a partner with an illness or health condition
• a child with a learning disability
• a friend suffering from substance misuse
• a sibling with a mental health problem

IF THE ANSWER IS YES, THEN YOU ARE A CARER

Many people who provide care often do not recognise themselves as a carer, and are therefore unaware of support available to them.

As a carer you may provide help with:
• getting out and about
• personal care such as washing or dressing
• practical household chores such as shopping or cleaning
• money and legal matters
• medication and nursing tasks
• offering emotional support

Taking on a caring role can happen at any time in someone’s life, and although caring can be a rewarding and fulfilling experience, it can also be hard work, frustrating and exhausting. Without the right support caring can have an impact on your own health, job, finances and social life, and can lead to people neglecting their own needs.

NOTE: An adult is not regarded as a carer if the adult provides or intends to provide care under or by virtue of a contract, or as voluntary work.

The value of unpaid care carers provide in the UK each year is estimated to be £132 billion, this is almost the equivalent cost of running the NHS, which costs £134 billion per year. (State of Caring 2016 – Carers UK)

Do you look after someone?

There are approximately 38,000 people living in the Dudley borough providing unpaid care. (CENSUS 2011)

As a carer it is important that you look after your own health and wellbeing.

£
Dudley Carers Hub and Wellbeing Service is our new information, advice and support service for carers of all ages living or supporting someone living in the Dudley borough.

It focuses on the needs of the carer and aims to empower carers to make informed choices both for themselves and the person they care for. You can speak to one of our trained advisors:

- calling our Carers Advice Line – 01384 818723 (Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm)
- visit us at the new Dudley carers hub (Mon - Fri 9am -4.30pm), or carers wellbeing sessions at various locations across the borough

**Information**
- Upfront information on caring (including rights and entitlements i.e. legal and financial, rights in the workplace)
- Free registration as a carer (including carers ID card and access to Dudley Options+ leisure discount card)
- Dudley Carer newsletter and e–bulletins
- Online Carer and Young Carer Aware training
- Community and social groups

**Advice**
- Arranging a carers assessment
- Welfare and benefits advice surgeries
- Accessing advocacy support
- Accessing social care services (adult social care / children’s early help offer)

**Support**
- Training courses for carers (first aid / moving & handling)
- Practical support
- Emotional support (Carers Wellbeing Café, counselling, bereavement support)
- Access to health and wellbeing services (i.e. carer health checks / looking after me wellbeing course for carers)
- Young Carer Service

**Dudley Carers Hub and Wellbeing Service is delivered in partnership by Dudley Council and commissioned service providers. It includes:**

Dudley Carers Network Team providing support to carers of adults over the age of 18 yrs:
- Carers assessments & support planning
- Carers Emergency Peace of Mind Scheme
- 1:1 appointments to discuss your caring role
- Support to access replacement care (i.e. home-based and respite care for adults)
- Training and advice sessions

You can pop in to see us at Dudley carers hub, Queens Cross Network, Wellington Road, Dudley DY1 1RB (Monday – Friday 9am - 4.30pm)

Call us on our Carers Advice line on 01384 818723 (Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm) or visit [www.dudley.gov.uk/carers](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/carers)
Dudley Carers Hub

**FREE DIGITAL RESOURCE FOR CARERS**

Dudley Council has teamed up with Carers UK to give carers in our area access to a wide range of digital tools and essential resources that may help make your caring situation easier.

Visit: carersdigital.org

Use this free access code: DGTL3392 to access all the digital products and online resources including:

- About Me – eLearning
- Jointly - Care co-ordination app
- Free publications – Carers UK guides

**HAVE YOUR SAY**

Dudley Carers Alliance is an engagement group which aims to give carers a voice and an opportunity to influence local policy and services. Members of the Alliance include carers, individuals from statutory, voluntary, community organisations and people with an interest in supporting carers. The carers alliance aims to:

- raise awareness of carers and issues that affect them
- enable discussion, consultation and networking with carers and key partners to develop, co-ordinate and monitor services for carers
- ensure that support for carers is embedded into local policies and strategies
- ensure all carers, including ‘hidden’ or ‘isolated’ carers; or those carers with language or communication difficulties, have an opportunity to have their voices, views and needs represented
- keep carers and organisations which work with carers informed of changes of policy and local developments which are likely to impact upon carers

Dudley Carers Alliance meets bi-monthly and is looking for carers and organisations with an interest in supporting carers to join.

For more information contact Dudley Carers Network 01384 813239 or email carers.network@dudley.gov.uk

www.dudleycarersalliance.org.uk

**USEFUL CONTACTS**

**Local:**
Adult Social Care Team – 0300 555 0055
(Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm)
An emergency duty team is available on 0300 555 8574 at all other times

**National**
NHS Choices, national information and advice line (7 days per week)
www.nhs.uk or call Carers Direct Helpline 0300 123 1053
Carers UK, expert advice and information about caring
www.carersuk.org 0808 808 7777 email: advice@carersuk.org
Contact A Family – advice, information and support for parents of disabled children – www.contact.org.uk or call 0808 8088 3555
Citizens Advice – local offices for advice / representation on benefits, debt and housing www.citizensadvice.org.uk
Loneliness and isolation

Loneliness can have a huge impact on both physical and mental health

Feeling lonely for a long period of time is as bad for our health as high blood pressure, a lack of exercise, obesity or smoking and can accelerate the ageing process aged 60 plus.

The internet is a vital tool in tackling isolation and loneliness, but don’t just keep in touch online.

Face to face contact is very important too. Taking the first step can be difficult but the long-term benefits can be enormous.

If you are lonely, try and involve yourself in some social activities. Find out about older peoples’ forums, partnerships, befriending services and groups, or take up a new hobby.

To help combat loneliness try to get out. Even walking to the local shops or library if you are able, will bring you in contact with people and help boost your confidence.

You could also consider becoming a volunteer. Volunteering gives you the opportunity to help others whilst meeting new people and making friends.

WHY WE BECOME LONELY

- The loss of a loved one
- Physical limitations like illness or poor mobility can affect a person’s ability to go out and meet people
- Redundancy or retirement can lead to people becoming more isolated, as they adjust to new roles
- Sensory impairment can be a barrier to social contact as many people are concerned that they will not be able to communicate
- Incontinence can be an issue for some people and make them fear leaving the house
- Financial issues can lead to isolation

Pleased to meet you

Enabling community support

Do you feel lonely or isolated?
Call our Please to Meet You telephone line on 01384 812761 for a chat or email communitysupportserv@dudley.gov.uk
Examples of other groups and support available

**Good neighbour befriending scheme**

The Good Neighbour Scheme is an initiative by Age UK Dudley and is dedicated to reducing the social isolation and loneliness experienced by many older people throughout the Dudley borough. Support is offered through regular visits from a trained and dedicated volunteer team. Contact the team by calling 01384 354512, or email goodneighbour@ageukdudley.org.uk

**Telephone buddy**

The telephone buddy scheme links up older people around the borough so that they can offer each other friendship, regular contact and emotional support over the telephone in their own homes. Contact Age UK Dudley by calling 01384 356150 or email volunteer@ageukdudley.org.uk

**Other groups in Dudley**

There are many different groups and activities for older people in Dudley. These activities and groups cover a wide range including woodworking, a group for the over 90s, yoga, walking, arts, exercise classes, falls prevention, lunch clubs, forums, befriending services, day trips, poetry and even tai chi classes. Search www.dudleyci.co.uk, your online tool to find out about activities, clubs, support, health services and much more.

**SOCIALISING KEEPS US HAPPY AND WELL!**

**HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?** Call our access team on 0300 555 0055 or go to www.dudleyci.co.uk for details of what’s happening in your area
Applying for a disabled (blue) badge

The Blue Badge is a national scheme for drivers or passengers who have severe mobility problems. The scheme allows Blue Badge holders to park close to where they need to go.

The scheme also applies to people who are registered blind and other people with disabilities. In the Dudley borough the council administers the Blue Badge scheme on behalf of the Department for Transport.

How to apply for a Blue Badge

People renewing a Blue Badge that is due to expire or applying because they automatically qualify should call the Access Team on 0300 555 0055.

If the application is for a person who has not had a Blue Badge before, or for a child under the age of three, then an application will need to be completed. You can get an application form by visiting the website below or by calling the Access Team.

Charges for a Blue Badge

There is no charge to apply for a Blue Badge, however if your application is approved there is a £10 fee for the badge to be produced.

Severe mobility problems or disability in both arms

People who are unable to walk or have very considerable difficulty walking may be entitled to a Blue Badge. The reasons for having a severe mobility problem must be permanent.

There can be many factors that cause people to have difficulty walking. Factors such as excessive pain, breathing problems and the speed people walk may all be taken into consideration. This difficulty must affect a person when walking a short distance of just 80 metres (87½ yards).

If a person drives a car and has a severe disability in their arms that prevents them from being able to use all or some parking meters or ticket machines, then they may be entitled to a Blue Badge.

You automatically qualify for a Blue Badge if you are:
- registered blind
- in receipt of the higher rate of the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance
- score 8 points or more in the moving around descriptor for the mobility component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
- in receipt of War Pensioner’s Mobility Supplement
- in receipt of a lump sum benefit at tariffs 1 – 8 (inclusive) of the Armed Forces and Reserve Forces (Compensation) Scheme and certified by the SPVA as having a permanent and substantial disability which causes inability to walk or very considerable difficulty in walking

Visit www.dudley.gov.uk/bluebadge or call the Access Team on 0300 555 055
Travel passes for older persons and people with disabilities

**Disabled person’s railcard**

The disabled person’s railcard gives a one-third discount on most fares to the cardholder and one accompanying adult. If someone is registered blind or visually impaired they, and a companion, gets this discount even if they don’t have a card. The leaflet Rail Travel for Disabled Passengers has a lot of useful information and includes an application form. It is available from stations. Visit www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk or telephone 0345 605 0525. For customers with hearing impairments call 0345 601 0132.

**Older people’s travel pass**

If you are aged 60 and over and live in the West Midlands county, you are entitled to free travel on public transport. The English National Concessionary Pass gives older people free travel by bus anywhere in England during ‘off-peak’ times - between 9.30am and 11.00pm Monday to Friday, all day at weekends and on public holidays. Additional benefits for West Midlands’ residents

Residents of the West Midlands who are 60 and over are also entitled to free train and Metro travel during these times, as well as extended travel beyond off-peak hours to include the last services of the day on all buses, trains and trams in the area. For 24-hour services, end of daytime service will be defined as 11.59pm.

Train travel is a great added benefit. You can use your pass in standard class anywhere in the Blue Zone, which is most parts of the West Midlands. For journeys partly in the West Midlands area, pass holders should pay the add-on charge for the part of their journey outside the area. The older person’s pass is now available to apply, replace and renew online. Visit www.networkwestmidlands.com and search for older person’s pass or call 0345 303 6760 for more information (please note applications will not be processed over the phone).

**Shopmobility**

Wheelchairs and electric scooters can be loaned in shopping centres. These are available from the Merry Hill Shopmobility Tourist Information Centre. For wheelchairs - turn up with ID such as a driving licence or disability badge. Electric scooters must be booked 48 hours in advance. Ring 01384 487911 during Centre hours. You must register for this. Two forms of ID are required, one of which must be photographic ID. For other locations see the Shopmobility website http://nfsuk.org, ring 08456 442 446, or email info@shopmobilityuk.org

**Taxis - wheelchair users**

When booking a taxi, inform the company that they will be carrying a disabled person and a wheelchair. The law states that they cannot refuse to take you unless the chair will not fit in their vehicle. They can charge a small booking fee £1.50 - (set by the Council) but otherwise can only charge what is on the meter. There is a factsheet available from the Licensing Department on 01384 815377, or email licensing.legal@dudley.gov.uk This has details of dimensions of wheelchairs that can be carried in a company’s vehicles.
Birmingham Regional Driving Assessment Centre

The RDAC specialises in providing assessments for people who want to learn to drive or return to driving with a disability, have suffered a stroke, or following a debilitating illness. The centre is staffed by a team of dedicated and experienced professionals - including specialist driving instructors and occupational therapists - and has a range of adapted vehicles available which can cater for a wide variety of mobility needs. Apply for an assessment online on the Regional Driving Assessment Centre website www.rdac.co.uk/, email info@rdac.co.uk, or for further advice call 0300 300 2240. The address is: Unit 11 Network Park, Duddeston Mill Road, Birmingham, B8 1AU.

Ring and Ride

Ring and Ride is a door-to-door service for anyone living in the urban areas of the West Midlands that struggles to use conventional transport. Passengers can use the service for catching-up with friends, popping out for a bit of shopping, a night at the theatre, or for healthcare appointments, but excludes hospital appointments. Small fares apply.

Who can use Ring and Ride?

Anyone who struggles to use conventional public transport can use Ring and Ride - you just need to live in the West Midlands County. The service is ideal for:

- anyone suffering from a temporary injury (such as a broken leg, a sprain, a sports injury or recovering from an operation)
- elderly people who find it difficult to use public transport
- disabled people who want the convenience of a door-to-door service

How do I find out more?

Visit: www.ringandride.org or telephone 0121 327 8128

How can I find out more?

Contact Network West Midands on 0345 3036760 or visit www.travelwestmidlands.com
Dudley Telecare Service is a fully integrated alarm technology has resulted in a new name and a fully integrated service – to residents within the borough and can provide a lifeline to people of all ages, in a variety of vulnerable situations, within the home.

Dudley Council’s Telecare Service was previously known as Homecall and this important independently.

Telecare solutions. Our aim is to enable people to continue living safely, securely and most importantly independently.

The expansion and development of the Homecall service, utilising Telecare technology resulted in a new name and a fully integrated service – Dudley Telecare Service. This new service is available to all residents within Dudley borough.

Dudley Telecare Service is a fully integrated alarm service, offering a whole range of supportive equipment is easy to install. All of the equipment has built-in sensors to monitor and alert potential accidents and emergencies such as a person falling. Alternatively, customers can choose for the call to be transmitted to a carer’s pager/mobile, within seconds.

Telecare equipment is installed in the home, following an assessment of the customers needs and is tailored to each individual’s requirements. Each piece of Telecare equipment is programmed to an individual alarm and works by automatically being activated at the monitoring centre or the carer’s pager/mobile, if the sensor activates on a piece of equipment (supplied to all customers) or if the sensor activates on a piece of equipment.

What is Telecare?

The service is available to anyone who is vulnerable and is likely to need a little extra support or assistance within the home. There is no age barrier to the customers or make response calls to customers which are triggered by the alarm. Here, professional and experienced call handlers, who are specifically trained to respond to customers emergency requirements, take calls either direct to the customer or the family, friends and carers. In this way customers, their family and friends have constant reassurance that help and support is always at hand.

Who is Dudley Telecare Service for?

Telecare represents the whole range of ‘assistive technology’ products, checking if help or assistance is required. In this way customers, their family and friends have constant reassurance that help and support is always at hand.

Here, professional and experienced call handlers, who are specifically trained to respond to customers emergency requirements, take calls either direct to the customer or the family, friends and carers. In this way customers, their family and friends have constant reassurance that help and support is always at hand.

What is the Dudley Telecare Service?

Dudley Telecare Service is part of Dudley Council’s emergency alarm call service. It operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. A range of Telecare solutions can be installed in the home and are linked to the Dudley Telecare Service monitoring centre via a telephone line and they alert the operators within seconds, that there is a potential problem within that home. Alternatively, customers can choose for the call to be transmitted to a carer’s pager/mobile, within seconds.

Dudley Telecare Service monitoring centre via a telephone line and they alert the operators within seconds, that there is a potential problem within that home. Alternatively, customers can choose for the call to be transmitted to a carer’s pager/mobile, within seconds.

Pebbell

Epilepsy sensor

Pendant alert

Pill dispenser

Bogus caller button

Lifestyle monitoring
Dudley technology enabled care

What is it?
It is a range of equipment and sensors designed to assist with everyday activities that have become difficult.

Who is it suitable for?
The service is helpful to people living within the Dudley borough who want a little extra help to remain independent, giving you, your family, friends and carers peace of mind.

What kind of situations can Telecare help in?
- It can raise an alarm if you have fallen
- It can remind you to take your medication
- It can reassure family or carers that you are ok
- It can help you feel secure in your home
- It can help locate someone if they are prone to getting disorientated outside

What happens if I have nobody to respond?
The Telecare staff, known as Community Alarm Officers, will attend to check that you are OK.

Dudley Telecare Service
providing a protective bubble for life’s emergencies
0300 555 2040
Equipment for you in your home

Assisted Living Centre (ALC)
Dudley’s Assisted Living Centres are an important resource for all disabled people and their carers living in Dudley. It has a range of equipment to assist daily living.

Located at two centres (Coseley and Brierley Hill), they enable demonstrations and trial use of equipment within everyday settings, such as a kitchen, bedroom or bathroom.

Qualified staff will offer a full assessment to determine what is most appropriate to assist you.

They will also offer comprehensive information and independent advice about the equipment and lifts on display. If required, equipment will be delivered to your home.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?
To enable us to give everyone individual attention it is important for you to make an appointment by contacting the Access to Adult Social Care Team
0300 555 0055
Do you need help with every day tasks?

Occupational therapists can work with you to identify your needs, how they’re impacting on your wellbeing, the outcomes you want to achieve in your every day life and how to maintain your independence.

You may benefit from an occupational therapy assessment.

The occupational therapy assessment
To be eligible for an assessment you need to be an adult or child living in the Dudley borough and have a permanent disability, illness or mental impairment that affects your ability to do everyday tasks.

Following your assessment, which may take place at the Assisted Living Centre (ALC), the occupational therapist or member of the therapy team will make a recommendation on what is required to enable you to live independently in your home.

Are you frightened of slipping or getting stuck in the bath?
Is it difficult to get in/out of bed?
Are you having difficulty climbing the stairs?
Are you unable to access your home safely?

These may include all or some of the list below:

- referral for a rehabilitation programme
- providing equipment to aid daily living – walking frames, commode, bath lifts
- providing information or advice
- minor adaptations – handrails, stair rails, grab rails
- major adaptations – ramps, level access showers, stair lifts, floor lifts, extensions
Adapting your home

If you are struggling in your home our home improvement service can help you. If you or a member of your household is having difficulties bathing, getting upstairs, or even getting into your home, we can help you to get it adapted following an assessment.

The service offers the following support:

- grants to pay for adaptations – these are available dependent on certain qualifying criteria
- information and advice to help you adapt your home
- reputable, council approved builders and trades people
- all work can be arranged by the council for you
- there is no hassle, worry or stress, as all work is handled by the service

Adaptations are classed as minor or major adaptations. Typical minor adaptations include things like handrails to paths or steps, stair handrails and grab rails. Typical major adaptations include things like ramps, level access showers, stair lifts, through the floor lifts and ground floor extensions to provide extra sleeping or bathing facilities.

Some people may wish to arrange their own adaptations, or simply want to take a look at the home aids and adaptations that are available to help people continue to live independently at home. You can visit the council’s assisted living centre (see page 17) where there is a wide range of aids and adaptations to see and try out, such as a demonstration stair lift.

Winter warmth

Living in a cold home can lead to serious health problems. As well as aggravating existing health conditions, living in a cold home can lead to breathing problems, heart and circulatory problems, difficulty moving around and mental health problems. Every winter people in the Dudley borough die as a result of being too cold in their home. These winter deaths are not from hypothermia but are from sitting or sleeping in cold rooms, which cause existing medical conditions to get much worse. Dudley’s Winter Warmth Service offers free impartial advice and practical assistance to help you keep your home warm and comfortable, no matter what your circumstances.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?
To find out more about a home adaptation call 0300 555 0055

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?
Call 01384 817086 or email winterwarmth@dudley.gov.uk
Housing options

If you decide that you simply can’t manage your home any longer and would rather move than adapt it, support is available to help you to consider alternative housing options.

Housing options means all of the potential alternative housing choices. These could include social or private renting, home ownership, sheltered or supported housing, a housing with care scheme, or even a move to a care or residential home.

**Who can help me choose the best housing option for me?**

You may be happy working out your best housing option on your own, but if you wish to speak to someone, or need help working out what to do, the council’s housing options service can help.

Alternatively, if you feel that you need additional housing support in the form of a residential or nursing home our access team can advise you the best course of action to take.

**HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?**

A housing options interview can be booked by calling 0300 555 2345 or by visiting www.dudley.gov.uk/ and search housing options

If you are looking to move into a care or nursing home contact our access team.
Healthy ageing

Taking care of yourself and making healthy choices is important throughout life. However, as you age the risk of some diseases increase. Adopting and maintaining a healthy lifestyle can significantly reduce these risks.

Plus, it’s never too late to start a new healthy hobby or make more healthy decisions.

Being physically active reduces the risk of dementia and other health conditions such as heart disease, stroke and diabetes, whilst regular strength and balance exercises can significantly reduce the risk of having a fall. In fact, keeping physically active, making time for new friends and getting out and about is really good for your mental health too.

As well as being active, eating a healthy diet will protect you against a number of health conditions, such as heart disease, cognitive decline and bone and joint problems. Staying hydrated is also important, as dehydration can affect how clearly you think and remember things, as well as increase your risk of low blood pressure, weakness, dizziness and falls.

It’s also important to know how much alcohol you are drinking and to stick within the recommended guidelines of no more than 14 units per week, spread evenly over three days or more. If you regularly drink more than this then you increase your risk of developing health problems such as high blood pressure, liver problems, heart attack and some types of cancer. Alcohol can also affect your sense of balance and increase the risk of a fall or make other health problems worse. Plus, all the hidden calories in your drinks can put you at serious risk of becoming overweight or obese.

Being healthy is about feeling good physically, mentally and emotionally, therefore your sexual health is an important and integral part of your overall health. As you get older looking after your sexual health is still necessary. You may be at risk of sexually transmitted diseases, especially if you are in a new relationship, so using a condom and getting tested when you change partners is really important.

You should also protect yourself by having your seasonal flu jab each year, the pneumococcal vaccine at age 65, taking all prescribed medication and attending screening programmes when invited.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?
For information and suggestions to help you make simple lifestyle changes, such as healthy eating, getting active, stop smoking, mental health and wellbeing visit www.lets-get.com or contact the Let’s Get Healthy lifestyle service on 0800 061 4962.
GET INVOLVED

There are lots of activities available around the Dudley borough that can help you to be fit and healthy and at the same time enhance your social life and learn something new.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?

Dudley Council offers opportunities to volunteer on some of our health promotion activities through Dudley Health Champions.

Visit www.dudleyhealthchampions.co.uk/volunteer-health-champions/ or call 01384 816256.

Age UK offers a range of volunteering opportunities for people from all backgrounds. Visit www.ageuk.org.uk/get-involvedvolunteer for more information and to find local volunteering opportunities.

Dudley CVS can also help you access a wide range of volunteering opportunities in the Dudley borough. Visit http://dudleycvs.org.uk/volunteering.html or call 01384 267414.
Living with dementia

Anyone worried about memory loss or dementia can ask for help and support from Dudley borough’s two dementia gateways.

They provide a dedicated advice, information and support service for people with dementia.

The gateways are located in Brierley Hill and Halesowen and provide a complete support service for people with dementia, their families and carers. They are made up of staff from Dudley’s Clinical Commissioning Group, the council’s adult social care team and the Alzheimer’s Society. Once a person has been diagnosed with dementia, the gateway’s dementia nurses and dementia advisors will provide a wide range of support. One dedicated contact will be provided - which is a lifetime contact.

A person diagnosed with dementia will initially be supported by one of the dementia advisors who will develop a person-centred plan of support, advice and care. This will be reviewed on a regular basis and the advisor is on hand for support or advice as required.

PREVENTION

The gateways work hard to help people newly diagnosed with dementia to maintain their independence and to continue living life to the full, for as long as possible. Information, advice, support, guidance and signposting to other helpful services is on offer.

Pre-diagnosis, the gateways offer information and advice to people who may be concerned that they have dementia. Staff can act as advocates on behalf of an individual, supporting them when they visit their doctor, and through any medical assessments along the way.

WHAT IS DEMENTIA?

Dementia is not a single illness but a group of symptoms caused by damage to the brain. The symptoms include loss of memory, mood changes and confusion. Dementia is caused by a number of diseases of the brain, the most common of which is Alzheimer’s disease.

Vascular dementia is the second most common cause. High blood pressure, heart problems, high cholesterol and diabetes can increase the chances of developing vascular dementia so it’s important that these conditions are identified and treated at the earliest opportunity.

DEMENTIA FRIENDLY APP

A dementia-friendly community app has been developed by the Dementia Gateway Services. The app is designed to be easy to use and to provide accessible and essential information.

The layout of the app provides a pathway that reflects the needs of the person seeking the information. The app is designed to appeal to younger and older alike. The app provides links through to other organisations that could provide support visit www.dementiafriendlydudley.co.uk
Living with dementia (cont)

RESPITE

Each gateway offers support sessions according to individual needs and preference, as well as a respite facility. A menu of daytime respite care is offered where a person with dementia can attend a gateway on a pop-in basis or just for a short period, or they can attend regularly, as a break for family or carers.

LONG TERM

If a person with dementia has more complex needs, they can attend one of the gateways on a regular basis. A range of suitable activities, as well as useful therapies, are on offer.

Along with the day care element of our long-term provision, the gateways offer ongoing information and support to people with dementia, their families and carers. As the condition changes, more or different kinds of support may be required. By maintaining regular contact with people, the dementia advisors are able to assess needs and adjust support accordingly.

WHAT SIGNS SHOULD I LOOK OUT FOR?

The following signs could be the early symptoms of dementia:
- struggling to remember recent events, but easily recalling things that happened in the past
- struggling to follow conversations or programmes on TV
- forgetting the names of friends or everyday objects
- repeating things or losing the thread of what's being said
- having problems thinking or reasoning
- feeling anxious, depressed or angry about memory loss
- feeling confused even when in a familiar environment

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?

For more information contact
Brierley Hill Gateway 01384 813315
Halesowen Gateway 01384 813600

Dudley Dementia Action Alliance

The Dudley Dementia Action Alliance is made up of organisations that operate across the borough and are working together to make Dudley a Dementia Friendly Community.

The Dudley Dementia Action Alliance held its first meeting in March 2016 and now meets on a regular basis.

Search Dudley Dementia Action Alliance for more information on how to join.
**Healthcare apps**

An ‘app’ is probably best described as: an abbreviation for application; a self-contained program or piece of software designed to fulfil a particular purpose; especially as downloaded by a user to a mobile device.

Apps are normally associated with smartphone or tablet devices, but can often be used on laptops or even desktop computers. They are normally stand-alone, self-contained programmes with a particular purpose or function. Apps are available from download stores, most commonly the Apple App Store, Google Play, Windows Phone Store, or Blackberry App World. Most smartphones come with the relevant store pre-loaded. The stores list most popular apps, and have a search function so you can track down a particular app, or see what is available for a particular subject.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Healthy living apps</th>
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<th>Dementia</th>
<th>Learning disabilities</th>
<th>Mental health</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sugar Smart - monitoring and advice on sugar in everyday foods</td>
<td>Diabetes momoActive – tracking of type 1 diabetes quick and easy to enable a person to get on with their life</td>
<td>The House of Memories - reminiscence tool that helps carers of people with dementia</td>
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<td>Brain in hand</td>
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<tr>
<td>NHS Smokefree – 28 day plan to help people stop smoking</td>
<td>Diabetes UK Tracker App - logs important dietary factors to create a record. Aimed at people with type 1 or 2 diabetes</td>
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<td>MychoicePad – helps people with learning disabilities communicate better</td>
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<tr>
<td>Be Food Smart – lets you look at sugar, saturated fats and salt in food and drinks</td>
<td>Smartpatient</td>
<td>Talking Point - support forum and source of information and advice for people with dementia and their carers</td>
<td>My Health Guide – an easy to use communication tool for adults with learning disabilities</td>
<td>Silvercloud - online course to help people manage stress, anxiety and depression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy Meals – helps plan and eat healthier meals</td>
<td>myCOPD – helps people better manage their condition</td>
<td>Talking Mats Lite - helps people with learning difficulties to express preferences via use of symbols</td>
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<td>Stress and Anxiety Companion - helps a person handle stress and anxiety on-the-go</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drinks Tracker – helps a person stay in control of how much alcohol they drink</td>
<td>Couch to 5K – designed to get a person off the sofa and running 5km</td>
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<td>Leso - an online course using instant messaging for people with mental health problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Couch to 5K – designed to get a person off the sofa and running 5km</td>
<td>BMI Calculator - uses the NHS body mass index calculator to track weight</td>
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<td>Catch It – helps a person manage feelings like anxiety and depression</td>
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<tr>
<td>BMI Calculator - uses the NHS body mass index calculator to track weight</td>
<td>Living well, feeling safe online</td>
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<td>FearFighter – online course for people who struggle with phobias, panic or anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living well, feeling safe online</td>
<td>Diabetes momoActive – tracking of type 1 diabetes quick and easy to enable a person to get on with their life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SAM : Self help for Anxiety Management – self help methods for managing anxiety</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Falls prevention checklist

Everyone is more at risk of a fall as they age; it’s a big cause of hospital admissions and can result in serious injuries and long-term complications. Falling can also contribute to a loss of confidence and independence.

CHECKLIST

☐ I have had a fall but not seen anyone about it
☐ My GP hasn’t reviewed my medication in the past year
☐ I often need to get up in the night to go to the loo
☐ I am probably not as active as doctors recommend (30 minutes moderate activity five times a week)
☐ I sometimes feel dizzy or light-headed when standing or walking
☐ I struggle with basic maintenance on my home
☐ I wear bi-focals or vari-focals
☐ I haven’t had an eye test in the past 12 months
☐ I sometimes feel weak when I get up from a chair or the bed
☐ A bit of clutter has built up at home over the years
☐ I probably don’t drink enough fluids (1.6 litres/3 pints a day for women; 2 litres/3.5 pints a day for men)
☐ My slippers have that ‘lived-in’ look
☐ Taking care of my feet is quite difficult these days
☐ I have a long-term condition such as Parkinson’s, heart disease/stroke, arthritis, COPD, diabetes, dementia
☐ I save electricity by turning off unnecessary lights
☐ My alcohol intake is probably more than GPs’ recommended limit (14 units per week)
☐ I don’t get out as much as I’d like because I worry about tripping, I feel unsteady
☐ If I had a fall I would probably be too embarrassed to tell anyone
☐ I often get my feet tangled up in things that could trip me; my pets or grandchildren running around worry me sometimes: they make me feel wobbly!
☐ I am not always that warm at home

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?
Call our access team on 0300 555 0055
Dudley falls prevention service

Worried about your mobility? Had a fall or concerned you might fall?

Dudley falls prevention is an innovative partnership made up of Dudley Council’s adult social care and public health services, Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust. These organisations have joined together to offer an integrated falls prevention service.

This means we are all working closely together to provide a one-stop shop for anything related to falls. We will help you to avoid falls, maintain your strength, balance and mobility, as well as help you to regain your mobility, confidence and independence if you have already taken a fall.

Who is Dudley falls prevention for?

Dudley Falls Prevention is for anyone aged over 18 who is concerned about falling. Whether you are worried about your balance and stability and want to prevent a first fall, or have fallen recently, help is on offer so that you can continue to live an independent, safe and active life.

We support anyone who is:

• simply keen to maintain strength and balance to avoid a fall
• feeling a little unsteady on their feet and worried they are going to fall
• recovering from a fall and lacking in confidence
• falling more often and doesn’t know why

We help adults who live in Dudley, or who are registered with a GP located within the borough.

You can give us a call on 0300 555 0055 to ask for help. Alternatively you can ask your GP or nurse to refer you.

When you call, an individual assessment will take place tailored to each individual’s own needs and circumstances. A range of different services and interventions will then be offered depending on your needs.

How can I find out more?

Call our access team on 0300 555 0055

Remember

Keeping active helps you to stay independent. Physical activity that includes both strength and balance components helps reduce your risk of falling.
WHAT SUPPORT IS ON OFFER TO YOU?

Support on offer from us includes:

- strength and balance exercise programmes, healthy lifestyle information and advice, exercise and fitness programmes at Healthy Hubs
- a community falls service where falls advisors will visit you at home and provide tailored advice and support
- support from a specialist falls team made up of falls specialist nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and specialist pharmacists.
- more in-depth support from a consultant-led falls clinic

Key areas we might look at with you include things like:

- improving your strength and balance
- home adaptations, helpful gadgets and home safety
- safe use of medicines
- protecting your bones
- staying fit and well through exercise
- eating and drinking well
- improving your confidence to get out and about

Dudley Falls Prevention
STANDING TOGETHER

Helping you stay active, prevent falls and maintain your independence

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?
For further information, call 0300 555 0055 or email us at fallsspa@dudley.gov.uk
Access to adult social care

At some point in our lives most, if not all of us, will need help with everyday living because of an illness, a disability, because we are getting older, or because we are caring for someone.

Every one of us will have a different view of the help we need and how we want it to be provided. Located at Brierley Hill Health and Social Care Centre, we provide a free comprehensive advice and information service for all care and support requirements.

The team is made up of experienced social workers and social care officers who will be able to advise you on a whole range of social and community activities and not those traditionally associated with social care.

What you will expect

When you call the staff will firstly ask a few questions to find out about you and the kind of help you are looking for. They will take into account your wellbeing and what is important to you and your family and will advise you of the best course of action including referring you, if necessary for a social care assessment.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?

Contact the Access Helpline on 0300 555 0055

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?

If you’d like further information about adult social care, call 0300 555 0055 (Monday – Friday, 9am – 5pm).

At all other times, an emergency duty team is available on 0300 555 8574.

Visit the website www.dudley.gov.uk/asc

Email the Access team at accessteam.dachs@dudley.gov.uk

Send post to Brierley Hill Health & Social Care Centre, Venture Way, Brierley Hill DY5 1RU

If you are a carer, you can telephone 01384 818723 or email carers.network@dudley.gov.uk
Reablement services

Sometimes following a stay in hospital, an accident or an illness, you may need some help to get back to normal and regain your independence at home.

The council offers a range of free short-term help and support for people so that they can carry on living at home. This help is sometimes known as ‘reablement’ or ‘rehabilitation’.

Support available can help you to regain your independence, or to increase it if you are struggling to manage at home (perhaps with daily living skills, confidence, or in need of extra support). This reablement support is available from teams made up of social workers, occupational therapists, nurses, physiotherapists and rehabilitation workers.

You will be visited at home and your needs will be discussed. A care plan will then be developed to help you get back your independence at home. This will be tailored to your needs and the goals that you want to achieve. The service is free to adults aged over 18 and it provides short-term intensive support lasting up to six weeks.

The aim is to help you to regain your confidence and to enable you to get back to normal and do things for yourself again.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?
For information call 01384 811366
Safeguarding

Safeguarding means protecting a person’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

It is about making people aware of their rights, protecting them and preventing or stopping abuse. We need to encourage people to report any suspected adult abuse, whether it happened recently or not.

Abuse is not normal and never okay.
Being abused means a person is being deliberately hurt by someone else. It can vary from the seemingly trivial act of not treating someone with respect - to extreme punishment, cruelty or torture.

Commonly recognised forms of abuse are:
Physical, sexual, financial, psychological, discriminatory, neglect or acts of omission, organisational, self neglect, domestic abuse and modern slavery.

If you employ somebody to help care for you or provide you with support...
it’s important that you are able to trust them.
You need to know that those around you will not:
• abuse you in any way
• steal from you
• deliberately fail to carry out their duty to care for you
• discriminate against you

An online safeguarding alert/referral form...
can be used by any agency, organisation or individual to alert Dudley Council to allegations or concerns about personal abuse of an adult at risk.
The form is available at www.dudleysafeguarding.org.uk or call 0300 555 0055 to speak directly to a social care officer. We are committed to preventing the abuse of individuals who are vulnerable and we respond promptly when abuse is reported.
Dudley Community Information Directory

Lots of information about support, healthcare services, activities and social clubs can be found in the Dudley community information directory (DCID).

The easy to use directory is a searchable online tool which contains details of a wide range of care providers, support services, self-help groups, community and voluntary organisations, as well as social clubs and groups and a ‘what’s on’ section.

The directory covers the Dudley borough and surrounding areas.

Information, advice and support services offered include things like free home safety and security services, such as key safes, door intercoms, door and window locks, door chains and spy holes, alarms, home improvement help and adaptations, handyperson services, fire safety advice, support to live at home and practical help looking at alternative housing options.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?
Find the directory at www.dudleyci.co.uk
Benefits advice

It’s important that to keep well, independent and happy at home you are claiming all of the welfare benefits and grants that you are entitled to. Expert advice is available from a number of places:

Online advice
Welfare benefits advice available from the government can be found online at www.gov.uk including an online benefit calculator where you can check entitlement to a range of benefits online.

Welfare rights service
The council’s welfare rights service provides information about welfare benefits for people who have had a social care assessment and vulnerable people. This service can be contacted via the Access helpline.

Housing and council tax benefits
Information about housing and council tax benefits can be found online at www.dudley.gov.uk under council tax and benefits.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?
Find out more by calling 0300 555 0055 and select option five
Further information

- We offer **quality advice and information**
- We promote **independence**
- We support people to **age well**
- We promote **health and wellbeing**

Contact our Access to Adult Social Care hotline on **0300 555 0055** (Monday to Friday - 9am to 5pm)

Web  **www.dudley.gov.uk/asc**

Email  **accessteam.dachs@dudley.gov.uk**

Post  **Brierley Hill Health & Social Care Centre**
      **Venture Way, Brierley Hill DY5 1RU**

If you require any assistance with regards to this document or would like to request an interpreter, large print or audio version, please contact the communications team on 01384 814280