

SMALL ACTS OF KINDNESS

smallactsofkindness.co.uk
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No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted

On Tuesday 26th November, ten Harpenden BS colleagues volunteered for Small Acts of Kindness (SAOK). SAOK are a charity that source and distribute practical gifts to older people in Hertfordshire.

A major project that SAOK undertake every year leading up to the winter months involves packing 'Warm in Winter' gift bags. These bags help those in the local community who may be struggling heating their homes. For some, these gift bags can be a life saver, reaching those who are having to make the unthinkable choice between heating their home or buying food.

Not only does the cold weather provide serious health risks for older people, it also has a negative impact on a person's mental wellbeing including loneliness, depression and anxiety. These gift bags act as an intervention that can help reduce the risks that older people face when they are cold.

The 'Warm in Winter' gift bags contain essential, practical, keep warm items including a fleece blanket, thermal hat, gloves and socks, a mug, hot drinks, soup and porridge. They also contain SAOK's comprehensive 'Purple Pages' information pack which is full of literature signposting to relevant support, services and activities, helping to break the cycle that loneliness and isolation can bring.

In addition to the practical items, each bag includes a handwritten message from the person who packed the gift bag. This 'Message of Kindness' provides a personal connection to the recipient and provides a positive impact on those who may be feeling lonely.

All gift bags are distributed free of charge to people aged over 55 across Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire.



Scan to donate to SAOK

Recipients of 'Warm in Winter' gift bags:

- Are warmer in their homes with the associated reduced risk of cold-related illness or seasonal death.
- Feel less lonely and isolated.
- Have increased feelings of wellbeing.
- Are better connected to their community.

Our colleagues attended two separate sessions (morning and afternoon) where they worked with other volunteers in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. As always, it was enlightening to see all the hard work that goes into packing and distributing these bags. The fantastic work SAOK do provides a much need lifeline to those who will be struggling this winter. Our team had a great time and are very proud to play a part in the process.

SAOK impact

1 in 5

older people spend their working day alone. Many also struggle to keep it warm at night

105,000

older and vulnerable people are now warmer in their homes, happier and better connected to their communities

450

volunteers and 150 partner organisations help SAOK reach thousands of older and vulnerable people each year



Find out more:



Scan to see the meaningful difference SAOK work makes to thousands of older people and how your small act of kindness can help;



Scan to nominate someone to receive the Warm in Winter gift bag