

**I&A Service Statement of Service**

The statement below will be included on Age UK Enfield website Information &Advice page. A notice showing the statement is pinned to the wall in all reception areas clearly stating that it is available as a printed or electronic document on request from an existing or potential client. A copy of this statement will also be issued to all clients receiving on-going casework support. All other Age UK Enfield Information &Advice promotional material make reference to the statement being available on request.

The statement is reviewed at least every six months and updated if there are any changes to the nature of the service (e.g. a change to opening hours). Once updated the new version will replace the previous document:

* On the Age UK Enfield website
* In the Age UK Enfield Reception area and waiting room

**Information about Age UK Enfield Information & Advice Service for its customers**

**What services do we offer?**

Age UK Enfield provides information and advice on a range of issues relating to older people and those who care for and support them. In particular we specialise in:

* welfare benefits advice for those over retirement age, including working out benefit entitlements and offering assistance to complete claim forms
* helping people identify the care and support they need, including help accessing Social Services and advice on how to pay for care and support
* advising on housing issues, including help with maintaining a property and advice on the different types of housing for older people who need more support or want to move nearer to family or friends
* advising on the services, support, groups, activities and concessions available locally
* advising those who are finding it hard to make ends meet or are struggling to pay their bills
* Helping people to make complaints or challenge decisions about social services, health services and energy providers.

**How do we provide help?**

* **Information guides and factsheets.** These cover a wide range of subjects affecting older people and those who care for and support them
* **Telephone advice.** Call us on 020 8375 4120 from Monday to Wednesday between 9.30am and 2.30pm. This call will be charged at a local rate. If you ring outside of opening hours, or if our adviser is busy, please leave a message with Customer Services or on our answerphone and an adviser will call you back.
* **Office appointments** to arrange an appointment at our office you can call our Customer Services Monday to Friday 9.30am to 12.30pm or 1.30pm to 4.30pm on 020 8375 4120. Arranging an appointment in advance lets us prepare for your visit and gives us an opportunity to tell you if there are any important documents we need you to bring along. This means we make the best use of our staff and volunteers’ time and can hopefully avoid people having to wait in the office for an appointment

**What will happen if we can’t provide the service you require?**

Sometimes people come to us with problems that we do not have the expertise or knowledge to help with. We are unable to provide consumer debt advice, financial advice or immigration advice.

In these cases we can provide you with basic information and direct you to another organisation for further help. Where possible we will give you a selection of organisations to choose from and we will either signpost or refer you to them.

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

Sometimes when advising you we will reach a point where we don’t have the expertise to pursue your case any further. This most commonly happens when there is a need to challenge a welfare benefit decision. We will refer you to another local advice service that can help you if this happens.

**How our service treats its clients**

We follow five key principles when delivering our service.

**The service is provided free of charge.**

You won’t be charged for any of our information and advice. If we signpost or refer you onto another organisation we will tell you if there is any charge for their service. While we provide help free of charge, running the Information and Advice Service is expensive and only some of the money to do this comes from external funding. Any donation you can make will be greatly appreciated. If you wish to donate please ask one of our staff or volunteers about Gift Aid.

**The information and advice we provide is independent of any outside influence.**

We will never recommend a service or provider to you, including Age UK’s own services. Where possible we will always provide you with a choice of alternatives and help you make an informed decision. We’re not bound by local or national government policies and will always advise you on what’s best for you rather than what’s best for the council, the Department for Work and Pensions, Age UK or any other organisation. We will never advise someone to do anything illegal or fraudulent. We will immediately stop advising anyone carrying out illegal or fraudulent actions and may notify the appropriate authorities.

**All information is confidential.**

Any information we keep about you is stored securely and only viewed by staff and volunteers involved in advising you or other people that you have allowed us to share this information with. These may be external auditors that check the quality and accuracy of our work, organisations we are referring your case on to and agencies we are dealing with on your behalf (such as the DWP or an energy supplier).We won’t share your information or discuss your case with anyone outside of our service without your consent unless they have been given responsibility to act on your behalf by the Court of Protection or Department for Work and Pensions. You have the right to withdraw consent. If you do not wish to continue receiving information from us or carefully selected third parties please email us or telephone us using the contact details on our web site.

We may share information about someone without their consent if:

* they insist on taking an illegal or fraudulent course of action
* we are contacted by a statutory body about a client who is being investigated for suspected illegal or fraudulent activity
* We are concerned that someone involved in a case is at risk of abuse or harm or there is a possibility of abuse or harm to others. In this case we may notify a relevant statutory body, for example social services or the police. These disclosures will be done following Adult Safeguarding’ procedures that our staff and volunteers have been trained in.

Any data we hold about you is processed in accordance with data protection legislation and Age UK Enfield’s’ Data Protection policy. A copy of our data protection policy is available at [**https://www.ageuk.org.uk/enfield/privacy-policy/**](https://www.ageuk.org.uk/enfield/privacy-policy/)

or by calling 020 8375 4120You have a right to view any data we hold on you and can request a copy of the information Age UK Enfield holds about you (we may charge £10 for information requests) to cover our costs in providing you with details of the information we hold about you.

**Clients are treated with fairness, dignity and respect and we expect clients to treat our staff and volunteers in the same way.**

We won’t judge anyone based on their age, disability, gender, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation.  We won’t judge anyone based upon the circumstances they find themselves in and we won’t try to influence the decisions you make following our advice.  Sometimes clients will make a decision that we don’t think is in their best interest. We will tell them if this happens and aim to provide enough information and advice to help them make an informed choice. We will respect whatever decision they then make.  The Information & Advice Service operates in compliance with Age UK Enfield’s’ Equalities and Diversity Policy. A copy of the policy is available at www.ageuk.org.uk/enfield or by request from Customer Services on 020 8375 4120

**Our service is as accessible as possible for older people**.

Our offices are suitable for people with disabilities which include step free access,

ground floor interview facilities and toilets including grab rails.

We can also offer information and advice in community languages, Amharic, Creole, French, German, Greek, Italian, Turkish and Twi, subject to availability.

Where clients have difficulties accessing or understanding our information and advice, for example because of a disability or language issue, we will take all reasonable steps to provide our service in a manner that is accessible and appropriate to their needs or circumstances and we will always aim to give you as much time as you need when we see you.  The Information & Advice Service operates in compliance with Age UK Enfield’s’ Equalities and Diversity Policy. A copy of the policy is available at www.ageuk.org.uk/enfield or by request from Customer Services on 020 8375 4120

**How to make a complaint, compliment or suggestion about our service**

If you would like to compliment or make a suggestion about our Information & Advice service please contact the service manager, Denise Perkins either in writing at John Jackson Library Agricola Place Enfield EN1 1DWor at **info@ageukenfield.org.uk**or by telephone on 020 8375 4120

If you wish to make a complaint, please follow Age UK Enfield’s’ complaints procedure. The following information will tell you how to raise issues, the response you can expect from us and what to do if you are still not satisfied. There is a three stage procedure:

● Informal Approach

● Formal Approach

● Review Panel

In the first instance please contact the person who is providing the service, so they can try and put things right for you. Alternatively ask for details of their manager to contact. We will always try to resolve issues informally but if this is not possible, we can then proceed to a formal approach. We will then send you a detailed copy of our Complaints Procedure A copy of the full complaint procedure are available here: [complaints leaflet](https://www.ageuk.org.uk/bp-assets/globalassets/enfield/complaints-leaflet-final-updated-oct-2018.pdf) or by request from Customer Services 020 8375 4120.

**What we ask of our clients**

In return for providing information & advice we expect you to:

* treat our staff and other clients with courtesy and respect
* provide us with accurate and truthful information about your circumstances
* attend appointments or let us know in advance if you can’t, if possible
* inform us of changes in your circumstances which may be relevant to your case
* provide us with information or paperwork that we need for your case
* Not negotiate on your own behalf or respond to information requests that relate to your case without first discussing it with us.
* notify us of the outcome of welfare benefit applications we have assisted you with

**How you can help us**

Our Information & Advice Team gain satisfaction from our work and the positive impact we have on our clients. We don’t expect any further form of recognition or gifts. And while thank you gifts are lovely to receive, there are a number of other ways you can support us so we can continue to provide the service.

## Make a donation

**In person** - When you have seen an advisor you can donate money directly into one of our donations boxes, donation envelopes or use our ‘Good Box’ facility to tap your bank card on to instantly donate £3.

**Online -** You can donate online <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/enfield/get-involved/donate> and refer to the “Donate online” section of the webpage.

**Standing order-** Regular donations made by standing order provide vital, ongoing income, helping us to plan ahead and cut administration costs, meaning more of your donation is spent on helping older people in Enfield. You can give monthly, quarterly, half-yearly or annually. Ring us on 020 8275 4120 or email us at customerservices@ageukenfield.org.uk for more information about setting up a standing order.

**Cheque -** If you would like to make a one-off donation by cheque. Please make all cheques payable to “Age UK Enfield”.

**Leave a legacy -** Leaving a gift in your Will enables us to provide vital services for older people in Enfield. Every gift in every Will, no matter how large or small, makes a difference.

**Donate in memory -** You can donate in memory: Making a donation in memory of a loved one is a wonderful way to celebrate their life. It really is a positive way to help make their memory last and to support Age UK Enfield's work.

**Gift Aid -** If you are a UK tax payer please ask us about ‘gift aid’. Gift Aid allows UK charities to claim back the basic rate tax already paid on donations by the donor. This means we can claim back from the government on your behalf 25p for every £1 donated; boosting the value of the donation by a quarter, please ask one of our staff or volunteers about Gift Aid.

Any donation you can make will be greatly appreciated.

For more information on donations please contact us on 020 8375 4120 or email us at customerservices@ageukenfield.org.uk

## There are other ways you can help us:

* Volunteer – Contact Daniela Sanna, Volunteer Coordinator on 020 8375 4120 or email customerservices@ageukenfield.org.uk for details of volunteering opportunities available and how to volunteer.
* Provide a case study of your experience of our Information Advice & Advocacy Service and the difference it has made to you. Contact Denise Perkins Information Advice & Advocacy Manager on 020 8375 4120 or email denise.perkins@ageukenfield.org.uk for more details.
* Join in with our activities. Age UK Enfield provides a range of activities for older people. Details can be found in our services booklet, obtainable by calling 020 8375 4120 , emailing customerservices@ageukenfield.org.uk or online at <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/enfield/activities-and-events/>
* Tell others about our service and recommend us to your friends.

Signed by the I&A Manager 

Date: March 2021

Review: September 2021