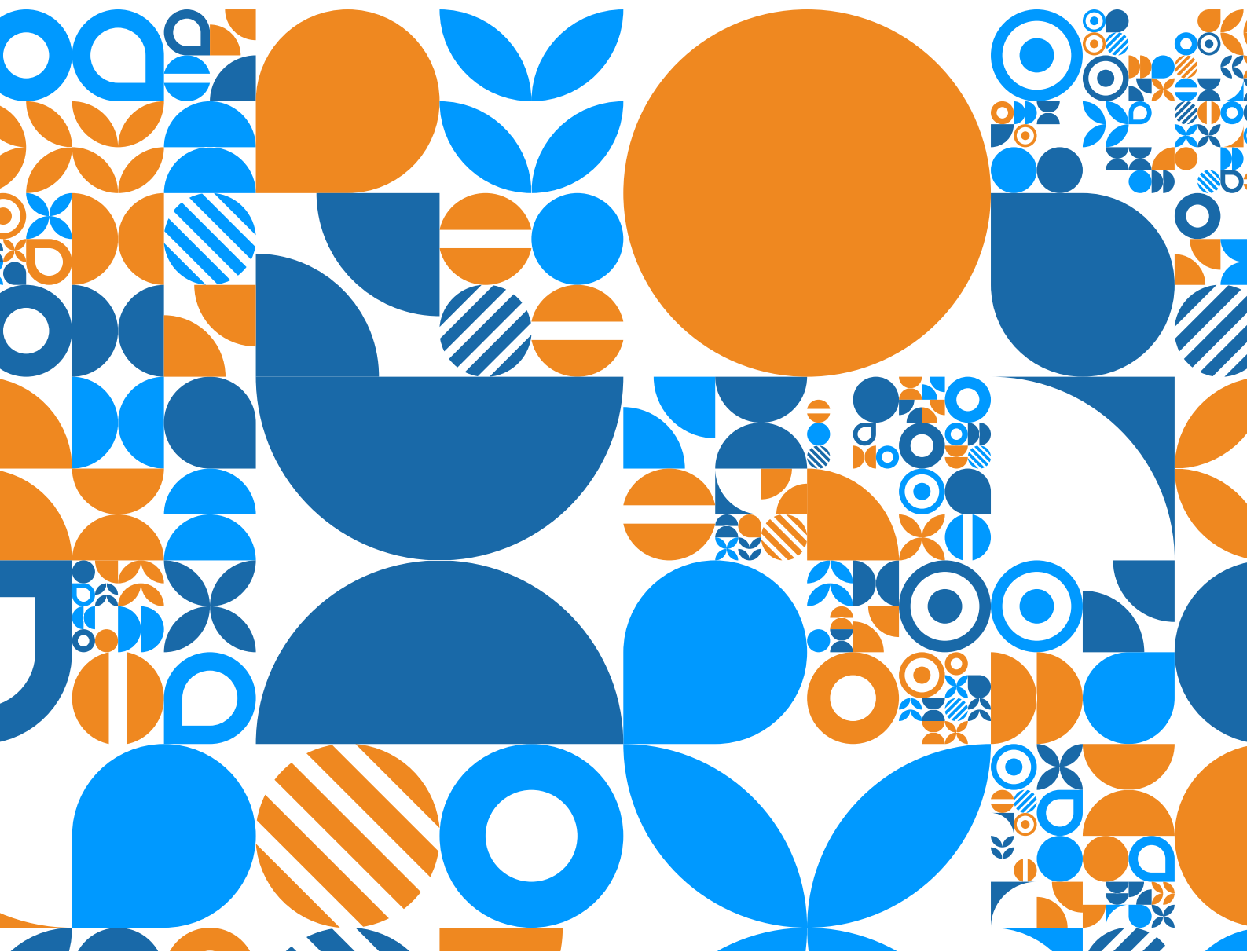


2022/2023

ANNUAL REPORT



Welcome to our annual report

Chairman's Message

I am pleased to present this year's Annual Review and Impact Report.

Age UK Blackburn with Darwen continues to provide charitable services to an increasing number of older people in the community, despite having to contend with rapidly rising inflation and the cost of living crisis.

The organisation provides quality services to support older people to improve and maintain their health and wellbeing, offering a free advice and information service, and a health and wellbeing offer which are highly regarded by both the people who use them and local partners. Our newly launched Dementia Wayfinder service has been particularly well received. We continue to work with the local authority to develop Day Care and provide a range of health and wellbeing support for older people in the community.

We are extremely grateful for all the financial support from many donors and benefactors as well as Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council with whom we have very important contracts providing invaluable levels of financial support, and it is important to know that every penny is used locally for the benefit of older people throughout Blackburn with Darwen.

Volunteers continue to be a vital asset to the organisation and are very much valued by the trustees. The individual and collective contributions of both our staff and volunteers are immense and should be widely recognised as key to our continued positive impact on the lives of older people locally.

All the staff and volunteers are to be congratulated for their dedication and desire to continue to support older people in Blackburn with Darwen.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Hedley', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Tony Hedley
Chairman

Chief Executive's Message

Welcome to our Annual Review and Impact Report for 2022/23 which aims to provide a summary of the work the charity has done during the year and the impact that this has on local older people. If you would like to know more about our work or services I would be pleased to talk to you.

It was another busy and challenging year for the organisation, which saw us continue to respond to the long term impact of Covid on older people and increase our support for people experiencing cost of living challenges, whilst maintaining our core service offer. We have continued to develop new offers in response to what older people have told us, and I was particularly pleased that we secured funding to develop a brand new dementia Wayfinder Service which launched in May 2023. We have also continued to explore how digital technology can support us to deliver services and make best use of our resources, whilst still retaining that all important face to face and person-centred approach we know so many older people need and appreciate.

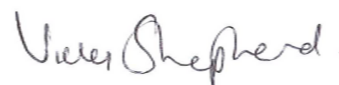
We have continued to develop our volunteer offer in response to the changing external context around volunteering. Our current team of volunteers have provided us not only with many hours of their time, but a huge wealth of experience and knowledge which really adds value to what we can offer to older people. I am pleased that we have also been able to grow our offer to host student placements during the year.

Our staff team have worked together in flexible and innovative ways to ensure that any older person who needs our support receives it in the best way for them. To support this, we have continued to develop workforce wellbeing support.

In addition to our service delivery, we have also maintained a focus on partnership working and influencing to ensure that the needs of older people are taken into account in planning and delivery decisions. In particular, we have been actively involved in leading the Age Well Partnership and inputting into the refreshed Health and Wellbeing Strategy for the Borough and the priorities of the new Place-Based Partnership. Our work engaging on and developing a Positive Ageing Framework for the borough, which was agreed in late 2022, will be key to supporting the development of age friendly policy and practice across all local partnerships and delivery.

We are grateful for the support from our funders, donors and supporters who provide vital resources to enable us to continue to support more local older people, and we also seek to continue to diversify and expand our income generation activities to support organisational sustainability.

In early 2023 we worked with our team and stakeholders to refresh and update our strategy and business plan for 2023 to 2026. The plan confirms that in setting and agreeing our priorities we will continue to adapt and respond to the needs of older people as they change, remain focussed on supporting older people to have the best later life possible and continue to be flexible, innovative and resourceful in all that we do.



Vicky Shepherd
Chief Executive

Introduction

Our Vision - For all older people in Blackburn with Darwen to have the opportunity to live the life they choose

Our Mission - To listen to the diverse voices and views of local older people and use to influence both our own and others priorities. To deliver quality, person-centred services which meet local needs and maximise independence.

To deliver our vision and mission, and our strategic priorities, the organisation delivers a range of services to improve the health and wellbeing of older people; to support people to remain independent as long as possible; and to be able to continue contributing to their community. We also work to influence the development of services for older people through a variety of mechanisms including delivery of the Age Well Partnership and sitting on a number of key strategic boards and groups, and through supporting national campaigns. As a local, independent charity we have an increasing need to raise funds from a diverse range of sources to support our work that is not funded through grants and contracts, including engagement and marketing and our campaigning and influencing work, along with core functions that ensure the quality of our provision. This is even more of a priority now as we deal with the increased costs and challenged income, resulting from the external economic environment. We are pleased to be a Brand Partner of Age UK, and we play an active role in the Age UK network, sub-regionally, regionally and nationally. This review provides an overview of our activity during 2022/23 and seeks to illustrate the impact of our services on the lives of older people and the benefit to the local community that we provide.

1248

1248 people supported through our range of Health and Wellbeing services

5613

5613 enquiries to the Advice & Information Service from 2074 people

8054

8054 volunteer hours contributed during the year

67

67 volunteers were giving us their time at 31st March

412

412 recorded compliments from our service users and supporters

1

1 complaint and 5 feedbacks received

Volunteers

The Covid pandemic has changed the landscape for volunteering with an increasing emphasis on people wanting more flexible roles and opportunities to fit around work, studies and lifestyle and as a charity we are adapting our volunteering offer. However, recruiting enough volunteers to fill our roles remains challenging.

At the end of March 2023, we had **67** volunteers across all of our services. This is a reduction from the previous year and numbers have been impacted by a combination of people not returning to volunteering after the pandemic due to changes in circumstances and recruitment challenges. However, we benchmark our volunteer data against the borough's population profile to ensure that our volunteers are fully representative of the community we serve and this shows that we have volunteers across all ages with the youngest being under 18 and the oldest 90+ and our volunteers also live in every ward within the borough.

Despite the decrease in numbers of volunteers across the year our volunteers gave us **8054** hours of their time which is equivalent to £136,371 at national Themes Outcomes and Measures (TOMs) framework rates, a significant and hugely valuable contribution to the work of the charity.

During the year we increased our offer for student placements and hosted placements for Social Work and accountancy along with International medical students, as well as work experience students from local secondary schools.

Our plans for 2023/24 include increasing the number of volunteers across the organisation to meet needs through offering more flexible opportunities wherever possible, delivery of a trustee recruitment campaign, providing additional training and guidance to our staff who manage volunteers to support retention, and continuing to increase the number of opportunities for placements.



Impact Story 1

Graham started attending our Remember the Rovers social sessions in 2019 having seen an advert for the group in a football programme. At the time he was spending a lot of time at home due to ill health. He got to know Mark our Social Inclusion Manager and in September 2021 started to also attend our weekly men's group. In early 2023 Mark asked Graham if he would help run the men's group and Graham joined us as a volunteer. Since joining as a volunteer Graham has taken on a second volunteer role as part of our busy Business Support Team answering our switchboard and helping with day to day tasks using skills he had from having previously worked in an office.

Graham says of volunteering "It gives me a reason to get out of the house more and gives me a sense of purpose and something to achieve. It is nice to be appreciated and it has improved both my confidence and sense of self-worth and I really enjoy it."



Our Services

All our services are based on the principles of working with individuals to provide person-centred, responsive, tailored support which builds on their own strengths and networks and enabling them to do as much as they are able. Our aim is to improve and maintain health and wellbeing and to enable people to remain independent for as long as possible.

Advice & Information Service

The provision of free, independent advice and information is one of our core functions and through this activity we offer older people and their carers holistic advice to enable them to make their own decisions based on timely and accurate information, and ultimately to improve their quality of life and wellbeing.

The service is provided at offices in Blackburn and Darwen through a drop-in service, appointments, by telephone and digital platforms and through home visits, providing advice, information and casework on the wide range of issues affecting older people. The service has seen a significant increase in demand as a result of the cost of living crisis along with people dealing with issues which have escalated during the Covid period. Across the year, the service dealt with **41%** more people and enquiries compared to 2021/22 but at times demand was increased by over 80% as people sought help with dealing with unprecedented levels of costs on fixed incomes. The team focussed their efforts on supporting people to claim their full benefit entitlements and maximise their income and to access the cost of living support available through local and national schemes. In 2022/23 the service was funded from a range of sources including The Henry Smith Charity, Age UK for specific delivery programmes, the Brian Mercer Trust and the Eric Wright Trust, and we continue to seek sustainable and diverse sources of funding.

Achievements

- Responded to 5613 enquiries from 2074 people, a 41% increase on previous year
- Local older people assisted to claim £1,163,031 in additional entitlements and income
- Worked with the local authority to design and deliver marketing campaigns to encourage income maximisation checks and access to cost of living support programmes for pensioners
- Successful delivery of all targets for funded programmes and a further two years funding secured from The Henry Smith Charity to support the outreach provision

Key Plans for 2023/24

- Continue to work flexibly to respond to the continuing increase in demand in a timely manner
- Participation as a partner in the delivery of the Household Support Scheme which aims to support people through the cost of living crisis
- Deliver a programme of neighbourhood based promotion to increase our reach to those older people who could benefit from the service
- Ensure all targets for funded programmes are met

Impact Story 2

Mrs C is in her 80s and lives alone in her own property. She has a number of health conditions including a heart condition and a respiratory condition for which she

had recently been in hospital. Mrs C uses oxygen to help with her respiratory condition and has difficulty with her personal care, especially getting out of bed, showering and moving safely around her home as she is prone to falling. She needed more help at home but was concerned about how she would pay for this so had been struggling on trying to manage. Her neighbour, who helps her with shopping, had used our service herself and suggested she contact us to see if any help was available. She had never considered applying for any extra help until her neighbour encouraged her. An advisor carried out a number of home visits to Mrs C, helping her to successfully apply for Attendance Allowance (a disability benefit) and a Blue disabled parking badge. After the Attendance Allowance was awarded, we also carried out a benefit check which established entitlement to income related benefits, Pension Credit and Council Tax Support. Mrs C had no means of making the online applications, so we assisted with these and both were awarded, meaning that she was over £100 per week better off overall. Not only has Mrs C's financial situation improved and she can pay for things she needs to remain at home, she is also more aware of her entitlements and who to contact for assistance. Mrs C told us she feels more secure and happy knowing that she has someone she can contact for help and can now pay for the essential help she needs.

Community Day Care Service

This year we have continued the development of the Community Day Care service which is delivered from three community centres across Blackburn each week. The service offers a range of support including personal care, transport and support with nutrition along with a varied programme of therapeutic, cognitive, physical and social activities. The community model provides support for frail older people and all age adults with a learning disability or difficulty. Those accessing the service must meet the Adult Services eligibility criteria.

We work with individuals and their carers to develop person centred support and care plans that aim to maintain good health and wellbeing and prevent a further deterioration in health. We also provide support and respite for the carers of day care users and offer regular courtesy calls to ensure they have the right support to maintain their own health and wellbeing and to prevent carer breakdown.

Our dedicated team of volunteers enable us to provide individual support for a range of different activities to enhance the offer available. For 2022/23 the day care service was funded through a contract with Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council.

Achievements

- Supported and cared for 72 of the frailest older people and adults with a learning disability or difficulty
- Increased the number of trips for service users to the countryside, local places of interest and to join in other community activities
- Provided more activities with a focus on nutrition and hydration, including the introduction of a regular breakfast buffet

- Worked with the community centre volunteers to deliver a range of events and celebrations which carers also attended

Key Plans for 2023/24

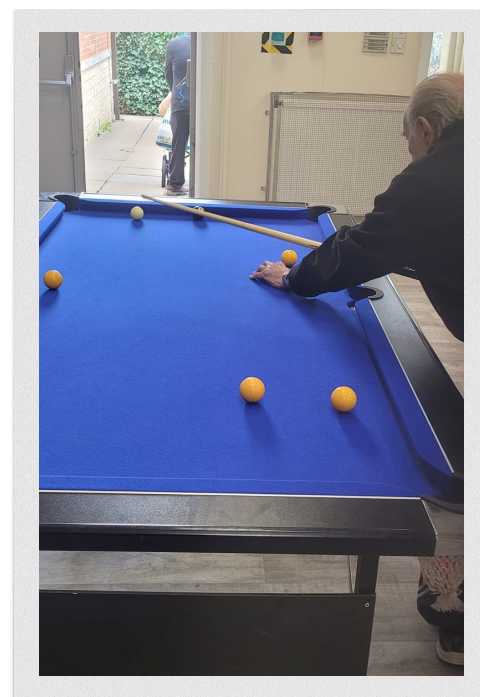
- Extend our volunteer roles and opportunities to offer a wider choice of activities and further enhance delivery
- Increase the number of student placement opportunities.
- Review and streamline systems and extend the use of our digital recording systems across the whole service
- Develop and increase the use of digital devices for activities and service delivery

Impact Story 3

JI is a frail gentleman who initially attended the day care service one day per week, however due to a change in his circumstances and him enjoying attending this was increased to two days per week. JI who has dementia and other health issues, lives alone in sheltered accommodation and has help from his daughter. During JI's first days of day care he appeared quiet, however we soon found this to be a façade as he loves to have a laugh and is incredibly funny. He also likes to reminisce about his time in the Parachute Regiment and his time spent in Asia. Although when asked, JI says he doesn't want to take part in activities, he usually changes his mind and has baked, joined in quizzes, plays board games, and socialised with other service users. Staff and the other service users have come to appreciate his comedic personality and his smile is clearly infectious. His daughter has also recognised that although when he arrives at the centre he may show that he's in pain and a little down it's the complete opposite when he's leaving for the day and has a big smile on his face due to enjoying his time in day care.

JI's daughter told us she's noticed how much happier he is in himself. She also stated that on a recent occasion when he was feeling unwell and had to be taken for a check-up at the hospital he asked if she was taking him back to day care as that is where he wanted to be. JI's daughter has complimented the service by stating *"the pressure on my wellbeing has been relieved due to the fact Dad is able to attend day care and I'm not getting constant phone calls."*

It is clear that JI was reluctant to come to day care at first, but with support and encouragement he soon settled down and began joining in different activities. Not only has this improved JI's mood and wellbeing but has also had a positive effect on his daughter's mental health.



Impact Story 4

SB lives on their own in a supported living scheme with carers and a Personal Assistant (PA) to support them. SB is wheelchair bound and has cerebral palsy along with a learning disability. Their vocabulary is limited and they can only say “yes” or “no”. SB attends day care three times a week. Initially SB was supported in day care by their PA and seemed very quiet and reserved. Over time staff have encouraged and supported SB to join in a range of activities including baking, cake decorating, painting and music without having support from their PA. They can now use their own initiative during activities and their PA no longer stays at the centre with them.

We have seen their personality shine through and they mix extremely well with other service users irrespective of age or disability. The carers where SB lives have expressed how much SB delights coming to day care. They arrive with a smile on their face and leave with a ‘beaming smile’ as they’ve enjoyed the day so much. SB especially enjoys making a lot of noise whether this is by musical instruments or joining in singing. After lunch they like to help with drying the dishes and thoroughly enjoy mixing cake mixture and getting messy. They communicate well with staff and love to tease them by hiding objects and turning chairs around, additionally, they mix well with different groups of service users which has built SB’s confidence. SB’s father and staff from their supported living scheme have expressed that there has been a notable change in SB and the improvement has been quite dramatic on their health and wellbeing.

SB’s transition at the Day Care service has seen a tremendous change from needing one to one support when they first arrived to now freely joining in activities independently. It’s been a pleasure to see SB blossom and is a testament to the strength-based approach we adopt regardless of physical or cognitive ability.



Health & Wellbeing Service

The Health & Wellbeing service brings together our Active Ageing, Befriending, Digital Inclusion, Here to Help, Nail Care and Social Inclusion provision under one umbrella. Throughout the year **1176** older people accessed services, received support or attended activities. Through our programmes we provide a range of support, friendship, activities and services to improve wellbeing, prevent a decline in health, promote independent living and reduce social isolation. Throughout our services we use a strength-based approach to prevent dependency on support services and increase resilience.

This year we have completed an internal re-organisation and brought our Befriending, Digital, Here to Help and Social Inclusion services under one Integrated Service, where all services now complete one holistic assessment to ensure people are accessing the right service at the right time.

In late 2022 we were successful in securing funding to develop the Wayfinder Service for people affected by dementia and their carers and families. We provide support, advice and are a point of contact for people post diagnosis to help them better plan for the future and enable them to live well with dementia. The Wayfinder programmes also sits within the Integrated Service and launched in May 2023.

We also secured additional funding to extend the Memory Makers programme this year setting up two additional sessions for people with memory problems that provide a broad range of evidence-based therapeutic, physical and cognitive activities which are based on the recognised Maintenance Cognitive Stimulation Therapy (MCST).

Also during the year we have piloted a Personal Health Budget scheme, whereby people are able to access a personal budget from the NHS to help improve and maintain their mental wellbeing and prevent them from declining and needing more specialist mental health support. We are working in partnership with other local voluntary and community organisations in the development and delivery of the project which is due to run until August 2023.

The **Active Ageing** service offers a range of physical activity sessions from walking groups to yoga to walking football at a range of venues across Blackburn with Darwen. Additionally, this year we have delivered the Stepping Out project aimed at older people who have deconditioned as a result of the pandemic and lost their confidence to get out and about again. We provided one-to-one support for up to six weeks to encourage people to participate in whatever activity they choose, which has included walking and joining in our social groups. In total **324** people accessed activities during the year.

Our **Befriending** service provides home visiting and a Phonelink for housebound and isolated people, as well as a Keeping in Touch calls with people with none or very few local connections, but who do not wish to have a weekly regular call or visit. During the year we supported 210 of the most isolated and vulnerable people.

In September 2022 we were successful in securing additional funding to extend and develop our **Digital Inclusion** service. Through this service we offer one-to-one support to help increase people's digital skills, knowledge and confidence.

We also run a 'Try Before You Buy' scheme whereby people are able to borrow a tablet free of charge, and support people to access free or reduced cost data packages. In total **68** were supported through this service. All new people coming into the organisation also have a digital diagnostic to identify level of digital need and any support they may require to increase skills and knowledge.

Here to Help is part of the Integrated Neighbourhood Team provision, working closely with GP surgeries across the borough and alongside health, social care and voluntary sector colleagues to provide support for older people who have long term conditions, are at risk of hospital admission or have recently been discharged. Our key role is to provide holistic assessments and coordinate packages of environmental and social support for people and as part of this offer we also provide a Practical Support service including shopping or transport to essential appointments for people recently discharged from hospital. This year we have provided support for **357** older people.

Working in partnership with Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust, through our **Nail Care** service we offer a toenail cutting service for people no longer able to care for their feet and who are not eligible for NHS Podiatry. **205** people received treatment during the year.

The **Social Inclusion** programme provides a varied programme of activities to reduce social isolation and help to maintain and improve people's wellbeing. The current programme includes Mens Groups, Memory Makers, Talk and Tunes and Remember the Rovers.

The programme also includes linking in with other services and referring people into non-Age UK social inclusion activities. During the year **174** people were supported through the programme. Through this programme we also work in close partnership with Lancashire Mind to deliver the Flourishing Minds project, through which people can access more specialist one to one or group mental health support.

The Nail Care service is paid for through customer fees. The Memory Makers programme is grant funded through national Age UK and the Wayfinder Service through the National Lottery Community Fund. The remainder of the Health & Wellbeing services are funded by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council through their Helping People to Stay Happy, Healthy & Well VCFS commission, along with a range of grants from trusts and national programmes.

Active Ageing Achievements

- Continued to develop a range of activities and information aimed at women experiencing the menopause
- Delivered 441 classes including online and face to face
- Set up a Walking Football group in Darwen
- Delivered the Stepping Out project to support people to become more active post-Covid
- Worked in partnership with Lancashire Stay Wild, Wild Swim group to establish a wild swimming session in Darwen

Key Plans for 2023/24

- Develop a pilot walking programme targeting sheltered housing schemes in partnership with Living Streets
- Develop programmes for specific target groups or communities in response to gaps and feedback from older people

- Re start the walking netball activity
- Further develop opportunities for a range of self-led and peer activities.
- Develop a programme of partnership activities focussing on outdoor facilities

Impact Story 5

Stuart lives alone in Darwen, is 65, and wanted to improve his fitness and activity levels. He saw an advert for the walking football session on social media and decided to give it a try. He first attended a session back in February 2022 and told us he was a bit apprehensive and sceptical, having not played football for many years. We reassured him that we were a friendly bunch, that it was not competitive, and slower paced version of football, and that his old skills would most definitely come into play. Stuart found the sessions beneficial on many levels. Not only have his activity and fitness levels improved, but the sessions have also given him a social outlet. He found us friendly and was made to feel very welcome, that the sessions “weren’t too serious” and that he would recommend to anyone *“to come down and give it a go.”*

He was particularly proud of the fact we played against Darwen Vale School year 9 pupils - and won 6-1! Stuart told us that was a special moment to remember and a great achievement to be part of - a real boost to his self-esteem.

Stuart has really enjoyed the activity, the people, the humour and looks forward to attending and says he is very glad he made the decision to take that step... a leap of faith, in participating in the walking football sessions.

Impact Story 6

Sandra is 75 years old and lives alone in a rented house since the death of her husband. Sandra has various health conditions the worst of which is rheumatoid arthritis. She has three children but sadly two have passed away.

She has been an Active Ageing service user for around 20 years and in that time has attended various groups including walks, tai chi and exercise sessions including aerobics and seated classes. She was struggling when she first came to us with joint problems but said attending the exercise class helped to clear this up. She has been with us through the loss of her children and again coming to the activities and being able to talk about things has really helped her with her grief. Sandra lost her husband to cancer 4 years ago and has struggled with the grief from this. Living alone she gets lonely even though she has grandchildren who are very supportive. She very often pops into the office for a chat, a cry or with a question and uses her visits to the office to talk about her problems and asks for advice and help to do things including topping up her mobile phone and exercises she can do at home.

Even though she does not attend any of the classes at present she says she always feels able to come to us. We make her a cup of tea and chat to her about her worries or just listen if she wants to talk. We provide help and support including a winter wellbeing pack and a friendly ear. Sandra said *“I know you are always here for me, and I can always come to you. Thank you for all the help you have given me over the years. I feel like I always know where to go if I need help, I just come to Age UK.”*

"I seem to deal with one lot of problems and then more appear, my family will help but sometimes I like to do things for myself and not have to ask for their help, you have been a great support and help me do things for myself, you don't make me feel stupid."

When someone comes to us in Active Ageing we take a strength based, individual holistic approach, and are there for as long as people need us and for whatever they need, be that short term or for the longer term.

Befriending **Achievements**

- Established the Keeping in Touch offer for people who have few or no local connections
- Reviewed and identified better ways to communicate with volunteers
- Review of criteria and development of new scoring system to ensure people can access the right support they need
- Recruitment of new Befriending Services Co-ordinator

Key Plans for 2023/24

- Implement a new streamlined system for volunteers to report into
- Source and secure more funding to further enhance the service offer with a particular focus on face to face support
- Recruit more volunteers to support delivery of the service
- Incorporate the Stepping Out programme within the Befriending service
- Trial a model of delivering digital befriending peer to peer and with volunteers

Impact Story 7

Roy is 81 years old and lives alone in Blackburn after losing his wife in May 2022. He is estranged from his only son. Roy is a very independent man and does all his cooking and cleaning himself. He was referred to the Befriending Service by his GP as he mentioned to them about feeling lonely after his wife died.

After receiving the referral, we contacted Roy and using a strength-based approach we completed a holistic assessment with him to get as much information as possible to see how best we could support him.

It was agreed with Roy that we would provide a regular telephone call using a volunteer, however until we could find the right volunteer match, Roy received a monthly Keeping in Touch call from staff. We were in the process of inducting a new volunteer at the same time we received the referral for Roy and it was identified that they would be a good match, with the volunteer agreeing to ring Roy each week.

The volunteer has been ringing Roy on a weekly basis up until recently, but unfortunately had to temporarily stop due to planned surgery. Conscious of not wanting Roy to miss the regular calls, we asked another volunteer to pick up the calls until his regular volunteer returned. When asked what difference the service was making to him, Roy replied *"I really look forward to the phone calls every week from the volunteers, I very much enjoy talking to them."*

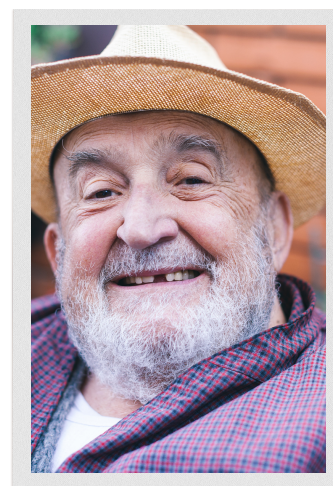
Our volunteer said *"I feel privileged that he seems happy to share things with me, he is determined to maintain his independence for as long as possible."*

Digital Inclusion **Achievements**

- Successful in recruiting a dedicated Digital Inclusion Co-ordinator
- Offered a 'Try Before You Buy' scheme, loaning out tablets.
- Secured funding to purchase sim cards to distribute to service users
- Facilitated access to free internet in partnership with 6g
- Re-developed a relationship with the Blackburn Santander branch for their staff to provide one-to-one lessons

Key Plans for 2023/24

- Deliver targeted support for housebound people with depression and anxiety to increase the use of digital tools to support improved wellbeing, funded through the Community Mental Health Transformation Programme
- Recruit additional volunteers to provide tuition to people
- Participate and support digital health developments with NHS partners
- Develop and expand our equipment and data offers



Impact Story 8

Ann is 70 years old and lives alone since her brother passed away in 2019. Ann has no family and few friends. She is quite active and in good health although she suffers a lot with general anxiety. Ann was referred to the Digital Inclusion service from the Advice & Information service as she had bought a smartphone for the first time and didn't know how to use it.

Ann was very nervous on her first visit, she confessed she hasn't been out much since the pandemic as she didn't want to catch Covid. Ann was reluctant to go into shops and will not go on a bus for fear of crowds and Covid. This meant Ann was restricted to shopping in Darwen and could not access her bank as there are no longer any banks in Darwen. On Ann's first visit we went through the basics of using a smart phone and downloaded some apps for shopping. Ann was excited to start using her phone.

As the weeks went on, Ann became more comfortable and her trust in

us grew and she felt comfortable about opening up about her history and her worries. A major worry was the rising cost of gas and electric and Ann told us she was getting into bed at 4pm just to avoid using the heating and electric. We downloaded the app for her energy supplier and signed Ann up so she could see her gas and electric usage at the press of a button rather than wait 6 months for bills. Ann was delighted and could see she was in a lot of credit which reassured her she could use her gas and electric and she wouldn't get into debt. We also showed Ann how to read her meters and how to input the data into the app so her readings and bills were up to date.

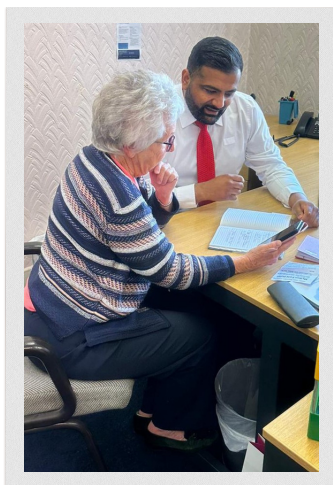
Ann achieved so much in her lessons and can now use her smart phone with ease and knows how to change her ringtone, silence her phone at night, and adjust the screen brightness.

She is feeling more confident in herself and her ability.

We also set Ann up with MiFi so she has internet access at home as well as a data sim. Ann also benefited from our tablet scheme which enabled her to do online banking, manage her household bills online, use You Tube, look for somewhere new to live and make contact with a cat rescue centre to adopt a cat to keep her company. This demonstrates that access to digital tools can really open up opportunities for people across their life.

Ann has also been referred to Memory Makers as she struggles with finding her words and remembering details.

Ann said "I've looked forward to the sessions every week and it's got me out of the house. Thank you for everything you've done, I really appreciate it."



Here to Help and Practical Support Service

Achievements

- Continued to be a key partner within the local health and social care neighbourhood structures
- Further developed our working relationship with the Intermediate Care Discharge Team, including locating in their office one day per week
- Facilitated Social Work Student placements
- Secured funding to continue the practical support service for people who have been discharged from hospital
- Offered shadowing opportunities for staff from health and care partner organisations

Key Plans for 2023/24

- Provide additional placement opportunities
- Develop a volunteer model to support delivery of the integrated service offer
- Explore opportunities to provide end of life support
- Continue to embed the service within Intermediate Care Services and hospital avoidance and discharge pathways
- Deliver a pilot programme funded through the Community Mental Health Transformation Programme to offer increased support for people with mental health issues, particularly depression and anxiety

Impact Story 9

We received a referral from the local authority's Home First hospital discharge service for Malcolm who was in hospital due to his blood sugars becoming very high and reoccurring infections. Malcolm is a 70-year-old gentleman with multiple health issues including Barratts Oesophagus, depression, diabetes and mixed dementia. He lives with his wife Jennifer who is his main carer. They have one son together and 3 grandchildren and have been married for 40 years.

They have District Nurses visiting three times a day to support with insulin management but otherwise Jennifer supports with all aspects of Malcolm's daily living needs as he cannot do anything independently and always requires support. They have converted the living room into a bedroom for Malcolm as it is unsafe for him to use the stairs. He really struggles with his mobility and mobilises with a frame but is at risk of falls. He sits in a chair all day and Jennifer has to lift him in and out of bed. Our Here to Help Co-ordinator visited to carry out a full holistic assessment to look at all their needs. As a result referrals to the Falls Team and Moving and Handling Team were agreed to improve safety for them both. Jennifer was concerned about the lack of movement from Malcolm, so a referral to Physio was also made.

During the assessment, it became clear that Jennifer was struggling, and she needed extra help. We discussed carers but she felt that Malcolm would not react very well. She wanted a break to go to the laundrette and felt uneasy leaving Malcolm on his own. We discussed a sit-in service via Adult Services and she thought it was a good idea to use that service as and when required.

We also talked about a referral to the Carers Service for Jennifer so she can have a chat with fellow carers in similar situations.

Malcolm struggles getting to the toilet on time. He has a commode in the room and a urine bottle also but cannot use it as quickly as he would like. His wife was concerned about incontinence issues. They agreed that he would benefit from a referral for a continence assessment. Malcolm has been really struggling with his appetite and struggles to swallow food. We discussed a referral to Speech and Language Team and they both agreed to this.

Jennifer required support around their finances and they wanted a benefits check to see if they were entitled to any further financial support. As Jennifer is working age and Malcolm is pension age a referral was made to Shelter's Welfare Rights Service.

We completed all the referrals that we discussed and following a conversation with Jennifer 6 weeks later she informed us that she was feeling more relaxed. Malcolm had been provided with equipment including a commode on wheels, wheelchair, rails and a hospital bed. A delivery of incontinence pads had also been received. The physio now attends once a week to support Malcolm with exercises and the speech therapist is involved also. Jennifer has been registered with the Carers Service and they have sent her information in the post and she has also been booked in for a Carers Assessment to discuss respite. She was very pleased that everything we had discussed with her was put in place. *"You have worked wonders. I really appreciate everything you have done, and I know I can pick the phone up and whatever problem I have, you will provide a solution."*

Nail Care

Achievements

- Reviewed and streamlined process for receiving referrals direct from NHS Podiatry
- Increased the number of clinics available and the number of customers
- Moved to a paperless system

Key Plans for 2023/24

- Review clinic capacity and further increase customer numbers
- Recruit additional volunteer nail cutters to support the delivery of the service
- Finalise the relocation of the Blackburn town centre clinic to a clinical based venue
- Establish placement opportunities for Podiatry students

into her lower abdomen. Linda is now waiting for a cardiology appointment and other scans.

She said: "The GP has dismissed this issue for years; you don't know what you've started. I wouldn't have had all these appointments unless it was for the Nail Care assessment, I'm ever so grateful to you. I wouldn't have known about this issue if it wasn't for your service. These medical appointments will determine my life choices going forward, I'm thinking of now moving house to make it easier for the future."

Social Inclusion

Achievements

- Secured additional funding to increase our Dementia friendly activities through two additional Memory Makers MCST Sessions
- Completed a small-scale gap analysis on community activities operating throughout local neighbourhoods
- Relocated the Blackburn Men's Group to the central library, increasing the number of men attending
- Hosted two Flourishing Minds workshops with Lancashire Mind on '5 Ways to Wellbeing' and 'Stress Buster'
- Worked in partnership with Innovate UK to deliver a feasibility study into a digital solution to reduce loneliness

Key Plans for 2023/24

- Continue to develop and deliver programmes to support more people with Dementia
- Scope the need to establish additional online sessions targeted at those that are housebound
- Develop opportunities for self-led and peer-to-peer activities
- Develop programmes to meet identified specific gaps in provision

Impact Story 11

PH lives with his wife in their own home. He owned a successful business in town which has been in the family for generations and is now run by his son. PH was very active in the local business community belonging to several organizations and was an avid supporter of the local football team and a long-term season ticket holder.

After receiving a diagnosis of dementia PH found his social circle dwindling as he struggled with his memory and verbal communication, and this was having a negative effect on his mental wellbeing as he didn't do anything unless his wife went with him. He started to become depressed and was experiencing feelings of loneliness and isolation.

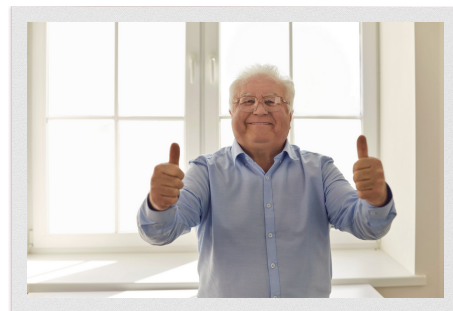
His wife contacted us and as a result herself and PH started attending the "Remember the Rovers" sessions which is a weekly reminiscence and social session based around the past of his beloved local football team. This reconnected him with past friends and associates and he quickly made new friends with people that shared his passion for football.

He was then assessed for our Memory Makers service and started attending and actively engaging in the weekly sessions. Although his wife initially didn't think he would engage PH soon became a regular member of the group enjoying especially the singing as he loves to sing "Irish" songs. The social interaction PH experiences attending the group sessions has had a huge impact on his mental wellbeing. He can attend the two-hour Memory Makers sessions independently without his wife being present and this has greatly helped his self-esteem and confidence.

Impact Story 10

Linda is 73 years old and lives in Blackburn. She initially enquired about the Nail Care service in 2016, which she attended until 2019. Several years later Linda contacted us to enquire about accessing the service again. We booked Linda in for an NHS Re-assessment at the Albion Mill clinic to check that she was still low risk and eligible for the service. The NHS Podiatrist found some issues with her circulation and irregular pulses. An NHS referral was completed immediately and Linda received an appointment to see the Podiatry team at a local health centre where a more in-depth assessment also found issues, so a referral was then sent to the Vascular Clinic. They also noticed that the issue had spread into her thigh. Linda was sent for a CT scan which picked up secondary circulation in her calves and she subsequently saw the Vascular surgeon who has referred her for additional scans, has said her arteries are blocked on one side and

When he attends, he always has something to share and talks openly about his business experiences and his football memories. His wife says sometimes he's unsure about attending but once he arrives, she has a time getting him to leave. He is more upbeat after attending and it is very evident that his mood has lifted. Asked if he enjoys the sessions PH says with a wry smile "Oh yes, I wouldn't be here if I didn't."



Wayfinder

Securing funding through the National Lottery Community Fund, in May 2023 we launched our new Wayfinder service which is aimed at people who have received a diagnosis of dementia and their carers and families. The service is an open door offer for people to access at any time for a range of support, advice, signposting or just someone to listen.

We have recruited two staff members who are leading on the development and delivery of the programme. Wayfinder sits within the wider Integrated Service to ensure people are receiving holistic support and can be fast tracked into our specialist Advice and Information service to help with pensions and money issues, housing, and form filling.



Influencing Policy & Practice

Our range of campaigning, influencing and partnership activities play a key role in contributing towards us accomplishing our mission to enable the voices and views of older people to be heard. In light of the growing older population and reduced healthy life expectancy; the longer term impact from Covid on the health and wellbeing of older people; and the ongoing cost of living crisis; along with system changes within health and care and continued pressures on public sector services we continue to spend a significant amount of time influencing policy and service planning, commissioning and delivery. We aim to ensure the needs of older people are taken into account, and support good practice development. We participate in a range of Boards, networks and groups on a wide range of issues locally and also work with our colleagues at Age UK Lancashire to contribute to the wider Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care System (ICS) including supporting the development of a new Dementia Strategy. We also play an active role within the local voluntary sector providing representation on the Health and Wellbeing Board, the new Place-Based Board and the Eat Well, Move More steering group on promotion of physical activity and healthy diet.

Age Well Partnership

Throughout the year we have continued to co-ordinate the Age Well Partnership for the borough which is a strategic body made up of representatives from the main commissioning and provider organisations in the borough who are responsible for the oversight, development, and implementation of the Age Well elements of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. We also continued to coordinate the Blackburn with Darwen Dementia Action Alliance.

During the year we were commissioned to develop a Positive Ageing framework for the borough involving targeted engagement through partners, and with a wide variety of organisations and stakeholders across all sectors and the general public. The Framework was endorsed by the Local Authority Executive Board and the Health and Wellbeing Board in late 2022 and provides a blueprint for all organisations to support both their own practices and the ambition of Blackburn with Darwen to become an age friendly borough.

The partnership focussed on key priorities of Covid recovery, dementia, social isolation, poverty and housing, digital inclusion and improving health life expectancy. Specific focus this year was on the impact of the cost of living crisis and the promotion of support available, along with inputting into the development of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Trauma Informed network.

The work of the Age Well partnership continues to develop in line with the new ICS place based structures. The agreed key priorities for the partnership for 2023/24 are dementia and the development of a dementia framework for Blackburn with Darwen, Falls and Frailty and the development of a Blackburn with Darwen falls prevention strategy, embedding the Positive Ageing Framework along with oversight of key organisations and initiatives that support the health and wellbeing of older people.

Campaigning

During the year we worked with our national Age UK partners to raise awareness of the impact of the cost of living crisis on older people along with supporting the campaign to ask the Government to develop a solution to the challenges within the social care.

Age UK Structures

During the year we have been active members of the Age England Association (AEA), the membership organisation for local Age UK Brand Partners, and have continued to participate in the development of a new Shared Strategy for the network, along with a range of other partnership and shared strategic developments. The Chief Executive is also Chair of the national Services for Older People Committee working with Age UK on services development. We work closely with our colleagues at Age UK Lancashire including through our jointly owned community interest company, Age UK Greater Lancashire.

Quality Management & Generating Funds

In order to achieve our priorities, we need to ensure the organisation is organisationally and financially sound and that it meets the requirements of Brand Partnership with Age UK and other relevant quality standards.

Quality

We recognise the importance of supporting and developing our workforce, both paid and unpaid, through training, coaching and skill sharing, and we have continued to prioritise this during the year. We have also continued to enhance our workforce wellbeing offer for staff and volunteers. Since late 2022 we have been preparing for our 3 yearly re-assessment for the Age UK Charity Quality Standard which will take place in June 2023. We continue to develop and deliver our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action plan with a current focus on ensuring our services are accessible and appropriate for older people from all communities. We were also pleased to support the first ever Blackburn Pride in summer 2022. We agreed a refreshed Environmental and Sustainability Policy in March 2023 and will be delivering an implementation plan to support this.



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE®
We invest in people Standard



Generating Funds

As an independent charity Age UK Blackburn with Darwen must raise funds from a variety of sources in order to sustain our services and core functions and meet increasing and changing demand. This year has again been a challenging and uncertain period with increased costs along with income from services and fundraising impacted by the cost-of-living challenges people are facing. We have retained our core commissioned contracts for the health and wellbeing and day care services and have been able to secure grant income to support our advice provision and other service development programmes. However, with our increased costs we continue to need to increase the amount of unrestricted funds we can raise to support our unfunded work, including campaigning and influencing activities; volunteering support; and our core business support functions.

Charity Shop

2022/23 has been a more positive year of trading for the charity shop in Darwen, despite the cost-of-living crisis and the challenges of a high street retail presence in the current economic climate, with the overall contribution made to the charity double that contributed in 2021/22.

Income from online sales continued to increase across our platforms, up over 100% year on year, and this is a growing source of income and focus for the shop team. In September 2022 we were fortunate to have the support of the Blackburn with Darwen Youth Justice Service who helped us to refurbish the external façade of the shop making it look

much brighter and more inviting to customers. Money for the materials was kindly donated by generous members of the public following an online fundraiser.

We have been pleased to remain part of the #ShopDarwen scheme and are grateful for their support. In October we undertook some Instagram collaborations with a couple of local Darwen businesses who have supported us, helping to both increase our own engagement and followers along with theirs. We have also worked with Darwen Market to hold regular pop up stalls, helping us to both increase income and promote our charity.

Our volunteers play a pivotal role in supporting the shop which would not be able to operate without them. We are pleased to have recruited several more volunteers during the year including students.

Key priorities for 2023/24 are to expand our retail operation to additional premises, further increase income from online sales and increase income from waste and recycling goods that haven't sold as part of our Environmental and Sustainability policy.

Fundraising

Donations are an essential source of unrestricted income for the charity, and we are very grateful for the support of those who donate to us. Towards the end of the year the rising cost of living has had an impact on the number of donors who donate regularly to us, and we expect this to remain a key issue for some time. Income from fundraising and donations was lower than expected

this year as we did not receive any legacy income.

We were fortunate to have seven swimmers taking part in the Great North Swim and 6 runners in the Great North Run during the year.

We were thrilled to be chosen as Blackburn Road Runners charity of the year in October 2022 and are grateful for their ongoing support with Christmas hampers for older people as well as their fundraising activity throughout the year.

We have made a conscious decision to limit the number of events that we undertake as a charity due to resources however we held a fashion show in July and our most successful Jail and Bail event in March 2023 benefiting from fantastic support from a number of local businesses and individuals.

Corporate donors and supporters bring so much to us as a charity, we are appreciative of the ongoing support of Finch Bakery who opened a new outlet in Blackburn Mall both financially and in terms of awareness raising.

The competition for schools fundraising is incredibly high so we were pleased to start working again with the Abu Hanifah Foundation and for the regular support of both Blackburn College Public Services Students and Tauheedul Boys School.

Key plans for 2023/24 are maximising the opportunities from being Charity of the Year for Blackburn Road Runners and since April of Blackburn Mall, reviewing our community fundraising model and delivering increased income through a donations, legacies and marketing campaign.



Financial Review

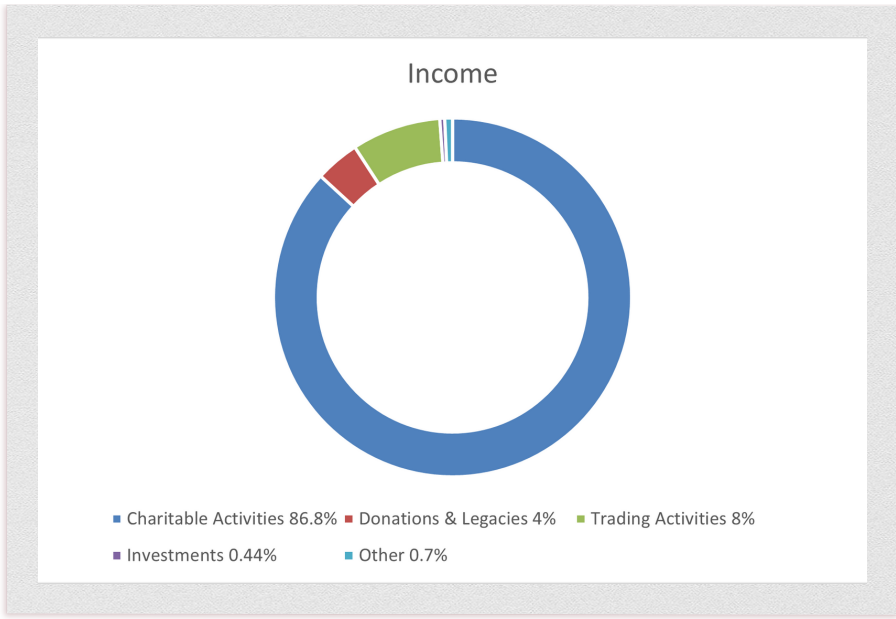
In the year to 31 March 2023 the Charity reported a deficit of £51,949 from an income of £1,022,699. This was made up of a surplus of £108 on restricted funds (funds which are to be used for specified purposes as laid down by the donor/funder) and a deficit of £51,841 on unrestricted funds (income received or generated and available for general use)

83% of the organisation’s annual income came from grants and service contracts from a variety of sources, which is a slight decrease from the previous year. The remaining income was raised through donations, fundraising, the charity shop and service charges along with investment interest.

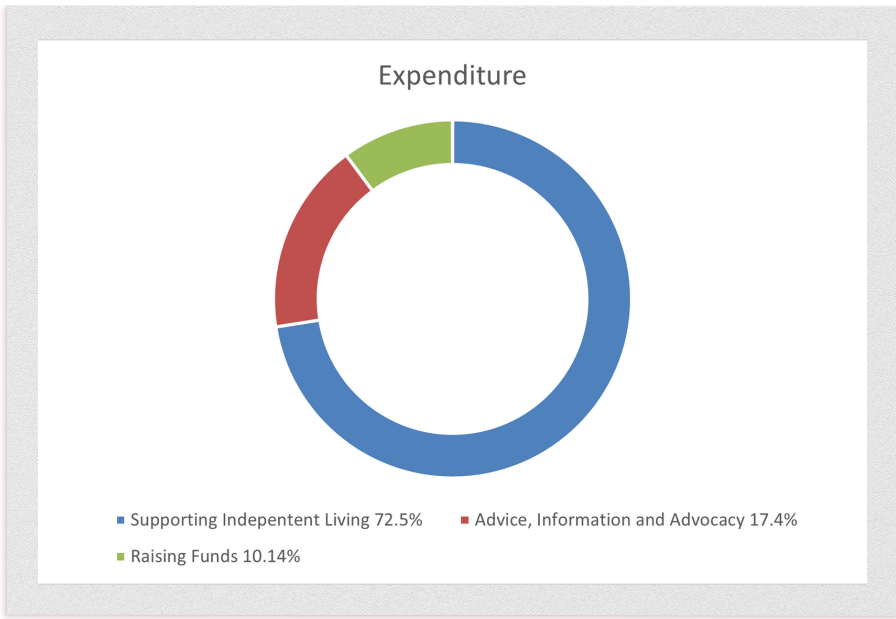
The organisation continues to operate in challenging times. We started the financial year with a deficit budget due to increased operating costs, particularly increased staff costs, energy and service supply costs and uncertainty around some income streams. Some of these costs also increased in year beyond budgeted expectations. We have continued to have a focus on careful cost control wherever possible without compromising the quality of our services, along with generating increased levels of income from a range of grant sources, donations and fundraising, however all of these sources are under pressure due to the cost of living challenges and increased competition for funds. The combination of these factors have resulted in the deficit at year end.

Total reserves at 31st March 2023 amounted to £642,952 including restricted and designated funds. The level of unrestricted, undesignated reserves held at 31st March 2023 is in line with the organisation’s reserves policy that the greater of either six months unrestricted running costs or three months running costs plus the cost of all liabilities will be maintained as reserves.

Where our income came from: Total £1,022,699



How we spent our income: Expenditure £1,074,539



Thank you

We would like to thank the following organisations and individuals for their support over the last year, along with all those who donated online, those who made donations to our charity shop and those who gave anonymously.

Companies, organisations & community groups

Age UK Bolton	Church of the Saviour Ladies Group	PCSE Capita
Abu Hanifah Foundation	Churches Together in Lancashire	Regal Foods PLC
Albion Mill	CMAC Group	Revidge Fold United Reformed Church
Asda Blackburn	Darwen FC	Residents of Lingfield Court
Blackburn and East Lancashire Friendship Group	Darwen Health Centre	Residents of Spinneyside
Blackburn Bid	Darwen Market	Santander Blackburn
Blackburn College	Darwen Vale High School	Soroptimist International Blackburn
Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council	Finch Bakery	St Peter's and St Paul's Church
Blackburn Library	Grays Schoolwear	Tauheedul Boys School
Blackburn Market	Henrietta Kenyon Bequest	Ten Pin Blackburn
Blackburn Road Runners	Kingsfold Pharmacy	The Activity Leisure and Learning Group
Blackburn with Darwen Youth Justice Service	Lancashire Constabulary	The Mall Blackburn
Central Ladies Fellowship Group,	Lesley's News	The Observatory Pub
Central United Reformed Church, Darwen	Mayers Fishmongers	Valetch Solutions Limited
Cherry Tree Library	Me Learning Ltd	Westholme Schools
	Meeting Places, Darwen	Your Style Boutique
	Middleforth Pharmacy	
	Morrisons Blackburn	
	Olly's Kitchen	

Funders

Age UK	Garfield Weston
Age UK and ABI Dementia MCST Programme	Jubilee Tower Credit Union
Age UK and Shell Warm Homes Programme	Innovate UK
Age UK and Sport England Tackling Inequalities Fund	DWP Kickstart Scheme
Age UK and Yorkshire Building Society Building Better Lives	Lancashire and South Cumbria ICS
Age UK Cost of Living Response Fund	Lancashire Mind
Age UK Winter Health campaign	National Lottery Community Fund RC North West Region
Brian Mercer Charitable Trust	Sport England
Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council	Skelton Charity
Care Network - Covid Community Champions	The Eric Wright Charitable Trust
Dept of Transport	The Henry Smith Charity
Darwen Town Council	

Individuals

Dr & Mrs Ahmed	F Culshaw	A Hartley	D Martin	R Smith
D Ainsworth	J Davies	I Haworth	A McMullin	F Szandurski
M Armstrong	D De La Rue	P Healless	J Molloy	H Talbot
J Atkinson	A & S Dawson	A Hedley	R Moorby	V Taylor
A Badruddin	A Dears	P Holgate	S Morris	E Thomas
L Baldwin	L Delves	J Hope	A Norse	J Thompson
T Ball	S Dennett	L Houghton	P Pack	P Thompson
J Barnes	S Dowson	Rt Rev'd P	L & MD Park	R Toplis
J Barnes	A Duckworth	Howell Jones	A Parker	J Towers
R Baker	V Edge	D Hunt	B Parker	I Townsend
J Baron	D Edwards	G Hutchinson	A Patel	B Turner
R Battersby	R & MJ Edwards	D Irving	K Patel	M Turner
E Bean	S Elliott	B Isherwood	J Pearson	J Walsh
M Beames	R Entwistle	L Jackson	J Pemberton	T Walsh
C Berry	B Etherington	S Jackson	J Pickin	T Walton
L & B Bibley	M Farnhill	J & J Kemp	J Pilling	G Waring
J Birtwell	JA Fay	V Kaminski	J Pimrick	J Waring
A & D Blair	A Fenton	G Lambert	A Ramsbottom	F Watson
B Brown	JW Fielding	K Lang	T Rigby	V Weatherburn
H Buckworth	J Floyd	J Langlands	M Riley	H Wellerd
K Butler	A Fulton -	A Leach	G Roberts	R Whitter
T Burrow	Russell	P Leather	R Roberts	E Wignall
K Cameron	J Gassert	K Leaver	S Roberts	P Wignall
T Clark	J Gordon	L Leek	S Rothwell	P Wilding
J Clarke	S Gregson	NH Linaker	M Rushton	R Wilson
G Colling	SH Gregson	A Livesey	K Ryan	S Wilson
W Cooper	H Hacking	L & R Loft	M Sameja	A & S Winter
M Cotton	W Hailstone	S Lucas	E Sharples	M Wood
D Cowburn	G Hammond	C Lysons	D Short	A Woolin
R Cox	G Hare	S Maddock	P Slater	WI Woolley
B Cregg	M Hargreaves	F Marriott MBE	N Smith	B Young

Donations in Memory

John Dennett
Eileen Fosberry
Ellen Harrison
Theresa Round
Sonya Smith
Jack & Dorothy Taylor
Margaret Wolstenholme

About Us

Age UK Blackburn with Darwen is an independent registered charity (number 1143809) and a charitable company that exists to support local older people. As an incorporated body Age UK Blackburn with Darwen is governed by Articles of Association. Within these the object of the organisation is to promote the wellbeing of older people in any

manner which now or hereafter may be deemed charitable by law, in and around the Borough of Blackburn with Darwen. Our services and activities are available to older people in Blackburn with Darwen and our charitable services are provided either free of charge or charged by us at a reasonable cost, based on the cost of delivery.

The charity owns a subsidiary company Age UK Blackburn with Darwen Trading Ltd (registered company number 2965744) which was dormant during the year. The charity also owns a 50% shareholding of Age UK Greater Lancashire CIC (registered company number 10086085).

This Annual Review and Impact Report should be read in conjunction with the full Trustees Report and Financial Statements to provide a complete picture of the organisation's financial activity and governance.

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the overall governance, management and control of the organisation, working with the Chief Executive and senior staff management team on strategic and organisational development. Decisions about day-to-day operation are taken by the Chief

Executive and senior management team; and decisions on matters with significant implications are brought to the board of trustees. The trustees have overall responsibility for ensuring that the charity has appropriate systems of internal controls in place across the organisation and for risk

management. The trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on Public Benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities, which is an annual process.

Officers and Trustees of Age UK Blackburn with Darwen 2022/23

Chairman
Anthony Hedley

Vice Chairman
John Thomas

Honorary Financial Advisor
Vacant

Trustees
Fran Breckell

Pamela Holgate (resigned 13/02/2023)
Judith Isherwood (resigned 28/11/2022)
Faith Marriott MBE
Faizal Patel
Christopher Porter

Local authority representative
Cllr Mustafa Desai

Chief Executive
Vicky Shepherd

Registered Office
4 King Street, Blackburn, BB2 2DH

Auditors
Rotherham Taylor, 21 Navigational Business Village, Navigation Way, Ashton upon Ribble, Preston, PR2 2YP

For more information contact us at:

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Age UK Blackburn with Darwen Trading Ltd is registered in England and Wales No. 2965744
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