



# **Annual Report 2023**

*Living Longer... Living Well in Bolton*





# Foreword



This has been another really busy year for our charity as we continued to develop new services and worked hard to sustain and reinvigorate existing ones. We were conscious of the residual impact of COVID on both our clients and volunteers. Many were unfortunately badly affected in terms of their mental and physical health as a result of enforced isolation and de-conditioning, so we sought to ensure that we could support them appropriately.

Others emerged with a strengthened zest for life and a real desire to get out there and make the most of life, looking for new opportunities to socialise and connect with friends old and new. Something many older people told us they now prize more than ever. We focused, therefore, on developing more varied social events to appeal to a wider range of people and are pleased to see more older men engage as a result.

Just as things seemed to be settling from the pandemic, the Cost of Living Crisis began to bite, becoming a major concern for many local older people, as highlighted in the Age UK report, “It Doesn’t Add Up”. As the crisis deepened, our Information and Advice service saw demand sky rocket. Consequently, we worked hard with partners, including Bolton Council, Citizens Advice Bureau and other local Age UKs, to secure funding to employ two additional advisors. I’m delighted to report that we entered the new financial year with significantly enhanced capacity to help older people manage their energy costs and boost their income.

Our Falls Prevention Strength and Balance classes also experienced an increase in demand, with more weekly classes in new venues across the borough and also in local care homes. The flagship Home from Hospital service further expanded its support to help more people remain safely at home and ease the strain on Bolton’s health and social care system.

Thanks to the dedication and hard work of our staff and volunteers and the support of local partners, we have been able to reach and support more people than ever; to help when they need us most and to offer more opportunities to enjoy a fulfilled life. I am really proud to present our work in this year’s annual report.

*Suzanne Hilton*  
**Chief Executive**

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**Social Butterflies**

*Did you know Age UK Bolton's social media presence is growing?*

**f 850** **297** **272** **in 105** **28**

(follower figures for financial year end 2022-23)



# Volunteering



All our services are delivered by or with volunteers. These warm-hearted and generous Boltonians form the backbone of our charity and without them we could not deliver a fraction of what we do for and with older people locally, generously giving their time, skills, talents and friendship.

Some people volunteer in more than one capacity, from befrienders to activity instructors and Home from Hospital volunteers to lunch club organisers, plus many more.

Our dedicated volunteers invest so much time in their roles that their efforts would have required an equivalent of 25

full-time members of staff, at a minimum cost of approximately £458,000 based on the UK Living Wage. In reality, what volunteers bring is priceless and cannot simply be replaced by paid staff.

Age UK Bolton also benefited from some corporate volunteering this year, welcoming a team of employees from AO (Appliances Online), a locally-based national electronics retailer who, alongside members of the Bolton GP Federation, worked on the Rawlinson Road Community Garden.



**235**  
active volunteers in

**266**  
roles

giving  
**42,000**  
volunteering hours

with an  
approximate value of  
**£458k\***  
in volunteering hours.

*“Volunteering for Age UK Bolton raised my confidence to apply for a job. They trusted in my ability and relied on me.”*

\*Calculated at hours times UK Living Wage



## Case Study 1

In June 2022 a 21-year-old man started volunteering with Age UK Bolton to gain real-life experience alongside his studies at University, where he was studying for a degree in Health and Social Care.

He began his volunteering as a snack bar assistant and receptionist, quickly becoming a valued support to the rest of the Ageing Well team, getting involved in physical jobs and admin. He enjoyed volunteering so much he chose to do his university work placement with our Home from Hospital team.

His experience helped him to secure a job as an Extra Care Support Worker at a sheltered accommodation with a local community care provider.



## Case Study 2

A recently widowed lady was struggling to fill her time and find a new purpose in her life; after being her husband's sole carer, she was feeling lost.

On the advice of a friend, she enquired about volunteering with Age UK Bolton. Despite not being sure about the specific role she would enjoy, she started to help out at our Ageing Well Centre in Farnworth. This included helping to set up and staff the reception desk, as well as making hot drinks. As a new volunteer, the lady found she was enjoying the volunteering so much that she decided to add to her role at the Centre by assisting with social activities and events, as well as admin tasks. Following this, she also took on the role of a befriender and now befriends several clients.

Since becoming an Age UK Bolton Volunteer, she has found that her involvement has helped her immensely saying, "It gives me purpose and I feel like I have come out of a dark tunnel and found myself again". She thoroughly enjoys each of her roles, finding that they give her a chance to socialise and derive a sense of satisfaction from helping others in her local area.





# Information & Advice

The Information & Advice service worked with clients to assist in applying for entitlements for older people, including Attendance Allowance, Carer's Allowance, Pension Credit and associated benefits. Enabling them to meet their additional support needs and remain safe and independent at home for longer with an improved quality of life.

The lion's share of this recurrent annual income will be spent in the Bolton economy, providing goods and services to enable people to improve their health, security, and independence.

We are pleased to have been able to increase our capacity to help older people through the current twin energy and cost of living crises by employing more staff within the Information & Advice service. This is with thanks to local partners such as Bolton Council, and a successful partnership bid with our local Citizens Advice Bureau and Age UK Bury to the Energy Saving Trust's Energy Redress Fund.

We were also delighted to recruit two additional volunteer advisors to increase support with completing claims and to offer more home visits and community outreach sessions. We continue to work closely with other local organisations to identify and plug gaps in advice provision and to deliver the best outcomes on individual cases.

The Will-making service and our legal advice clinic, delivered in partnership with Bolton Law Society, once again enhanced the support available.



## Money Matters

Our Money Matters service, delivered in partnership with Age UK Blackburn with Darwen, and kindly sponsored by Brown Shipley, offered specialist advice appointments to enable older people to make informed decisions about their pensions and manage their finances in retirement.



**676**

New I&A clients

**2294**

Contact sessions

**£771,205**

Secured in financial gains for clients

**33**

"Money Matters" advice sessions held

**117**

Will appointments



# Case Study

Three months before this lady was due to retire she approached us with concerns regarding the automatic end of her benefits and the start of her retirement at 66 years old.

She was worried about navigating the complex benefits system. We were able to work through a pension forecast for her enabling her to make a retirement plan.

Once at retirement age, we helped her apply for State Pension, Pension Credit, Carers Allowance and Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support. We were able to iron out potential problems to prevent delays in the initial application process. Unfortunately, despite this, her initial Pension Credit award was incorrectly calculated.

With our assistance, the lady submitted a successful challenge to the ruling which resulted in claims for the client and her partner, totalling £15,727.40 per annum on top of her State Pension.

***“I am flabbergasted by the benefit we have been able to get. I thought I would have to work for another 3-4 years!”***

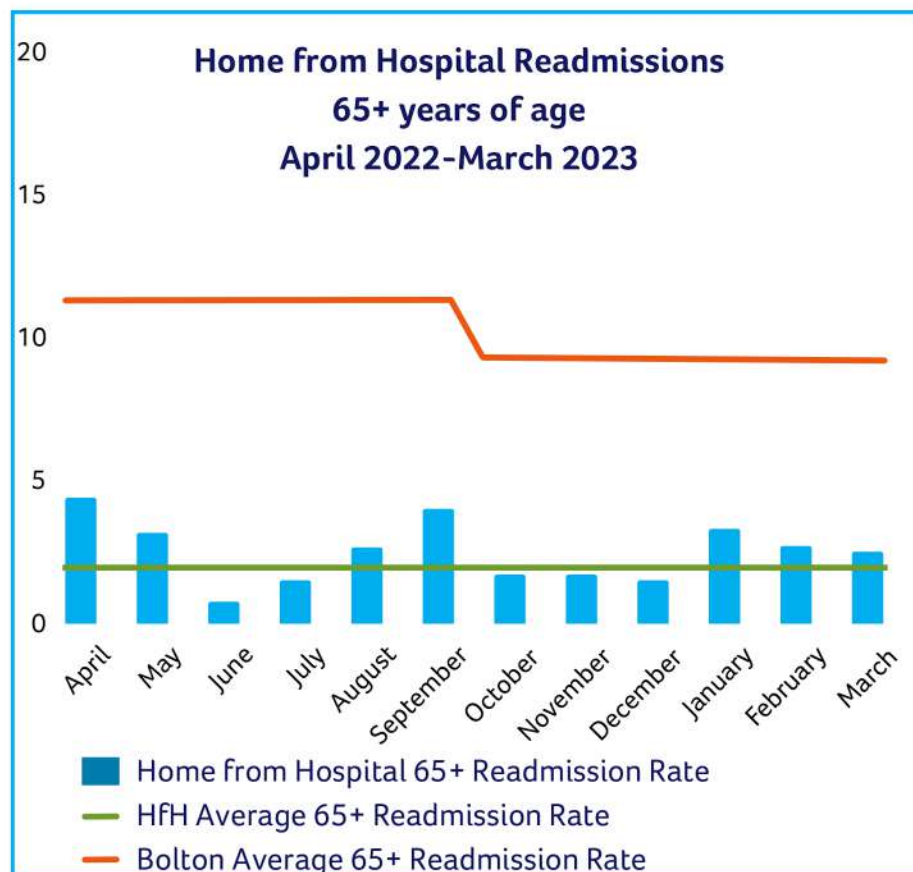




# Home from Hospital

The flagship Home from Hospital Service continued to support people 65 plus, who live alone or are the main carer of another. The service provides practical and emotional support (not including personal care) for up to six weeks post-discharge, enabling people to recover safely at home and become well and as independent as possible.

Thanks to additional support from local NHS commissioners, the Home from Hospital team was also able to provide Admission Avoidance support for people over 50 who live alone or care for another and had been identified as being at risk of admission to hospital. The team worked alongside health and social care professionals in the community as part of Bolton's "Home First" approach.



This is particularly pleasing when one considers that we supported the most vulnerable clients, many of whom have particularly complex needs.

Importantly, feedback continues to evidence how much the support means to clients at a point when they feel most vulnerable, and how much the service is valued by health and social care professionals.

*"You are the only people that have helped me and I can't thank you enough. I also want to say how much I appreciate what my coordinator did and she definitely went that extra mile and made a very poorly man happy"*

**1610**

Accessing Discharge & Aftercare

**7869**

Discharge & Aftercare support contacts

**1906**

Accessing Admissions Avoidance

**5998**

Admissions Avoidance support contacts

**2.21%**

Readmission rate



## Case Study

A 79-year-old gentleman, who lived alone, was referred to the service after being admitted to the hospital for pacemaker surgery. The team visited the client on the ward and followed up with a home assessment for discharge that day. The property had been boarded up as a result of neighbours' concerns, alerting the police to carry out a welfare check. We advised that further arrangements would need to be made to access the property before the patient could be discharged.

Once home the client was supported with hospital appointments and ordering medication. He was also struggling with his hearing aids, which were broken, and he was unable to get out to have them serviced. Our coordinator found the home neglected and in need of a deep clean and ongoing cleaning support. The property had no central heating and a condemned gas fire. The client was using an unstable small heater, had a toilet leak and a cooker and fridge not fit for purpose.

To support the client, Home from Hospital assisted this gentleman to have his hearing aids fixed, arranged medication, blister packs and automatic repeat prescriptions. A local cleaner was arranged to help with a deep clean and regular cleaning visits. The client was referred to Bolton Care and Repair to apply for a heating grant and supported with the purchase of a suitable heater. The gentleman was also supported to access patient transport and was referred to the Age UK Bolton Information & Advice service for financial support to access new white goods.

The client is now able to independently administer his own medication with the blister packs without missing any doses. He can access community appointments and book patient transport independently now that he has working hearing aids. The client has a new cooker and fridge and a cleaner in place, who also provides warm meals a few times a week.





# Home Services

The Charity's paid-for Home Services cleaning and shopping service, operated by Age UK Bolton Enterprises Ltd, continued its successful growth in its fourth year of trading. Delivered by regular, friendly staff, supporting more older people than ever with daily living tasks to promote their safety and independence, enabling clients to remain in their own homes for longer.

Time and again, the service was described by clients, families and health and social care professionals as “so much more than a cleaning and shopping service”, delivering the highest standard of service.

Our people are our greatest asset and we are proud to be accredited by the Living Wage Foundation as a UK Living Wage employer.



*“The Service is excellent, it feels like Sam is part of the family and is lovely with my mum. It has helped enormously, it gives my brother a break when our helper is there. It’s a fresh face for Mum and someone to talk to. The family are more positive for Mum since having the service”*

*“I couldn’t manage without the service. It helps me to stay at home which I wouldn’t otherwise be able to do, I struggle with many jobs around my home and nothing is ever too much trouble for my helper”*



**182**

New client agreements

**7091**

Support hours of support delivered

**100%**

Client satisfaction



# Ageing Well



We are delighted to report a year of growth and increasing demand across all services, activities and events.

It has been a joy to see how much older people have enjoyed our broadening range of Ageing Well activities, appealing to more people with a much greater interest in social events post-pandemic. Encouragingly, physical activity, the monthly Friendship Café and Lads@Lunch group sessions remain popular. We also hosted two Wellbeing events. The “Jubilee Coming of Age Party” at the Ageing Well Centre, when we celebrated the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee alongside the 21st Anniversary of the Centre, was a highlight and afforded us the opportunity to appropriately thank our volunteers for all their hard work.

We hosted 22 Warm Space sessions attended by 208 people at the Centre. These sessions were vital to older people in the community during the energy crisis over the winter months. Having somewhere to go to stay warm, have a hot drink and socialise was welcomed by many in the area. These sessions were also attended by members of Age UK Bolton staff, enabling people to find out more about, and access, other services within the Charity.

*“Where else can I go?  
There is nothing else for  
me, this space has helped  
me in one of my darkest  
times. Thank you”*



**40**

Social events

**741**

Social attendees

**28**

Creative & Leisure  
events

**6503**

Creative & Leisure  
attendances

**27**

Physical Exercise  
classes

**10,016**

Physical Exercise  
attendances



# Ageing Well

Befriending remained one of our most vital services, offering support in the form of a regular visit from a volunteer to help ease the burden of loneliness and isolation, bringing the sunshine of socialising back into the lives of older people.

A super success this year was our Befriending Afternoon Tea, where numbers doubled over the year. The Afternoon Teas had 444 attendances at 12 events, serving over 1776 delicious volunteer-prepared sandwiches and 888 tasty cakes and treats! Musical entertainment was provided mostly by local choirs, singers and instrumental groups, with clients' favourites regularly returning to support us.

*This year I went face to face with my befriender and you know, it has been just the best thing. We have really settled and gelled into a proper friendship. We have so much in common and whereas before it was more like someone just helping me, now I realise what a difference befriending has made to me. It has really become a proper friendship.*



## Befriending Networks



### 45

Face-to-face matches

### 34

Telephone matches

### 1500

Hours of telephone befriending

### 1980

Befriending visits

### 3950

Hours of face-to-face befriending



# Promoting Active Lives

The PALs project helps isolated older people to re-engage with their local community, become more independent and active, reconnect with previous social networks and join new ones to enrich their lives.

Thanks to additional funding from the Bolton Fund and Bolton Council's Public Health department, it was possible to extend the highly popular and valued PALs service (Promoting Active Lives) to December 2023.

The Friendship Café saw strong growth over this year, starting with 23 attendances, rising to double that figure and ending the year on 46 regular monthly attendances. It has become a popular place to find friendship and for many is the only time they leave the house. The guest speakers at these events were very popular, with guests commenting how much they enjoy the variety and opportunity to learn that they bring.

People were also encouraged and supported to try new activities on offer at the Ageing Well Centre, or elsewhere in their local neighbourhoods. One lady, who had hardly left the house in nearly a year and a half, could get taxis on her own and use Ring and Ride by the end of support. She regularly attended both of the activities escorted and even found two new ones that she attends on her own.

Two independent external reports both confirmed that we have achieved great outcomes for older adults. In particular, significant positive differences in life satisfaction, happiness, anxiety and worthwhile living.



144

People supported

221

Friendship Café  
attendances



*'It has definitely improved my confidence and I am not as lonely. I enjoy coming to the social groups at Age UK Bolton. There is a lot I can't do but there is also a lot you have helped me do – like getting on a bus into Bolton and back and using Ring and Ride. I have just been on holiday with my friend and she has seen the difference in me since being involved in this project.'*



# Falls Prevention: Strength & Balance



The Falls Prevention Strength & Balance service focuses on delivering FaME (Falls Management Exercises) across Bolton in the form of Postural Stability, Otago and Tai-Chi. All of these are evidenced to improve posture, muscular strength, bone density and balance in older adults. The service continued to be in high demand and, as evidenced by a recent external evaluation study, made an effective contribution to Bolton's objectives of older adults experiencing fewer falls and falls related injuries. This helped people reduce their risk of falls and thereby enabling them to live independently for longer.

Specialist and qualified instructors support people with a wide range of long-term health conditions and deconditioning to allow them to keep active for longer while staying safe and improving strength and steadiness.

The service also continued to raise awareness of successful falls prevention in older adults and the wider community and is helping to reduce pressure on local health and care services. The team focus on improving people's mental as well as physical health, as activity produces a lift in mood as well as giving people the opportunity to socialise and make friends. We learned that this aspect is very much valued by participants.

Falls prevention Strength & Balance has continued to work with the Bolton Pulmonary Fibrosis Group providing specialist Cardiac Rehabilitation sessions in association with Bolton Hospice.

*"I suffered a bad fall in the garden which really shook my confidence as I was afraid it would happen again. My confidence has grown since joining the strength and balance class. I am using muscles that I have not used before and challenging my balance in class has changed my outlook. I now feel the future is bright"*



**595**  
Clients

**10,509**  
Collective attendances

**1,032**  
Instructor led sessions

**26**  
Home visits

**4**  
Care homes in falls prevention pilot

**35**  
Residents engaged in falls prevention pilot



# Case Study

Earlier in the year, an 86 year old lady fell in her home incurring a number of injuries, not least bruising to her face but fortunately with no bones broken. Her confidence, however, was impacted significantly, to the point that she was finding even daily living tasks extremely challenging. Her mobility was significantly hindered, she was in chronic pain and could no longer rise from a chair without assistance. All contributing to severe deconditioning and loss of confidence plus increasing isolation as she was unable to attend her usual weekly social events/activities.

Post her original visit to A&E and following referrals for aids and adaptations in the home plus physiotherapy visits her mobility started to improve but she was still struggling to manage some basic living tasks and suffering from low confidence.

Fearful of attending classes in the community, we provided 1-2-1 sessions in the home, to build confidence and establish a rapport between client and instructor. Focusing on improving lower limb strength and working with a focus on falls prevention, there was a significant improvement. After several weeks of guided exercise, the client was able to leave her home to attend strength and balance classes twice a week. As she attended classes, her confidence grew enough to join a weekly social with the women from her class and has established a new group of friends.

Now able to walk unaided, after previously needing the support of a four-wheeled walker, she can climb stairs, so is no longer in need of the use of her stairlift; she can even now stand on her tip toes to access the top shelf in her kitchen, which she hasn't been able to do for many years.

Her mobility continues to improve and, having achieved her goal of walking to and from the shop recently to collect her paper, so does her confidence. She is extremely proud of what she has been able to achieve in a relatively short space of time.





# Social Prescribing

Age UK Bolton was pleased to remain a partner in Bolton's Social Prescribing programme, led by the GP Federation, with a staff member seconded to the wider team, based at a local GP surgery. She contributes valuable knowledge and expertise to the wider team in supporting older adults. The social prescribers are able to spend much-needed time with patients who make a high frequency of calls and appointments arising largely from non-clinical concerns, and thereby free up time for GPs and allied healthcare practitioners. With time to listen, they can better understand issues in order to link people with a range of non-clinical support that improves their quality of life and health outcomes and also reduces pressure on clinical services.

**498**

**Patients referred**

There is a strong upward trend in demand, with social needs being the highest reason for referral, followed by loneliness and isolation, and then mental health.



One specific highlight of the past year has been the development of the Community Garden, which benefitted from an award of funding to improve the outdoor space. It was wonderful to see the pure joy in patients' and local people's faces when they were later able to harvest and take home some of the produce they had helped to grow. This also improved people's mental health as well as their understanding of the importance of fresh produce and through "grow your own" skills, to introduce it more affordably into their diet.

# Nutrition & Hydration

The Nutrition & Hydration Programme has continued to enhance awareness of the prevalence and risk of malnutrition (1 in 10) and dehydration (1 in 5) in people 65+ living in the community. The programme works through partners to reach them and provide information and guidance. The results achieved demonstrate the effectiveness of targeting resources to the more vulnerable older people through a range of pathways including housing support, post-hospital discharge aftercare, community dietetics and carer support.

Further funding was secured from Bolton Council to develop the Hearty Meals Bags project to help people being discharged from hospital and assessed as being at significant risk or currently malnourished. The project, which will launch in May 2023, is a partnership with Urban Outreach, providing branded hessian bags containing 2 days' worth of carefully chosen food together with guidance and recipe literature to support weight gain, good nourishment and improved health outcomes for those at risk across the Bolton borough.

**17,966**

People reached

**5,970**

Benefitting from a conversation on appetite

**4,385**

People at risk receiving advice & support

**127**

Members of staff trained





# Finance

## Where our income came from



**Total: £981,432**

## How our income was spent



**Total: £1,059,628**





# Thank You

***As a small, independent, local charity, Age UK Bolton is self-financing and depends on others to deliver all its charitable services and activities that enable older people to enjoy full and rewarding lives while remaining safe, independent and as mentally, physically and socially active as possible.***

We acknowledge, with gratitude, the kind and generous monetary and other gifts received from individuals, groups and organisations, and those given in memory of a late friend or family member, including the late Eileen Simpson and the late John Hoban.

Donations received from those who have used our Information & Advice service, Home from Hospital and Wheelchair Hire service are also received with gratitude. We are much indebted to the individuals and organisations who have supported us this year, including Bolton Rotary Club, Open Door, Just Giving, Brown Shipley Private Bankers, who enable our Money Matters service, and Home Instead Senior Care.

## ***The Board of Trustees***

The following served on the Age UK Bolton Board of Trustees during the period under review:

David Smart (Chairman); John Cooper (Vice Chairman); Margaret Rothwell; Emma Wood; Dr Arun Kallat; Cllr Andy Morgan; Cllr Susan Baines

All of our services are delivered by, or with, volunteers, so a special debt of gratitude is owed to our wonderful band of dedicated people who regularly donate their time, energy, skills and talents to enhance the quality of life of others, without whom none of the achievements set out in this report would have been possible.

Thanks is also due to AO (Appliances Online) for the efforts of their corporate volunteers.

The Trustees also wish to thank the staff team for their excellent service in supporting and coordinating the work of our volunteers.









# How you can support Age UK Bolton

*There are lots of things you can do to get involved. Whether you want to give your time by volunteering or donate, your help is very much appreciated.*

## **Make a Donation**

*We rely on your support to keep helping older people in Bolton. Any donation, no matter how much, is greatly appreciated.*

## **Get your organisation involved**

*A partnership with us could be beneficial for your business by helping you meet your Corporate Social Responsibility objectives. It's a great way to motivate employees, gain an insight into the over 50s market and help Age UK Bolton deliver support to vulnerable people in the community. Display a collection tin, donate a prize or service, donate equipment or even send some employees to volunteer with us on some of our projects supporting older people in the Bolton area.*

## **Volunteer with us**

*Our amazing volunteers help us to do so much in Bolton. Whether you have an hour or a day to spare, we have lots of opportunities for volunteers. Without our volunteers, Age UK Bolton couldn't offer the range of services we have available to the older people in Bolton.*

## **Leave a legacy in your Will** (Age UK Bolton RCN: 223240)

*Ensure your support continues for years to come. You can do so as a specific sum or a share of your estate. Anyone with an estate worth more than the inheritance tax threshold of £325,000 can reduce this tax from 40% to 36% if 10% or more of the estate is given to charity. Your solicitor will be able to advise you of the best way, or if you have not made a Will yet our confidential Will-making service may be of assistance.*



### **The Square**

53-55 Victoria Square, Bolton BL1 1RZ

*Email:* [enquiries@ageukbolton.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ageukbolton.org.uk)

*Telephone:* 01204 382411

### **Ageing Well Centre**

Cross Street, Farnworth, BL4 7AG

*Email:* [ageingwell@ageukbolton.org.uk](mailto:ageingwell@ageukbolton.org.uk)

*Telephone:* 01204 701525

### **Online**

