

'I just wanted to say a huge thank you, and to the wider Age UK team for your support during the Intergenerational sessions we have delivered in collaboration with you so far. It was such a joy to see the wonderful connections forming between the children and the residents. Your warmth throughout these sessions truly help make it the special experience it was for everyone involved. We were so pleased to hear your lovely feedback, especially those gorgeous moments when the children shared that it had been "the best day ever" and the smiles and hugs that followed. These comments really show how impactful these sessions can be, and they mean so much to us. We're really looking forward to the remaining sessions and building on this brilliant partnership between CHEXS and Age UK. Thank you again for your collaboration and support in helping create such meaningful experiences for both the young people and the residents'.

Simone Kelsy Clark- CHEXS Growth & Communications Manager

Welcome to our Impact Report for 2025/26 which highlights the organisation's impact over the last year from our activities.

Across 2025-2026, services have:

- Reached thousands of residents, including some of the most frail and high-risk populations
- Delivered demonstrable reductions in loneliness, isolation, and mental health decline
- Supported independence and delayed escalation into statutory services
- Generated system-wide value, reducing pressure on GP, Adult Social Care, and emergency services

Some of the highlights from this year have been that Hertfordshire was selected as the second Centre of Excellence for Music and Dementia by the National Academy for Social Prescribing (NASP) through its Power of Music Fund.

This pioneering initiative was developed to harness the power of music to transform dementia care across the county, improving the lives of thousands of people living with dementia and upskilling care

staff to integrate music into everyday practice. We launched this in partnership with Hertfordshire Care Providers Association (HCPA), Music 24, Public Health Hertfordshire, among many other sector partners, and have completed the first year of project delivery of what will be a two year project.

We also continued to develop the Age Friendly Communities Hertfordshire campaign in partnership with North Herts and Stevenage CVS and Public Health Hertfordshire. This year saw an opportunity to enhance the programme, in partnership with the Herts Sport & Physical Activity Partnership and their Live Longer Better project. This new enhanced programme is now called Age Friendly: Live Better which is an exciting new collaboration designed to implement the changes needed to make Hertfordshire a great place to age well.

This work was in addition to the services that we provide through our staff and volunteer workforce which aim to improve the lives of older people who are in need of our help.

Thank you for all the support...

We couldn't do all this without the generous and ongoing support of local businesses, organisations and individuals. So to all of you we give our heartfelt thanks and appreciation and look forward to working with you in the future.

- Sister Clare Manning OP
- Sunnyside Church
- Tring Charities
- Raj Rai (Apple)
- D Kershaw (Microsoft)
- Sacred Hearts School, Ware
- Caroline Lovatt - stamps sold at auction
- Desmond Scott - Heat or Eat Show
- Barkway Village Hall Market
- The Rotary Club of Hemel Hempstead
- Verulam Lodge No 6131 St Albans
- Broxbourne Lottery
- East Herts Lottery
- Watford Grammer School
- HCC - Civil Society Covenant
- Age UK National - OMAZE
- Simon Gibson Charitable Trust
- Age UK National - Dunelm
- Frank Litchfield Charitable Trust
- The 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust
- Shanley Foundation
- HCC - Winter celebration
- Age UK - Ed Frost - London Marathon Fundraising

The Difference We Made 2025-2026

17,233

club attendances

3,100

carers supported

31,778

people supported

250,393

contacts made

71,800

volunteering hours
with a value of
£877,655

£74,131,826

social value of
organisation

The difference we are making to those using our services...

Mary is 86 years old and lives independently. She has a son and a daughter, neither of whom live nearby. In 2022, she was diagnosed with dementia.

Mary's daughter contacted our Clitheroe Health and Wellbeing Centre in South Oxhey to ask about support. At that time, Mary had been managing her condition well with help from her sister and a close friend. Sadly, her sister passed away and her friend was diagnosed with a terminal illness, leaving Mary without her usual support network. As a result, she began to find it more difficult to cope with and manage her symptoms.

Mary expressed a strong desire to stay active but was not interested in simply "sitting around chatting." She has always seen herself as someone who supports others rather than someone who needs help. With a keen interest in gardening, table tennis, and other practical activities, she was also looking

to bring more structure and routine into her daily life.

Staff at the centre introduced Mary to other clients in similar situations and encouraged her to support Avril, a volunteer, in the garden—something she quickly grew to enjoy. It soon became clear how much Mary values helping others, and she is now often involved in preparing and serving refreshments.

Mary currently attends the club five days a week and thoroughly enjoys her time there. She is especially welcoming to new clients and takes part in a wide range of activities, including entertainment, sports, crafts, and team quizzes. She particularly values sharing lunch with others, as having company at mealtimes has made a positive difference to her wellbeing.

Mary continues to build new friendships and remains an active and valued member of the club.

Testimonials



Age Friendly Hertfordshire changed this year to Age Friendly: Live Better following additional funding which enabled the collaboration with the highly impactful Live Longer Better programme. This enhanced programme will focus on the implementation of the action and delivery plan which was put together from the baseline report and extensive input from multiple agencies across Hertfordshire. Age Friendly: Live Better is working to make Hertfordshire the best county to age in – where everyone remains valued and can live healthier, happier, and safer lives for longer.

How to get involved:

- Sign up to our newsletter to stay informed about local activities, ways to get involved, and Age Friendly progress near you.
- Volunteer as an Age Friendly Ambassador – help spread awareness, share updates, and represent the voice of older people in your area.
- Take part in local walking audits to help us assess the age-friendliness

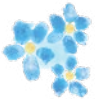
of streets, public spaces and transport.

- Feedback your thoughts on the Baseline Report – we would love to hear your reflections.
- Sign up to the Age Friendly Employer Pledge – show your commitment to valuing older workers and creating inclusive, supportive workplaces for all ages.
- Join our Age Friendly Professionals Network to share best practice, hear from others, and collaborate on local plans.
- Make your environment more Age Friendly – from seating and signage to customer service and accessibility.
- Co-host activities or support community events that bring people together and reduce isolation.

Register your interest or ask us any questions by contacting:
Email: agefriendly@agekherts.org.uk

Age Friendly Communities





Memory Support Hertfordshire

Funded by
Hertfordshire
County Council



Hertfordshire's memory support service.

This service provides a range of help and support for people with memory problems or affected by dementia, and their carers.

We, in conjunction with Carers in Herts, Alzheimer's Society and Admiral Nurses, run the gateway service to ensure those who are in contact with us receive the right information and advice, and are referred on to the appropriate local organisations for ongoing support .

The Gateway service has continued to grow this year meeting the demand of Hertfordshire residents with 6,484 clients seen. We support 57,986 different enquires, including helping people to claim £1.9m in benefit entitlement.

The service provides a single point of access and includes one to one advice and guidance as well as group services across Hertfordshire.

Memory Support Hertfordshire



£1,984,564

Raised in unclaimed benefit entitlement

6,484

people supported

33,800

website hits

57,986

enquiries made

“I truly mean thank you. You don’t know, how much you have helped me and my mental health.”



The Information and Advice service in 2025 -2026 has had a significant positive impact on the lives of older people in Herts. We continued to help older people to live well and retain their independence.

We supported 8,866 clients with 78,637 different types of enquiries. These numbers do not show the significant volume of enquiries and demand from anonymous clients, who we also supported.

The need for Information and Advice support continued to rise last financial year due to two main factors:

Ongoing cost of living and energy prices increasing has significantly affected older people’s needs, especially vulnerable people struggling to heat their homes.

We also saw an increase of people not in financial hardship seeking early advice due to decreasing savings and worries about the future.

We supported 580 people via warm home sessions to maximise their income by identifying their benefits entitlement, other financial help and energy savings.

We distributed £50,000 food vouchers and helped claim £7m in unclaimed benefits.

Every 40 seconds an older person is scammed in England and Wales. We supported 850 vulnerable clients via 112 in depth scam prevention advice sessions. It is estimated each of our clients warn at least 3 other people helping us to raise awareness to over 2,000 older people.

Information & Advice



£7,028,470

Raised in unclaimed benefits entitlements for older people in Hertfordshire

8,866

people supported

78,637

enquiries made

“My Home Helper brightens my day, she does a brilliant job.”

Our Help in the Home Service has continued to be very popular with older people who need a trusted provider to help with daily living activities.

The service supports people with domestic tasks such as cleaning, changing bed sheets, shopping and putting it away, hoovering, dusting and cooking light meals etc. We also provide companionship visits for those who are feeling isolated or to enable a carer to have a break. It enables people to remain independent by supporting them to maintain the standards that they expect in their own home.

This regular support provides a safety net for the clients and their families, the team are able to help address concerns and, where necessary, signpost them on for additional support. The regular contact with their home helpers improves their mental health and is a comfort to know that support is just a phone call away. This service was recently expanded to the residents in the West Essex area and the number of clients is continuing to grow.

Help in the Home



60,548

HITH hours delivered

1,245

people supported

371

new clients joined the service

The difference we are making to those using our services...

Mr and Mrs T have been clients since August 2024, when support was initially put in place to assist with domestic cleaning. At that time, Mrs T was living with Alzheimer's disease, and it quickly became clear that both she and Mr T would benefit from additional, more tailored support to help them manage day-to-day life safely and comfortably.

By January 2025, a second weekly visit was introduced to provide practical help with shopping at local stores. As Mr T's eyesight has gradually deteriorated, he has found it increasingly difficult to manage tasks such as reading labels, preparing meals, and keeping track of cooking times. To support his independence, the Home Helper developed a simple but effective system—writing cooking temperatures and timings clearly on

a table using a black marker. This allows Mr T to confidently prepare meals later in the day, reducing anxiety and helping him maintain a sense of routine and control.

Earlier this year, Mrs T's health declined further, and the decision was made for her to move into a care home where her needs could be more fully met. This was understandably a significant and emotional transition for both of them. To ensure Mr T can continue to maintain regular contact and emotional connection with his wife, the Home Helper now provides transport, accompanying him to visit her. This support has been invaluable in helping Mr T stay connected to Mrs T, while also offering reassurance and continuity during a challenging time for them both.

Testimonials



**'I have a lady coming to me for tea and chat
I look forward to that as I have no one else.
Just me and four walls'**

Our Befriending Scheme and Telephone Club continued to support people who are experiencing loneliness and social isolation over the year.

Age UK Hertfordshire have provided over 50,000 hours of befriending support through their volunteers last year which is a significant amount of support.

This was only possible through the support of their volunteers, who we are very thankful to.

The service consistently delivers:

- Reduced social isolation and loneliness
- Improved emotional wellbeing and confidence
- Sustained independence at home
- Improved engagement with health and care services
- Early identification and escalation of risks

Befriending & Telephone Club



18,522

Home visits

8,412

befriending calls
made

52,920

volunteer hours

“I honestly don’t know how I would have managed without their support. I wholeheartedly recommend the service 100% to anyone who is going through a difficult time and needs someone to talk to especially when it feels like there’s nowhere else to turn”

Funded by
Hertfordshire
County Council



Our InTouch Team provides a listening service and offers emotional support to people going through difficult times in their lives.

We find that with ageing, comes additional emotional challenges and so the service is much needed and continued to help some of the most vulnerable members of the community last year.

Many of the issues that the team help with are complex and can take time, and often centre around themes including bereavement, social isolation, depression, suicide and anxiety.

The impact of the government changes to pension credit and the wider cost of living pressures has

caused, significant increases in anxiety, depression and concerns about the future and so the team have been busy supporting with the mental wellbeing of those individuals by listening, building confidence, and empowering people to access advice to explore potential options to help their situation.

The service has:

- Reduced social isolation and loneliness
- Helped build emotional resilience
- Improved confidence to engage with health and support systems
- Prevented escalation to crisis or statutory services

InTouch Team



176

New referrals

2,848

support calls made

250

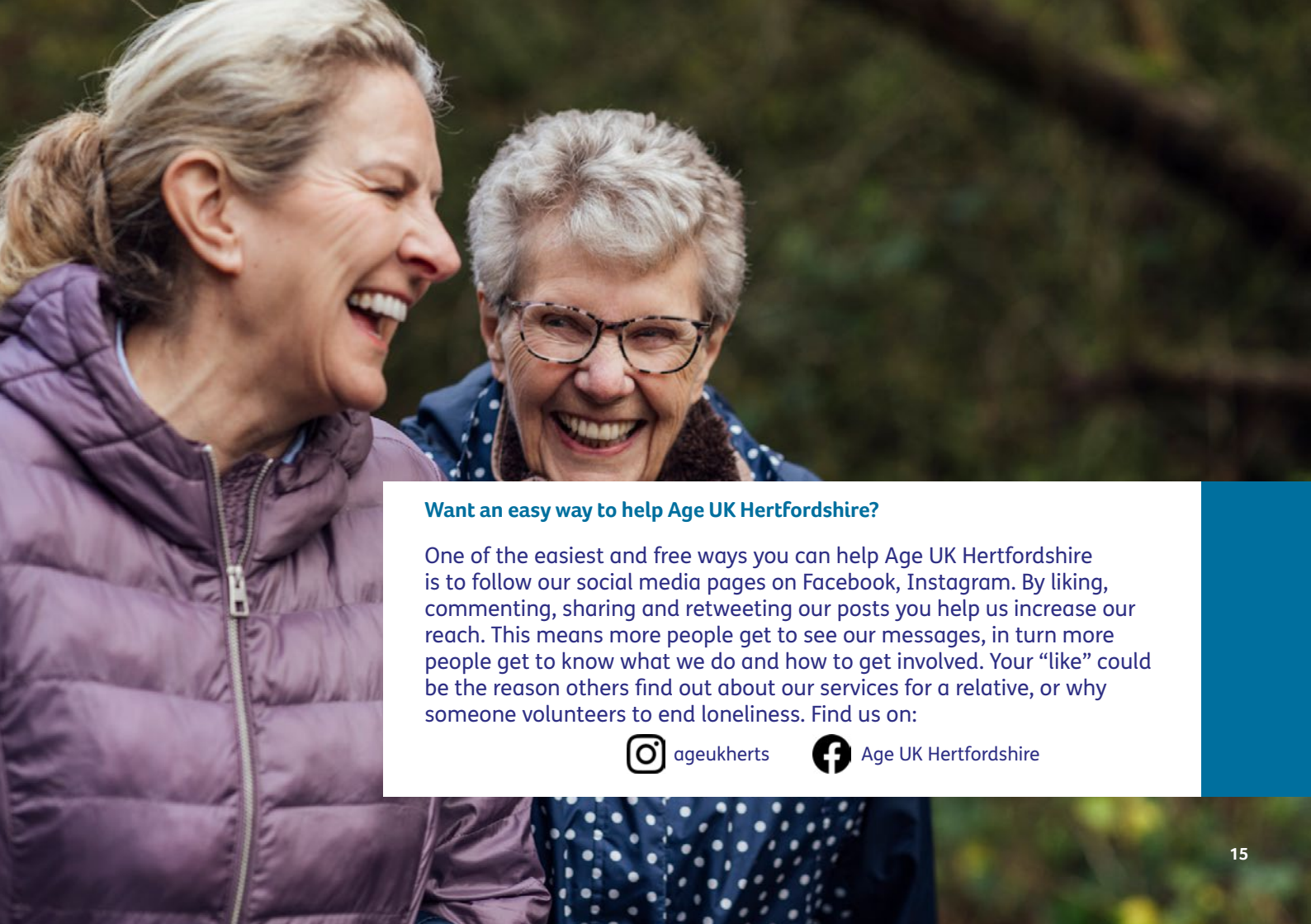
People were supported experiencing challenging life events

Can you spare an hour a week?

We rely on people to help their local communities by volunteering with us - whether it's through becoming a befriender, supporting at one of our lunch clubs or by providing information and advice to people in need. We depend on our volunteers to reach the number of older people that we do, and always need more! So, if you have time to support us by joining the Age UK Hertfordshire team please get in contact with us for an initial chat:

Tel: **07525 070472**

Email: **volunteering@ageukherts.org.uk**



Want an easy way to help Age UK Hertfordshire?

One of the easiest and free ways you can help Age UK Hertfordshire is to follow our social media pages on Facebook, Instagram. By liking, commenting, sharing and retweeting our posts you help us increase our reach. This means more people get to see our messages, in turn more people get to know what we do and how to get involved. Your “like” could be the reason others find out about our services for a relative, or why someone volunteers to end loneliness. Find us on:



ageukherts



Age UK Hertfordshire

“They appreciated your patience in answering their questions and found it very interesting and insightful. They enjoyed the tasters for better snacks and your advice around them. They now feel better informed to know what to eat and what to look for around nutrition”



Our Nutrition Support Workers in West Hertfordshire continued to support the NHS Community Trust Dietitians by focussing on the social causes affecting their patients' malnourishment.

Through discussion with people, we identify what help they need to access the nutrient dense foods recommended by the Dietitians and address their social issues through signposting and referral; such as access to shopping, social isolation, poverty, bereavement and transport. Social isolation is a high factor in the incidence of

malnutrition among older people, so those at risk are supported to prevent decline and to maintain wellbeing and we encourage people to attend lunch clubs and refer to befriending services.

Education around eating well as we age is an important part of the service and we visit groups, in person and online, to explain how the focus on food and drink changes and discuss the risks to health of being malnourished.

Nutrition & Dietetics Service



130

Clients supported

1,309

Support contacts made

659

Additional people reached via awareness talks

Working together to provide those recently discharged or with wellbeing issues to get the services they need.

The Hospital & Community Navigation Service (HCNS) partnership completed its 9th year of service delivery and continued to provide Social Prescribing support to people in need.

The countywide team of Link Workers worked as an integrated team across hospitals, PCN's and communities to support those facing issues including, social isolation, debt and finance issues, mental health issues, housing, and homelessness as well as practical tasks such as emergency food parcels and shopping.

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The demand for this service increased significantly due to the impact of the cost-of-living crisis, with many people struggling with mental health, physical health and finances needing to be connected to support services.

Within the HCNS service the Better-At-Home and Waiting Well team is now into their 6th year of operating. The team provide vital support to patients ensuring that those being discharged from hospital or who are on waiting lists for treatment are contacted and offered additional support if needed.

Hospital & Community Navigation Service



13,410

People supported

27,014

Cases were managed

Top issues supported with:
Hospital Discharge Support; Support at Home; Debt, Finance & Benefits

'The club is something to look forward to, it makes me get up, it also makes you realise that you're not on your own. I have fun doing quizzes and having a chat'

Active Ageing aims to provide older adults with regular opportunities to socialise and take part in activities beneficial to both their physical and mental wellbeing.

Members have the chance to meet new people and enjoy activities such as chair-based exercise, quizzes, entertainment sessions, informational talks and more.

All our clubs offer a friendly, supportive environment where older people can enjoy building new friendships, reducing feelings of loneliness and isolation

Funded by
Hertfordshire
County Council



and speak to staff about any concerns or issues that they may be facing, enabling our staff to directly support or refer to other appropriate services.

We have a menu of active ageing clubs across the County such as:

- The Clitheroe Health & Wellbeing Centre
- Young at Heart lunch clubs
- Tea and Chat clubs
- Brainwaves clubs (for those experiencing memory problems)
- Jas clubs (for older Asian people in North Hertfordshire)

Active Ageing



17,233

Club attendances

625

Exercise sessions

597

Men in Sheds attendances

‘Really, really appreciate the service, my husband can’t walk now, and sitting out among all the pots really gives him a boost, really pleased with the service - thank you’

Funded by
Hertfordshire
County Council



This service supports older people to live more independently for longer in their own homes by providing help with maintaining domestic gardens and completing basic DIY tasks around the home.

The Handyperson service also supports the acute hospitals in Hertfordshire by installing key safes which can then enable a timely discharge home for the patient. The Gardening service has proven to be very popular as it helps older people maintain accessibility to a safe outdoor space.

In addition to this, the service was also able to support older people with improving energy efficiency measures in their homes during the winter by installing draught insulation and radiator reflector strips, as well as providing winter blankets, electric blankets and energy efficient lightbulbs etc. This service was funded by Hertfordshire County Council

279

Winter Welfare
Checks carried out

Handy Person & Gardening Service

£896,292

Social value for
Handyperson &
Gardening service

727

new people supported

165

Key safes installed
to enable hospital
discharge



'It is a two-way experience. Not only do we feel valued, the clients give us their experience and in turn we share ours. It's a win, win.'

Volunteers continue to play an essential role in the life of Age UK Hertfordshire, bringing time, compassion and commitment to support older people across the county.

During 2025–26, alongside the enormous contribution volunteers made through our services, we placed renewed focus on strengthening the volunteer experience and on improving how we support people from their first enquiry through to their volunteering journey. We also created more opportunities for volunteers to meet one another, share experiences and feel connected.

The impact of volunteering continues to be extraordinary, both in the time volunteers generously give and in the difference they make to older people's lives every day.

As demand for our services continues to grow, so does the need for more volunteers. We rely on volunteers to reach older people across Hertfordshire, and we are always keen to hear from people who can spare time to make a difference. If you are interested in volunteering, we would love to hear from you.

Call **07525 070472** or email us at **volunteering@ageukherts.org.uk**

Volunteering



£816,541

Value of volunteer hours

71,376

Volunteer hours



Using Social Media to Grow Reach and Support Our Mission

This year, social media has helped us grow our audience, raise awareness of our work, and connect with more people across Hertfordshire. Through regular, purposeful content, we have used our channels to share positive stories, highlight the difference our services make, promote opportunities to get involved, and reach new audiences.

Good news stories about volunteers, clients, partnerships and community activity have helped bring our work to life, building trust and strengthening engagement with supporters and local communities. Social media has also become an important recruitment tool, helping us attract new volunteers and staff, and increasing awareness of the

many ways people can support our charity.

Alongside this, we have used social media to share vital information, advice and resources from the Age UK Network, helping to raise awareness of issues affecting older people and connect people with trusted support. By promoting both local services and national information, we have also helped friends, family members and carers find us, supporting earlier access to advice and services.

Our channels have also helped people take action, whether seeking support, making referrals, applying for roles or learning more about the help available.

Social Media



2,834

Facebook and Instagram followers

80,000

Website hits

308,600

Facebook reach

19,100

Instagram reach

‘Now I have your number I feel better that I have someone that I can call for assistance, or who can help me to get assistance, that’s what I needed, thank you’

Funded by
Hertfordshire
County Council



Offering support to people living in the Dacorum area who give unpaid care to a relative, neighbour or friend, where one of them is over the age of 50. We provide one to one emotional support and practical guidance to help carers in their role, either face to face or over the telephone. We also have two carer support groups that meet monthly which enable carers to share their experiences and provide much needed peer support to one another, in a friendly and non-judgemental environment.

We regularly have guest speakers attending the groups who provide relevant and topical talks to our members.

Across 2025/26, the service has:

- Prevented escalation into statutory and crisis services

- Improved carers’ emotional resilience and wellbeing
- Reduced isolation through targeted engagement and peer support
- Strengthened system navigation and access to services
- Delivered innovative, needs-led interventions (e.g. male carers group, falls prevention, health initiatives)

A Key development this year has been the introduction of “FellaShip” (Male Carers Group) Launched in direct response to identified unmet need:

- Designed to overcome barriers to male engagement
- Uses activity-based and informal approaches
- Encourages peer support and emotional openness

Dacorum Carer Support

511

Number of contacts made

100

people supported

153

Number of group attendances





Stevenage

Funded by Hertfordshire County Council



The HertsHelp service is delivered in partnership with Citizens Advice Stevenage and entered its third year this year.

This exciting collaboration brings the combined expertise of two key advice providers in Hertfordshire to ensure that residents have timely access to a 'no wrong door' service 7-days per week.

People can expect to speak to one of our Connecting Officers if they need help, who will listen, research, refer and signpost them onto the support that they need.

The team can help with a plethora of queries including financial support, transport, home services, equipment and community groups.

The service works closely with a range of partners to ensure that an holistic approach is always taken, and provides a 'one stop shop' to help Hertfordshire residents to find solutions to problems in one phone call.

Top Issues

- Financial hardship;
- Accessing Health & Community Care;
- Accessing Charitable Support

HertsHelp



132,671
contacts received

18,531
people supported

34,564
Issues supported

Fighting dementia with the power of music!

Year 1 of the Power of Music programme has demonstrated significant progress in embedding therapeutic, person-centred music practice across dementia care settings in Hertfordshire. The programme has successfully mobilised a county-wide approach to workforce development, culture change, and improved resident outcomes.

Key achievements include:

- Establishment of a growing network of trained Music Champions
- Delivery of structured 3-day training, ongoing network sessions, and implementation support

- Strong partnership delivery model involving Age UK Hertfordshire, HCPA, Music24, and Hertfordshire County Council

In addition to delivery outputs, the programme has demonstrated clear qualitative and quantitative impacts. Residents have shown improvements in emotional wellbeing, communication, and engagement, with multiple examples of reduced agitation and distress. Staff have reported increased confidence, improved job satisfaction, and stronger connections with residents. The programme has also contributed to a shift toward non-pharmacological approaches in dementia care.

Power of Music



2,546

Residents reached



54

care providers engaged



2,765

Number of staff trained

We need your support!

Thank you for taking the time to read our report which details the impact our Charity had on the local community last year. We could not do this without your support.

We rely on fundraising to help support the services to keep going and have the impact that they do. There are different ways in which people can support us with this, for instance, you can fundraise on our behalf by taking on exciting challenges - we have had many examples of this such as an 80+ mile run, families completing virtual bike rides to France, to head shaves and press up challenges!

If you wish to find out more about this to see what is possible, please contact us:

Tel: **01707 323272**

Email: **fundraising@ageukherts.org.uk**

We are also always looking for support via corporate sponsorship, whether it is to fundraise for us, sponsor us as your Charity of the Year, or to help raise awareness of our services. If you represent an organisation who may be interested in any of these activities, please get in contact via the details above.

And of course, we are always in need of the kind donations that we receive - no amount is too small. You can donate via Just Giving, by cheque, via Facebook or by simple bank transfer - full details are on our website here: **www.ageuk.org.uk/hertfordshire/get-involved/donate/**

Finally, thank you once again for reading our latest impact report which celebrates our extensive achievements in supporting older people in need last year. We look forward to making another significant impact this year with your support - Local Charity, Local Impact.





www.ageuk.org.uk/hertfordshire

01707 323272

Registered charity number 1116662