

Our 2023-24 Impact Report



Love Later Life in Bristol

A few words from our Chief Executive, Kay Libby



2023-24 in review

It has been a year of change for Age UK Bristol. While some services finished, we also saw growth in other services. We started a new Going Home from Hospital service working in Southmead Hospital and Bristol Royal Infirmary. This is a partnership project where we are working with Southern Brookes and Alliance Homes in the hospitals and several community organisations for work with individuals in the community. We worked hard to build this new service that can cover the Bristol, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset area with our partners. We support the NHS Discharge to Assess service, supporting older people to return home more smoothly and help to prevent readmission to hospital. We have really enjoyed being based in the hospitals and reaching a different cohort of older people who may not have known what we do.

Our other services went from strength to strength. Our Friends Ageing Better (FAB) community grew to over 2,000 members. Tai Chi continues to be popular with additional sessions being added to our current venues. The Information & Advice team supported 2,058 individuals and raised another £2.1M in additional benefits this year. This is money that older people can use in whatever way they want to. This could be for taxis to activities, gardening help or a cleaner.

Age UK Bristol is working in close partnership with other local organisations in the Bristol Ageing Better Alliance and the wider Support Hub for Older People. We are proud to be a part of this uniquely Bristol network making a difference for local older people.

I am proud of the incredible work of our staff, Board of Trustees and volunteers. We are working together to make Bristol an Age Friendly city, where older people are valued for their contributions.

Thank you for your continued support.
Best wishes,
Kay Libby

**If you'd like to send a one-off donation to us you can use our text to donate service.
Simply text BRISTOL to 70560 to donate £3.
Texts will cost the donation amount plus one standard network rate message.**

2023/24 Age UK Bristol



1,809 members of Friends Ageing Better



£2.1 million in additional benefits raised by the Information & Advice team for older people in Bristol!



1,429 helpline calls answered



2,058 people supported by the Information & Advice team

‘My mum loves New Beginnings – she calls it her club. She loves every minute of it – her words are “I could never get bored; there is something to do all the time. You don’t feel the time going by and ALL the staff always go above and beyond in the level of support and care.’

Carer, New Beginnings

“You saved me”
Sue, advice client

Information & Advice

Our Information & Advice (I&A) team offers person-centred benefits advice for older people in Bristol. We help people to navigate the benefits system, social care, and housing.

Despite an incredibly challenging year, with huge numbers of clients dealing with complicated, interlocking problems that affect every aspect of their life, the I&A service has managed to improve the lives of thousands of clients. Giving people good initial advice can help them access the benefits and services they are entitled to, and for those who need more support we have helped many to manage long and complex social care and benefit processes, in some cases helping to manage benefit appeals that take 18 months to be resolved. Without our advisers and volunteers helping clients with these technical processes, they would never be able to secure their legal entitlements.

This year, we supported **2,058 individuals** with advice and information. We help people to maximise their income and claim the benefits and entitlements that they are entitled to. This is life changing for some people.

Some advice questions can be easy to answer, while other may take several phone calls and appointments to settle all of the outstanding issues. Our service made nearly 6,000 individual contacts with the 2,000 people that we supported. **Through our work, we raised £2.1M in additional benefits for older people in Bristol this year.**

We are a very small team, with one full-time manager and four part-time paid advisers. We are very lucky to currently have a team of ten volunteers supporting our advice service, helping with disability benefit applications, benefit checks, and all kinds of one-off advice.



“Thank you so much for your quick reply and all the really helpful information included.

You have put my mind at rest on a number of points and I, and my daughters, are very grateful to you for your expertise and kind words.

People like you make the world a better place.

Best wishes to you and the good work you are doing.”

Mary, Information & Advice client

Going Home from Hospital

The Going Home from Hospital (GHfH) service started working in partnership with local hospitals in Bristol to support people to return home after a stay in hospital. Our Link Workers know the voluntary and community sector well and can ensure that individuals get the support they need for a smooth and timely return home.

During its first year, the GHfH service worked to learn, adapt, and expand the support we could offer to deliver a holistic, person-centred approach. We have supported a huge number of people with financial concerns, housing issues, social isolation, carer support and more. This has allowed people to leave hospital with the non-clinical support they needed, preventing readmissions and connecting them into their local communities. We had 291 referrals and supported 261 individuals.

We have also established great working relationships with our community partners; Southmead Development Trust, Wellspring Settlement, and Knowle West Health Park, as well as many other VCSE organisations who we work closely with.

“You have been absolutely brilliant, I now have so much support in place due to you.”
Mike, Going Home client



New Beginnings Day Service

The New Beginnings Day Service and Memory Connections dementia groups help to keep people with progressive health conditions living at home for longer.

New Beginnings Day Service is open four days a week. The service enable people to live at home, safely and well, for longer, offering carer respite and enjoyment for our members. It is thought of with great affection by our members and their families.

“I wish I knew about this place earlier, all those years I have been on my own – I love it here”.
Pat, New Beginnings member

LinkAge and Friends Ageing Better

Our LinkAge services offer social activities for people aged 50 and over to improve wellbeing. Our Friends Ageing Better (FAB) community went from strength to strength this year. We had a membership of **1,809 individuals** at the end of March 2024. Around 670 members were regular attendees to our FAB cafes, telephone groups and discos. In addition, we supported 1,600 members by sending out regular email and postal bulletins with information on FAB and other events happening in their communities.

These contacts helped reduce isolation for the over 50's in Bristol. Our FAB cafes give people a reason to leave their homes, make social contacts, keep mobile and maintain a level of fitness. We could only do this with the help of our 17 FAB volunteers.

Our Tai Chi sessions have grown in popularity, so much so that we have increased the number of sessions in our community venues. Tai Chi improves strength and balance, and mood. As one volunteer said, "Tai Chi is a bottomless pit of joy!" These classes join the list of other community Tai Chi sessions run by our previously trained instructors.



Memory Connections

Our Memory Connections dementia groups have remained popular with two sessions a week taking place in north Bristol. We have a small team of one Coordinator and five volunteers who supported 15 people this year. The Memory Connection dementia group gives clients a purpose and structure to their week offering a social and fun two hours every week as well as stimulation to maintain cognitive function. It not only gives them something to look forward to but also offers respite and support to their carers and loved ones.

We have people who have been members of the group since day one in 2022. Friendships have been formed and we have a great time together.

Wider Work

Age UK Bristol works to make Bristol a great city to grow older in. We work collaboratively with other voluntary organisations, businesses, health services and the city council with the aim of **making Bristol an age-friendly city**.

The **Support Hub for Older People and the Bristol Ageing Better Alliance** continued to work together to share information and better support older people in Bristol. We held the **Celebrating Age Festival** in October. A highlight was a concert in City Hall with the Windrush Choir, Bristol Drugs Project (BDP) Raising Voices Choir and Dhek Bhal Older Women's Choir.

Research is in the heart of Age UK Bristol. We are a partner in the **ConnectED research project** with the University of Bristol and three local authorities. This is a three-year project to connect research evidence with decision making in Adult Social Care. We are increasing our research knowledge and capacity and using this learning for our services.

Age UK Bristol co-delivered the **Bristol Research Forum on Ageing** with the University of Bristol and University of the West of England (UWE). The Forum works to ensure that research informs practice and service development. We held 3 Forums over the year and with around 50 participants at each one.



Active Ageing ran another successful **Bristol Walk Fest in 2023** with 612 events and 3000+ people participating. We supported delivery of lots of other projects including Year 2 of the Building Boats: Building Lives project. Active Ageing continues to work at a strategic level supporting older people to move more. In 2023-24, we delivered **Active Lives Health Intervention Team (HIT) projects including; Active Hospitals, REACT – Pre Falls Prevention, and Dance for Dementia**. These were funded by Ageing Well ProActive Care.

Our Supporters over the last year

We would like to thank all of the people and organisations who have supported Age UK Bristol this year. We could not support older people without the time and financial support given to us by others.

We couldn't do our work without the AMAZING support of our volunteers. We had **99 volunteers** this year. They support every aspect of our work, from FAB membership admin to answering helpline calls, to giving advice on benefits. They are an integral part of our team and make a real difference to older people in Bristol.

We would also like to thank you for the financial donations large and small from countless individuals and businesses including...

- Age UK
- The Anchor Society
- BNSSG ICB – Ageing Well Programme
- Bristol City Council
- Bristol Health Partners
- Bristol Lions Club and Rotary
- British Society of Gerontology
- Christadelphian Samaritan Fund
- Dementia Wellbeing Service
- Dolphin Society
- John James Bristol Foundation
- Merchant Venturers
- National Lottery Community Fund
- Pensions Management Institute
- Quartet Community Foundation
- SD Solutions
- Sirona Foundation
- Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust
- Sky Community Fund
- South Bristol Locality Partnership
- St Monica Trust
- The Health Foundation
- University of Bristol
- **Individuals like you!**

Financial accounts can be found on our website and the Charity Commission.



**Thank you for all of
your support**

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