

Annual report

2016 - 17



Chief Executive and Chairman's report

Age UK Milton Keynes
is a local independent charity

As an Age UK brand partner we are required to deliver an Information and Advice service but we do not receive ongoing funding from Age UK for any of the services we run.

High on our list of priorities is helping older people remain part of the community and overcome what for many is becoming an overwhelming sense of loneliness and isolation.

So much of the information people need for daily living is now only available online, which for large numbers of older people is not accessible. Few resources are being dedicated to ensuring that people without smartphones or a broadband connection can call a number and speak to a person.

Digital information is fast and cheap but the reliance on it is leaving a large section of the population without the contact they need to remain independent.

Our work with the Open University is helping to ensure that technological progress and research doesn't discount the needs of older people. Our Technology Help Service (which has two years funding from the Rothschild Foundation) received 250 referrals in its first 10 months, demonstrating a real need for this type of support.

We also undertake preventative work, looking at the individual day-to-day needs of older people, ensuring they do not find themselves in difficulty

Mission statement

Age UK Milton Keynes works with and for older people to make a real and positive difference that contributes to their wellbeing and quality of life.

We help
make later
life better

because they don't know who to get in touch with if they have a problem.

We would like to carry on providing the support and services described in this report but at a time of austerity and budget cuts it is increasingly difficult to find the resources to do so. We rely on income from our shops, the charges for some of our services, fundraising activity, donations and legacies to bring in the unrestricted funding needed to fund our free services.

As always, we would like to express our thanks to our staff and volunteers who have once again put their all into improving life for the older people of Milton Keynes.

Jane Palmer
Chief Executive

Sue Graham
Chairman



Board of trustees

Sue Graham (Chairman), Meg Bates (Vice-chairman), Jackie Taylor* (Treasurer), John Goodman, Peter Lazard, Diana Payne MBE, Kris Raina**, Stewart Jones***, Dr Tony Watson

* Until January 2017

** From March 2017

*** From December 2016

Information & Advice Service

Free, confidential and independent

This service has been provided at eight locations across Milton Keynes, providing 14 sessions a week where clients can visit for face to face advice on a range of issues affecting older people. It now includes our nine Community Home Visitors who make an average of 20 home visits each week across the borough of Milton Keynes.

We are grateful to West Bletchley Town Council, Wolverton & Greenleys Town Council and Woburn Sands Town Council who funded our information and advice service in their areas for local residents until March 2017. We are also delighted to be working in partnership with Evans Mediation and Paralegal Services Ltd.

Last year's figures

- 2,069 enquiries made to the service
- 731 clients were helped to obtain welfare benefits
- £2,692,456 total value of welfare benefits claimed by clients following our intervention
- We helped 42 clients access health services
- We resolved Social Care matters for 166 clients
- 67% of referrals are made by telephone
- 30% of clients aged 65 - 74 years
- 33% of clients aged 75 - 84 year
- On average our Community Home Visitors carried out 1,326 visits in the year

"Her sheer tenacity and persistence means that I will have heating and hot water over the winter."



Advocacy

Acting when a person's rights are being disregarded

Our advocates support people who ask us to help them, or who give their consent to someone else who will ask us. We are also able to act on someone's behalf as "Non-instructed advocacy" where they have lost mental capacity and have no family or close friends who can support them.

Last year's figures

- Total of 136 referrals
- 13 clients helped to resolve family relationship and safeguarding issues
- 40 clients helped with Housing worries
- 36% of clients aged 65 - 74 years

Volunteers

A vital part of the workforce

As always, we continue to be heavily reliant on our volunteer workforce. We are proud that our volunteers as individuals also benefit hugely from the support and opportunity to meet others through their connection with the charity. Last year there was a noticeable drop in volunteer enquiries which may be due to a low level of unemployment in Milton Keynes. We continue to use multiple channels to advertise for volunteers and the convenience of applying online suits many potential volunteers, helping to speed up the process. Last year over 500 local people regularly volunteered for us.

Last year's figures

- 11 Advocates
- 4 computer tutors
- 76 lunch club volunteers
- 187 shop volunteers
- 94 befrienders
- 4 walk leaders
- Assuming each volunteer works six hours a week, it is estimated that the total is comparable to £1,101,600 in monetary value over the year



Mary helps at our shop two mornings a week. She enjoys being part of a team and meeting customers; volunteering motivates her to take pride in her appearance.



Edith is a volunteer receptionist at The Peartree Centre. She loves it when the building is busy and "enjoys being useful".

"I love volunteering - it feels like I've accomplished something."



Community Development

Engaging and supporting local people

Last year we updated and reprinted our comprehensive "Directory for people in later life" which was distributed around the borough and can be found on our website. We continue to support Senior Voice MK and helped seven black, Asian and minority ethnic lunch clubs for older people secure funding for 12 months. We focus on raising awareness of issues that concern people in later life and work to represent their interests by attending meetings, taking soundings and promoting measures that will meet their needs.

"I feel safe letting Ken into my home and the work he has done has stopped me worrying."

Property Services

Practical work in the home

This service carries out practical work in the home that helps older people stay independent and is under continual development. All our handypersons have attended Dementia Friends and Asbestos Awareness training and the service has been awarded "accredited trade" status by Trustmark, a government endorsed scheme for traders. Working with our Hospital Aftercare Service we have introduced a keysafe loan scheme because it was recognised that fitting them more speedily can prevent unnecessary overnight hospital stays.

Our list of vetted local Trusted Traders, which helps protect consumers against rogue traders, is now on our website and had 956 unique visitors last year, averaging 2 minutes 30 seconds per visit. A least one person checked the online list every day and the information is also available by telephoning any of our offices.

Funding from the National Energy Foundation and Age UK with E.on enabled our handypersons to visit 98 older people in Milton Keynes to carry out free energy checks and offer advice and practical support to help them stay warmer in the winter months. We help people take measures to reduce their energy bills which not only improves their quality of life but also helps to reduce carbon emissions.

Last year this service

- Completed 1,175 jobs for 741 clients
- Fitted 372 keysafes
- Carried out 98 free Home Energy Checks
- Arranged for 68 keysafe loans to be fitted at short notice
- 82% of clients aged over 65 years, 52% of clients aged 75 - 84, 37% aged 85 - 94



A handyperson visited Mr Y to fit handrails at his home, but realised he was not coping. Registered blind, living alone and with mobility problems Mr Y asked our handyperson to buy him some soup and chocolate as he was hungry. He was also worried about letters from Community Alarm that he was unable to read. Within an hour we delivered a bag of groceries and the Home Support Service was fast-tracked to provide regular shopping and cleaning support from the following week. A lunch club volunteer who lives in the same street offered to visit weekly to check he is ok and read his mail to him and we contacted Community Alarm so that they were aware of his difficulties reading his mail.



Gardening Service

Keeping the garden as you wish it to be

Our gardeners take the worry out of looking after a garden by keeping it as its owner wishes it to be. We mainly provide a general maintenance service but in the past year have expanded the range of work we can tackle, aiming to provide a year-round service. We were grateful to receive a grant from MK Community Foundation to develop and expand the service and this has borne fruit. We have invested in new equipment and have worked hard to recruit new gardeners to bring the waiting list down to single figures.

Some gardens we visit have long grass and overgrown bushes but our gardeners take on the work and discuss any problems with colleagues, occasionally working together to clear gardens more quickly.

Last year's figures

- 522 clients over the year, spread evenly around the borough
- 13% of gardens are in West Bletchley, 7% in Newport Pagnell
- 69% of clients are female

Mr B had been a keen gardener but because of his multiple health problems his beautifully laid out garden was being neglected. He thoroughly enjoyed our visits, working with us to get things looking as they had previously. Our visits became an exchange of ideas about each area of the garden and the plants. He told us that before we came he kept his curtains drawn because he could not face the untidiness. After a couple of visits, he bought a patio set and often enjoyed a cup of tea sitting in the sunshine. And now he sits outside chatting to the gardener as he works. This story could be repeated about other clients, many times.

"It is such a comfort, knowing the garden is taken care of."



Relief Care Service

A sitting service for people aged 55 or over

Whilst still providing a service to give carers a break, this service has become more personalised in meeting the needs of its clients. People who are feeling lonely and isolated can book the Relief Care Service and receive a regular visitor for as long and often as they like. They can engage in activities that they would not normally be able to, such as visiting a garden centre, tea room or going clothes shopping. Carers enjoy seeing their relative interacting with our staff in activities such as drawing, singing and playing dominoes.

Last year's figures

- 23 clients received an average total of 50 hours service a week

"I could not manage without you. You do the tasks I cannot cope with by myself."

Home Support Service

Practical support that enables people to live independently at home

In the last year we have worked hard to increase capacity in this fundamental service. This service continues to provide essential practical help with the usual household chores we are all accustomed to doing ourselves: cleaning the bathroom and kitchen, vacuuming the carpets, wiping down surfaces and dusting shelves.

Our Home Support team also goes shopping for our clients and accompanies them to appointments and social events, an aspect of this service that older people greatly value. People who find themselves alone for a large proportion of the week very much welcome and appreciate a regular visit by a friendly face.

Some figures from the past year

- 65% of clients were female
- 9% of clients live in Wolverton or Greenleys
- 3% of clients live in Walton
- Average of 58 Home Support Workers employed at any one time
- Total of 830 clients over the year
- 71% of clients have our cleaning service
- 13% of clients have our shopping service
- 235 visits which enable an older person to join in a social activity



Deep Clean Service

A more comprehensive cleaning service

The Deep Clean Service provides more comprehensive cleaning than the light housework provided by our Home Support Service. We offer a spring clean or an intense clean and help to clear homes of unwanted items and rubbish. Last year most referrals to the came from the Hospital Aftercare Service meaning that more people could be discharged from hospital to a comfortable, safe and hygienic environment. Once the Deep Clean Service has cleaned a home clients are then offered the Home Support Service to help them maintain it.

Last year the Deep Clean Service

- Carried out 69 deep cleans
- Average time taken: 20 hours
- Average cost: £200

"I would most certainly recommend this service to others like me who have not been brought up with the internet!"

Footcare Service

A toenail cutting service in your home

The Footcare Service's ten Footcare Agents visited 931 clients in their homes, in day centres and at other community venues. Our Footcare Health Practitioners were also able to provide the service to people with diabetes or have other health conditions that affect the condition of their feet.

Poor foot care can be a reason for not wearing appropriate footwear which can increase the risk of falls. Falls are particularly dangerous for people age 65+. Our clients say they appreciate having a home visit from a considerate and caring professional without the need for a clinical referral.

Last year this service

- Carried out 4,368 home visits
- Took on 373 new clients
- The largest proportion of clients (38%) are aged 75 - 84 years
- 21% of clients live in West Bletchley
- 4% of clients are aged 95 - 104 years



and sockets and then back at The Peartree Centre replaced the power unit but with no luck. Replacing the motherboard from a spare PC surplus to requirements seemed to do the trick. Whilst setting it up in Mr F's home we noticed that the printer cable was damaged, which is a likely cause of the initial problem. A new cable was sourced and a happy Mr F doesn't need to buy a new computer.

Technology Help Service

Enabling older people to benefit from new technology

This service, that helps older people in Milton Keynes get to grips with their desktop PC, laptop, tablet, mobile phone or other smart devices, continues to grow.



We visited Mr F because there was no power to his desktop PC. We tried different cables

Last year this service

- Carried out 140 home visits
- 11 clients attended four-week basic training sessions
- Areas where this service is most popular: Shenley Brook End, Tattenhoe and Bletchley

Hospital Aftercare Service

Support after a stay in hospital

Age UK Milton Keynes has a three year contract from the Clinical Commissioning Group to run the Hospital Aftercare Service until March 2019. Our team visits patients on the wards to identify their needs and works out how we can help. By transporting patients home, settling them in and providing practical support in the home for up to six weeks, we enable them to regain their independence or put in place more long term support that improves their wellbeing and quality of life. The Hospital Aftercare Service plays a significant role in reducing the number of unnecessary hospital admissions and days spent in a hospital bed.

When in doubt, the GP is often the first port of call for an older person

Social Prescribing, sometimes referred to as Community Referral, enables GPs, nurses and other care professionals to refer people to local, non-clinical services that can take preventative measures, providing support that directly avoids medical admissions.

At Age UK Milton Keynes we have improved many lives by being at the end of a telephone, offering practical solutions to problems, relieving anxiety and so preventing the need for clinical intervention.

We believe that the integration of Health and Social Care means Social Prescribing should be an important part of commissioning.

"I would not have asked for help if they had not come to me."



Last year this service

- Helped 1,211 people, 37% of whom were aged 75 - 84 years
- Arranged for 76 key safes to be fitted at short notice for patients leaving hospital with a care plan
- Organised the re-arranging of furniture in 19 homes so that a hospital bed could be installed
- Signposted 347 patients to other Age UK Milton Keynes services
- 80% of people using the service were referred by Milton Keynes University Hospital (51% in 2015/16)
- Arranged 17 deep cleans of homes to enable patients to be discharged

Day Activities

Meet up with friends and enjoy a hot lunch

Following a necessary restructure we have amalgamated several clubs and now run seven lunch clubs, giving some of the most isolated or lonely older people in Milton Keynes the opportunity to socialise and meet new people. We endeavour to meet the needs of our members who as a cohort grow increasingly frail, needing a greater level of support with each passing year. We are grateful for the support of local businesses which provide donations of food meaning we can make modest savings on food costs. Lunch club members were delighted to chat to volunteers from Santander and VW Financial Services who helped at a number of Christmas lunches and also made a financial donation.

In addition, the Dega Day Club for people with dementia or who are physically more frail continues to run at capacity. There are 12 members on a Monday and 10 on a Thursday.

Last year's figures

- 7 lunch clubs
- 80% average attendance rate
- On average 250 people attend one or more lunch clubs each week
- Average age of lunch club members is 92 years



Mr A was initially reluctant to attend a lunch club as he felt too shy, but his son persuaded him it would do him good. He found he enjoyed the hot meal and sitting with the same people and making new friends so much that now he attends three lunch clubs a week.

"I am so glad to have found Dega. I was very lonely and it has changed my life."



Befriending Service

A regular visit for a chat and support

Demand for our Befriending Service has increased substantially and changes and cutbacks in the health and social services have resulted in more people being referred to us. Our waiting list has doubled and we are having to prioritise clients with the greatest need. Sometimes there is a delay in placing volunteer befrienders because they are available only evenings, which does not tend to suit older people who prefer to meet in the daytime.

Last year's figures

- 108 volunteer befrienders
- Average of 98 people being visited on a regular basis at any one time
- 153 people were visited during the year
- 41% of clients are aged 85 - 95 years

Fundraising

Together we can improve later life for everyone in Milton Keynes

Fundraising activities are vital in ensuring that Age UK Milton Keynes can carry on helping older people in Milton Keynes. Last year centre:mk chose us as their Charity of the Year, donating £2,678, supporting us throughout the year and funding the cost of a large hoarding promoting our services at Gate 9.

We are grateful to the many individual fundraisers whose enthusiastic and sometimes quirky activities raise vital funds. With the support of local enthusiasts we are able to join in larger fundraising promotions such as Age UK's Big Knit campaign, MK Community Foundation's Charity Car raffle, The Winslow Show and have runners in the London Marathon. We also rely on the support of local businesses Blum UK, BP Garages, Nando's, National Express and Santander, John Lewis, VW Financial Services Ltd and supermarkets Sainsbury's, Tesco and Waitrose who offer us bag-packs in their stores.

2016 Milton Keynes Dragon Boat Festival

As festival charity we would like to thank the 40 crews who signed up to race in this annual event; their community-minded spirit is absolutely vital to us. We are particularly grateful to Gold sponsors BSH Home Appliances, Topdrill Ltd, SMC Pneumatics (UK) Ltd and EDW Technology Ltd, and Silver sponsors Copart UK Ltd, FibreFab, Computacenter and Makita UK Ltd.

The charity trophy was won by Kuehne + Nagel who raised a magnificent £1,700 for us.

Hey

you

get involved!



Last year

- We took part in 25 events over the year and those fundraising activities raised over £32,000
- Postcards Anon 2016, held at Gallery 200 and supported by local artists and MK College, raised £650
- Two quiz nights at The Peartree Centre raised £3,242
- We raised £1,125 by knitting 4,500 little woolly hats for the Big Knit



We get little external funding so every penny raised is vital!

Income generation and trading

Raising vital funds that support the work of the charity

2016-17 was another successful year for the retail team who exceeded their sales targets again, with standout performances from Wolverton Books, Olney and the Kiln Farm furniture store. The charity retail market is as competitive as ever and continues to be a challenging environment for all of us who work in it. Our retail teams have had to adapt to keep ahead of the game, trying new strategies such as developing new product lines to complement the generous donations, for example the brand new mattresses we sell in the Kiln Farm store. We also sell the more unusual and collectable items online. We have further developed our marketing strategy such that we now use Facebook and Instagram to promote sales and increase income.

Last year

- Our furniture vans made 2,820 collections of large donated items and 1,752 deliveries of purchases
- On average 190 volunteers worked in our shops each week
- Approximately 26,500 books were sold in Wolverton Books
- The most popular bought-in items sold in our shops are packets of cotton hankies
- The income generated in all nine shops supports our free services

Grants awarded

Age UK and E.on First Utility Benefit Take-up Programme
Age UK and E.on First Utility Home Energy Check Programme
Age UK Warm and Well Programme

Many older people call into our shops for a chat or to find out useful information



CMK offices

A friendly welcome

The Snack & Chat cafe continues to provide freshly-cooked hot meals, cold snacks and cakes at affordable prices in a pleasant, sociable environment. April's small increase in prices, the first for many years, was purely to match the actual rise in food costs. Many customers say they visit our cafe for a hot meal as this saves them the chore of cooking in the evening.

We run three Information & Advice sessions at the offices and the arrangement with Age UK Northamptonshire to provide Age UK insurance services for clients one day a week continues. Day excursions are still popular and it has been good to see some new faces joining our trips.

Finance report

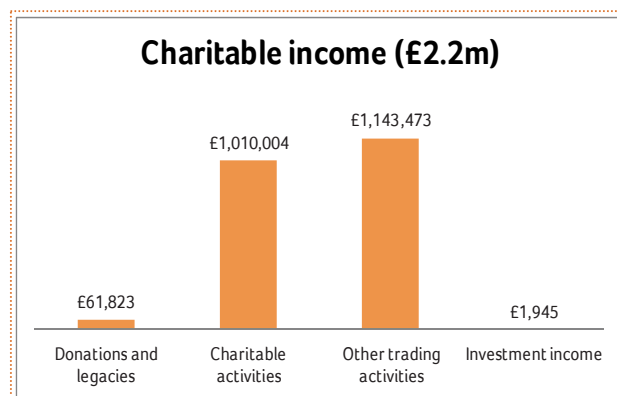
2016-2017 was another challenging year for Age UK Milton Keynes. We have again reviewed the services we provide to older people in Milton Keynes and the organisational structure and staffing that provides those services.

Unfortunately it was necessary to make redundancies and to reduce some of the activities we had hoped to retain. We now run just seven Lunch clubs each week across Milton Keynes, despite the service being vital in the fight against social isolation. With the average age of people attending our lunch clubs now 92 years, it is often the only time some of the most vulnerable people are able to leave their home. The cost of transport has been the principal reason for the reduction in service.

We carried out a review of all our charged-for services, to ensure they are best able to support our free services. Any surplus is invested in the Information & Advice, Advocacy and Community Home Visiting Services, which receive very little external funding. Telephone and face-to-face advice is still vital to older people, especially to those who have yet to become confident using new technology. We hope to continue the Technology Help Service after the two-year funding from The Rothschild Foundation ends.

A Fundraising Strategy will be put in place next year and we will develop the corporate connections and friendships we have made through activities such as the Milton Keynes Dragon Boat Festival and Quiz nights. This will support the unrestricted funds from our retail outlets. More than ever before, the charity needs to keep a close eye on income and expenditure to ensure we keep within the budgetary requirements.

We are enormously grateful to our staff and



volunteers who have worked tirelessly to improve the lives of thousands of older people in Milton Keynes.

The deficit for the year ending 31st March 2017 is £176,997 compared with a deficit of £78,596 in 2015-16. Last year, the sudden withdrawal of funding from several services by Milton Keynes Council was eased by a transitional grant of £121,000. We have reshaped several of our services to make up this shortfall, but still have some way to go. We have made further changes to be implemented in 2017/18, which resulted in three redundancies but include plans to grow several of our services.

While gross income from our shops was slightly up on last year, major remedial repairs following fixed-wiring safety inspections, led to a net contribution to our unrestricted income of £310,771, a drop of 3.6%.

Total income for the year was £2,217,242 compared with £2,222,988 for the previous year. Income from our shops and fundraising represents 51.6% of total income, compared with 51.9% last year. Expenditure on charitable activities accounts for 65% of all expenditure.

Jehanne Houghton
Head of Finance

This report contains insufficient information to allow a full understanding of the financial affairs of the charity. For further information full accounts and the three year Strategic Business Plan 2017-2020 should be consulted. Copies are available for inspection at Age UK Milton Keynes, The Peartree Centre, 1 Chadds Lane, Peartree Bridge, Milton Keynes MK6 3EB.

Auditors: Keens Shay Keens MK 01908 674484

Thank you to our donors

Your support makes a difference

Rosa Antoniou-Savva

Dorothy Appleford

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Louisa Marshall

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Howard Miller

• MK Community Foundation

Milton Keynes Rotary clubs Swimathon

Elizabeth Mold

Gwendoline Morgan

Mountain of Glory Church

Ann Muttitt

Ethel Mutton

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Sean O'Flynn

Rita Oldfield

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• The Rothschild Foundation

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Brian Willatts

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Sherry De'Looze, Laurie Maureen

Osaka, Colin Waters

Gifts in memory of dearly departed *

Joyce Broughton, Ernest Curtis, Constance Dawson, Debbie Farnojuro, Audrey Iliffe, Eric Johnson, Glenys Jones, Herbert McDowie, Trevor Meadows, Eileen Reeve, Archibald Robertson, Lily Rose, Eileen Saville, Yvonne Seneczka, Joan Short, Rose Stevenson, Freda Tibbit, James Norman Wishart

Thank you also to the trusts and individual donors who wish to remain anonymous, to players of our Weather Lottery, people who have made online donations via Virgin Money Giving and Local Giving, and to the many other individuals and organisations that have in some other way supported our work.

*Individual donors who make gifts in memory are acknowledged but we do not name them here.

We welcome
your
feedback


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A local independent charity dedicated to helping
more people love later life

Our charity's purposes as set out in the Objects contained in the Company's Memorandum of Association are to promote the relief of elderly people in any manner which now or hereafter may be deemed by law to be charitable in and around Milton Keynes (hereinafter called "the area of benefit").

The Executive Committee (Sue Graham, Peter Lazard, Meg Bates, Rachel Bell, John Goodman, Jehanne Houghton, Stewart Jones, Jane Palmer, Diana Payne, Kris Raina, Nick Stacey, Tony Watson) has conducted a review of the major risks to which the charity is exposed. A risk register has been established and is updated at least annually. Where appropriate, systems or procedures have been established to mitigate the risks the charity faces.

Significant external risks to funding have led to the further development of the strategic business plan which will allow for the diversification of funding activities. Internal control risks are minimised by the implementation of procedures for authorisation of all transactions and projects. Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with the health and safety of staff, volunteers, clients and visitors. The continuing implementation of the ISO9001 standard ensures a consistent quality of delivery for all operational aspects of the charity. These procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the charity.

The figures in this annual report are as accurate as we can make them at the time of printing.



Milton Keynes University Hospital 
NHS Foundation Trust

