

Age Cymru Gwynedd a Môn

Statement of Service

The service:

Age Cymru Gwynedd a Môn provides free confidential information and advice on a wide range of issues for people aged 50 and over, their families and carers. We inform people of their rights and entitlements, local services and the support available to them and those who care for and support them. In particular we specialise in:

- **Welfare Benefits** we offer free and impartial information and advice for people over the age of 50, including benefit checks to work out if you are eligible or entitled to additional benefits, and offer assistance for people to complete the claim forms.
- **Money Information** we provide guidance in the form of factsheets that enables you to have the information to make informed decisions that will enable you to take positive steps towards improving your finances. We do not offer advice but signpost to specialists who can.
- **Blue Badge** we offer information, advice and assistance in completing application forms.
- **Social Care** we can discuss care and support services and provide guidance through fact sheets to find care appropriate to needs, accessing Adult Services and provide information guides on how you can pay for care and support in order to make independent informed decisions.
- **Local Community** advising older people on the services, support, group, activities and concessions available locally.

Our service includes:

- **Information guides and factsheets** on a wide range of subjects affecting older people and those who care for and support them.
- **Telephone advice** -Monday to Friday between 09:00 and 16:30. Please call us on 01286 677711 (please note information and advice is provided by Age Cymru Gwynedd a Môn between 09:00 and 12:00, and by Age Cymru (Cardiff office) between 12:00 and 16:30).

What will happen if we cannot provide the service you require?

Sometimes people will come to us with problems that we do not have the expertise or knowledge to help them with or that we do not have the appropriate licence to enable us to provide advice.

We can provide you with basic information on almost any issue commonly experienced by older people but if you require advice we may have to direct you to another organisation. Where possible we will give you a selection of organisations that you can choose from and we will either 'signpost' or 'refer' you to them.

When 'signposting' we will give you the organisation's contact information so that you can contact them yourself. When 'referring' we will contact the organisation on your behalf, arrange an appointment and provide them with copies of any documents already completed by our service. We will always seek your consent before referring you to another organisation.

Sometimes when advising you we will reach a point where we do not have the expertise to pursue your case further. This may be when challenging employment or immigration issues.

How our service treats its clients

In delivering the service we follow four key principles:

- **Free of Charge** Information service is provided free of charge. If we signpost or refer you onto another organisation we will tell you if there is any charge for their service.
- **Independent** The information and advice we provide is independent of any outside influence. We will never recommend a service or provider to you, including Age UK's / Age Cymru's own service. We will always, where possible, provide you with a choice of alternatives and provide you with help to make an informed choice. Our service is not bound by local or national government policies and we will always seek to advise you as to what is in your best interest. We will not advise a client to take an action that is illegal or fraudulent. If a client insists on pursuing an illegal or fraudulent course of action we will immediately cease to advise them and may notify the appropriate authorities.
- **Confidentiality** We will treat all of your information as being confidential. Any information that we keep about you is stored securely and will only be viewed by information and advice staff and volunteers involved in advising you or third parties that you have consented to us sharing the information with. Your personal information is held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. We will not discuss your case with anyone outside of the Organisation without your consent or if they have been granted responsibility to act on your behalf by the Court of Protection or Department for Work and Pensions. We will seek consent from you before sharing your information with other parties. Common examples of third parties that your information may be shared with, following your consent, are external auditors from Age UK / Age Cymru that check the quality and accuracy of our work, organisations that we are referring your case onto and agencies that we are dealing with on your behalf (for example the DWP or an energy supplier). There are three circumstances in which we may share your information without your consent. They are:
 - ❖ if a client insists on taking an illegal or fraudulent course of action
 - ❖ if we are contact by a statutory body about a client we have advised who is suspected of taking an illegal or fraudulent action and is being investigated
 - ❖ and if we are concerned that an individual, that is involved in a case that we are advising on, is at risk of significant harm. In such cases we may notify a relevant statutory body of our concern, for example social services or the police. Such

disclosures will be done following the local agreed 'No Secrets' procedures that our staff and volunteers have been trained in.

- ❖ **Respect** We will always treat our clients with respect and expect that our clients will treat our staff and volunteers in the same way. We will not judge our clients based on their age, disability, gender, sexuality, race or religion. We will not judge our clients based upon the circumstance they find themselves in and we will not seek to influence the decisions you make following our advice. Sometimes clients will make a decision that we would generally consider not to be in their best interest, we will inform them of this and aim to provide enough information and advice to help them make an informed choice. We will respect whatever decision they then make. Where clients have difficulties accessing or understanding our information and advice, for example because of a disability or language issue, we will attempt to take all reasonable steps to provide our service in manner that is appropriate to your needs or circumstances and we will always aim to give you as much time as you need when we see you.

UPDATE – due to Covid-19 (Coronavirus) consent can be given verbally only to reduce the risk of cross contamination and reduce paperwork.

Whilst the service is provided free of charge, the charity accepts donations to support the service to others. Funding for the information and advice is difficult to obtain, the charity runs on donations received by beneficiaries to support local need.

Signed by the I&A Manager:

Date:



Review: Review period 2 years. Next due 5th October 2023