

Improving later life

2016-17 Annual Review and Impact Report



A Year of Challenge and Innovation

Age UK North Staffordshire is a local, independent, registered charity which works to promote the wellbeing of older people in North Staffordshire and helps make later life a fulfilling and enjoyable experience.

This Annual Review provides an overview of the charity's work and positive impact over the last twelve months to March 2017. Change, adaptation and innovation have been the recurring theme of our year.

We are very conscious of the growing challenge for this charity, - along with other providers -, of ensuring that a good quality of life for older people, centred on health, wellbeing, independence and inclusion can be achieved by all. In so doing we have remained fully committed to delivering flexible, person-centred and holistic preventative services which meet the needs and aspirations of older people and their carers both in the city of Stoke-on-Trent and right across North Staffordshire.

We have done so against a very demanding back-drop of uncertainty, continuing funding reductions, difficult trading conditions, as well as rising costs. In spite of these pressures, wherever possible we have worked hard to maintain the continuity of our quality standards and reliability. We have also responded with agility by exploring and developing partnerships with statutory and voluntary agencies, and where possible by expanding, adapting or strengthening our preventative and community-based services.

So, we are proud of our many achievements during the year, and particularly by:

- ▶ improving the living standards of thousands of older people by putting over £1.55m back into their pockets in unclaimed benefits and entitlements, primarily through our always in-demand Information & Advice Service;
- ▶ developing the resilience of GPs' patients who need non-clinical support and guidance through our Primary Care Support Service;
- ▶ fostering older people's independence through the continued growth of our high-quality, person-centred Help at Home Service;
- ▶ developing strands of innovative activity with a focus on physical exercise within our Ageing Well and Falls Prevention programme;
- ▶ improving our volunteer opportunities by developing a 3-year inter-generational project in primary schools.



Information & Advice Service

Older people will:

- **be living as independently as possible**
- **have greater personal resources and be better informed**

The charity provides a free, confidential, independent and trusted information and advice service (I&A) from offices in Hanley and Newcastle and incorporates home visits for those who need it.

This vital and much-used service is often the 'gateway' into the charity's wider range of services and once again has had a busy year supporting a total of 3,287 clients with 7,517 enquiries which required 7,928 client contacts through appointments, telephone calls, drop-ins, home visits, letters, etc.

This was achieved against a backdrop of a further significant reduction in the local authority funding support for the service which impacted on its capacity and accessibility.



The service is specially tailored for the needs of people over the age of 50, and their friends, relatives and carers, providing support which can make the difference between just managing and living a more fulfilling life. Trained advisers respond holistically to the needs of clients in a variety of person-to-person ways with the provision of information, advice, case-work, sign-posting, and onward referral internally, as well as externally to other supporting agencies as appropriate.

The range of information and advice available through our Service covers: Working Age Benefits, Debt, Money advice/guidance, Tax and Pensions, Residential care, Health, Housing issues and homelessness, Legal issues, Employment issues, Bereavement advice and Consumer advice.



Over 70 different information guides are also stocked along with a wide range of leaflets covering many topics which can also be provided to other health and care organisations free of charge.

Grants from the national Age UK charity, support from health commissioning, and seasonal initiatives such as the 'Warm Homes - Healthy People' project, funded through Stoke-on-Trent City Council Public Health, enabled the service to carry out 344 home visits to older people across North Staffordshire. These projects enabled our advisers to carry out benefit checks and complete benefit forms for clients. The extra income generated by these claims made a great difference to clients, for example, by helping with their heating costs during the winter months.

Despite the enforced Service reductions, in relation to income maximisation activity for clients and improving older people's standard of living and tackling poverty, this year's total annualised income achieved by staff and volunteers exceeded £1.47million in unclaimed welfare benefits and other entitlements. It's worth noting that this calculation is based on figures notified to us by service users, and the true figure will be considerably higher than this.

Primary Care Support & Hospital Discharge Services

Older people will:

- **be living as independently as possible**
- **be living longer and healthier lives**

The charity works extensively in partnership with the NHS to deliver quality care to older people.

Primary Care Support Services

During the year, the charity was commissioned by 6 local GP Practices to provide this Service, assigning our Independent Living Coordinators (ILC) to work alongside Practice staff with patients to help minimise hospital admissions, ensure that people are able to maximise their income and independence, and reduce their social isolation. Patients often talk to their GP about a range of matters when visiting but doctors don't always have the time to help with non-medical issues. The service provides non-medical support to older patients, helps with unmet social needs and supports vulnerable patients recovering from episodes of ill health or following injury.

The service is targeted at older patients that Practice staff judge will benefit and was available at Ashley, Betley, Haymarket Health Centre (Tunstall), Mayfield Surgery (Longton), Norfolk Street (Shelton), and Willowbank Surgery, (Longton and Meir).



With consent from the patient, our ILC will make a home visit to meet them and initiate a 'guided conversation', help identify patient needs and wants, and agree an action plan.

During the year, 437 patients were referred into the service across the 6 practices. In addition, the charity's staff have been working with other stakeholders in the development of local community care hubs as part of the NHS 'Five Year Forward View' to enable better multiagency and multidisciplinary working at primary care level.

Hospital Discharge Services

The charity's Royal Stoke Hospital Emergency Department Discharge Support staff work closely with health and social care professionals to ensure a person-centred service is provided and that independence is maximised.

Clients referred to this service are often at their most vulnerable after an injury or health crisis. A holistic assessment is offered to establish what help the person needs to make their life a little easier and to promote their wellbeing.

For those discharged home after attending the Emergency Unit and associated clinical areas, our service offers short-term support, such as collecting shopping, helping with prescriptions, providing benefits information, advice and applications, advising on safety in the home, linking with other services and community activities to help recovery.

The service was funded by the University Hospitals of North Midlands during the first half of the year until their budgetary decision led to closure of the service in October 2016. As part of a package of measures to combat winter pressures on the hospital, the service resumed in January 2017 for the remainder of the financial year, commissioned by the local Clinical Commissioning Groups. In the year, 163 referrals were made by the multi-disciplinary teams at the Unit during the period of operation.

Prevention and Resilience Initiatives

Older people will:

- **feel and be safer at home and in their community**
- **have greater personal resources**

Winter Safety

During the year the charity delivered effective preventative initiatives geared particularly to improving the winter resilience of older people across our area, as well as reducing pressure on the local health and social care system.

These included funding from Age UK/E.ON and Stoke-on-Trent City Council's 'Warm Homes Healthy People' project, both of which featured programmes of home visiting to clients to ensure income and warmth maximisation measures.

For the second year running, the charity also linked with 7 other Stoke-on-Trent third sector organisations to collaborate on an initiative which became known as 'Surviving Winter', to work with the local NHS in supporting vulnerable people through the winter months.

From January to March 2017, the charity was able to enhance capacity in our I&A service, reintroduce our Hospital Discharge Support scheme in the Emergency Department at the Royal Stoke, provide emergency shopping hampers through our Help at Home service, offer social group activities, and distribute 3,000 'Winter Safety Packs' via local GP surgeries.

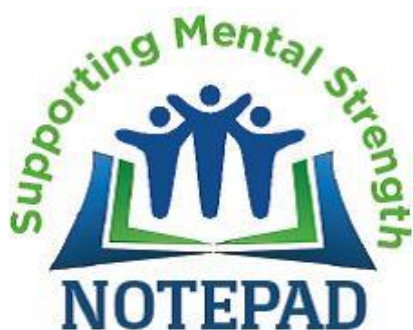
In addition to the many positive outcomes for clients, 'Surviving Winter' has proved its worth in supporting hard-pressed NHS and care staff when demand on their services is at its highest.

Winter wrapped up
A guide to keeping warm and well this winter

age UK
Love later life



NOTEPAD



During the year the charity has been delighted to work in partnership with a multi-disciplinary research team at the Research Institute for Primary Care & Health Sciences, Keele University to devise and implement a 2-year research project funded by the National Institute for Health Research.

The project, called NOTEPAD (Non-Traditional Providers To Support the Management of Elderly People with Anxiety and Depression), tests the feasibility of new approaches to supporting patients aged 65+ who are experiencing low mood or anxiety, to improve their mental wellbeing and decrease their isolation through the training and deployment of

Support Workers recruited from amongst our staff.

Our 6 Support Workers, trained in Behavioural Activation techniques and funded through Keele University, began engaging individually with their patients, as identified by GP Practices, over a time-limited period through a combination of home-visiting and telephone conver-



Ageing Well

Older people will:

- **be living longer and healthier lives**
- **be learning and sharing skills and experience**
- **be part of supportive social networks**

The service promotes health and wellbeing for people aged 50+ by encouraging them to keep as active as possible - physically, socially and mentally. The Service provided extensive Falls Prevention activities across all of North Staffordshire: in Stoke-on-Trent funded by Stoke-on-Trent City Council, and in Newcastle and Staffordshire Moorlands funded through local district partnership arrangements with Public Health.

Physical activity programmes are an important part of the healthy ageing agenda as they have the potential to impact on physical as well as mental health by improving mobility, muscle strength, enhancing cognitive function, improving social functioning and reducing physical symptoms. Participants also enjoy the benefits of meeting together regularly to exercise and socialise.

During the year, the service consisted of:

- 30 weekly exercise groups held in community and care settings across the area. 657 individuals attended one or more of the groups ;
- Peer mentor-led walks varying in length from 1 to 5 miles occur across the area in most weeks throughout the year. 143 walks were organised with a total of 1,459 attendances;
- The further development of walking sports, including the Chesterton Crusaders Walking Football, who, in addition to their regular Saturday morning sessions organised and participated in regional tournaments. Membership increased with involvement from over 70 people during the year. With the average number of participants being 20 per week, there were 935 attendances over 49 sessions. In addition, a Walking Netball group was launched and has begun to flourish with 33 members and 39 Saturday morning sessions organised.
- The completion of the 1-year 'Inspire and Include' project encouraging people over 50 with a long term condition or disability to take part in sport. Overall the project it attracted over 130 individuals to take part in Nordic Walking, yoga, tai chi, kurling, Walking Rugby and Football.

- The provision of information and advice about falls and falls prevention, including talks and the distribution of Falls Information packs across the area. The charity also led a local multi-agency working group, organising North Staffordshire's Falls Awareness Week in September 2016.

Total attendances at all our Ageing Well activities reached 14,077 by the end of March 2017 compared with 11,722 in the previous year. The feedback to our volunteers and staff on the many ways in which these group activities improve and support their wellbeing remains very positive.

A central element of the way in which the service is delivered are the roles played by volunteers. During the year, there were 39 volunteers supporting the service, with ages ranging from 53 to 91. On average they each contribute 3 hours a week, equivalent to over 3 full-time staff. Ageing Well staff

recruit, induct, train and support them, predominantly as exercise peer mentors and walk leaders. In March 2017, 8 new exercise volunteers completed a 4-day in-house training course to increase capacity to meet demand.



Help at Home Service

Older people will:

- **be living as independently as possible**
- **feel and be safer at home and in their community**

The main focus of our service in Stoke-on-Trent, Kidsgrove, Newcastle-under-Lyme and the surrounding areas is that 'little bit of practical help' that keeps people aged 50+ living safely at home and independently, and also provides re-assurance to relatives, particularly those living away from the area.

Our service team of approximately 45 well-trained, safety-checked and locally-based staff provides most home support tasks including shopping, collecting prescriptions, laundry, ironing, bed-changing, bathroom and kitchen cleaning, vacuuming and dusting, and cleaning windows inside.

Our service has now been established for 9 years with the total number of clients benefitting since its start-up now reaching approximately 1,950.

Like most self-funding services, this Service has faced challenges over the year, including increased competition and the increase in the minimum wage which is nevertheless to be welcomed. These have had financial implications for the service, but true to our price stability commitment, the consistent high standard of the service continued and the increased costs were not passed on to our clients during the 2016-17 financial year.

Overall reported client satisfaction levels remain very high. Whilst maintaining our high standard of delivery, the service has consistently achieved approximately 2,160 hours of service per month. The number of new clients joining the Service totalling 204 for the year.

In addition, staff recruitment for the service has continued to prove below expectations, reflecting the difficulties felt in the care/service sector generally. This has affected our capacity to grow the service and meet new needs. There have also been location changes and staff movement within local authorities and health which in turn affects the numbers of referrals received.

In total 25,900 hours of support were provided to older people in their own homes during the year and overall income rose to £395,649 for the year.

The Service team was also able to contribute to the 'Surviving Winter' campaign, by providing and delivering substantial food hampers to older people. This service both helped to prevent hospital admission in some cases and also supported vulnerable, older people on hospital discharge.

Assisting older people to remain safe and well in the community is an increasing part of Help at Home work, and improving outcomes for individuals is part of the added value the service provides.



Social Activities & Befriending Services

Older people will:

- **be part of supportive social networks**
- **be learning and sharing skills and experience**

Our programme responds to our recognition that loneliness and isolation amongst older people is an increasing problem which often carries serious impacts on the personal health and wellbeing of older people, with consequential costs to the community, and to the NHS and care system.

Our in-demand service provides a wide variety of activities for older people enabling new friendships to be forged and providing many opportunities to learn new skills, and remain physically and mentally active. Our experience is also that older men are more isolated than older women, and tend to have differing needs, so our programme is diverse and adaptable.

During the course of the year the charity continued to provide and develop a range of social and activity groups in the Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle and Biddulph, attracting a membership of 305 people attending at 12 locations throughout the area.

Over the course of the year, 477 sessions were delivered attracting 4,713 attendances across all groups.



With the vital support of our volunteers group leaders, supported by our Service Organiser, groups running during the year comprised:

- A monthly 'memories group' meeting at Goldenhill Community Centre. Various local historians give reminiscence talks at this group.;
- Three art and craft groups meeting weekly in Trent Vale, Tunstall, and Stoke. Crafts that the groups have participated in include: drawing and painting, card making, sewing, tapestry, embroidery, glass painting, colouring and many more;
- Two weekly knitting groups, one held at the West End Village in Stoke and the other at Port Vale Football Club in Burslem. These groups take part in the 'Big Knit' knitting fundraising campaign each year and knit for other Age UK North Staffordshire projects;
- 5 computer clubs, meeting weekly, in Porthill, Cross Heath, Hanley, May Bank and Newcastle. The clubs teach older people how to use computers safely, and with confidence;
- The weekly Biddulph Men's Group continued attracting around 20 older men at each session, with speakers regularly invited to attend, chosen by the group members themselves.

Knitting together – The 'Big Knit' 2016: Our Social Activities Service together with our Ageing Well Groups, external groups and individual knitters at home took part in the 'Big Knit' 2016. Involving over 250 people, our target of 24,800 smoothie hats was achieved raising an exceptional £6,200 for the charity. These proceeds were used to support our services, particularly during the winter months when the risks of social isolation can be greatest.

Befriending Services: Despite the ending of City Council funding some time ago, we have kept the Stoke-on-Trent scheme ticking over, providing regular phone calls from a limited group of trained volunteers to people aged 60+ in the city who are lonely, isolated or housebound. Where appropriate we also refer new clients to Age UK's national 'Call in Time' scheme which is a telephone friendship service for those who would benefit from having a regular chat.

Older people will:

- **be learning and sharing skills and experience**
- **feel valued and make a difference in their community**

Children Matter - Learning Together is a unique partnership project run by Age UK North Staffordshire, Age UK South Staffordshire and Entrust to promote volunteering and intergenerational work in schools. The project has been successfully established in the south of the county for a number of years. Due to additional Big Lottery funding, from autumn 2016 onwards this charity began to extend the new three year project to cover Staffordshire Moorlands, Newcastle and Stoke on Trent.

Through *Children Matter – Learning Together*, volunteers aged 50+ are recruited and trained to help in local primary schools by listening to pupils read and encouraging their reading development.

The *Children Matter* project makes a big impact in not only helping children improve their reading skills and supporting schools with delivering the curriculum, but also - and most importantly for this charity -, in supporting older people to prevent loneliness and social isolation, get more involved with their local community and build their confidence and skills.

The project also brings different generations together to share knowledge and experiences and increase understanding of each other. Three part-time members of staff have been recruited to make up the North Staffordshire team, and by the end of March 2017, the project was well established, with 15 volunteers recruited and partnership plans established with 8 schools.

Recent Feedback on Age UK North Staffordshire Services

Help at Home

"Your service has improved my life immensely, doing my shopping and also some polishing which I really appreciated. Also knowing I have someone I can trust to contact and speak to! Thank you".

Ageing Well

"I look forward to seeing all the friends I've made at the group. M is a great tutor who makes us smile, and is very good at explaining the exercises".

Children Matter- Learning Together

"I'm really enjoying it, the school have been very welcoming. I can see the progress the children are making and the children enjoy reading to another adult".

Social Activities Programme

"I am most grateful for this opportunity to learn, but am also enjoying the general friendliness of the group. I am always impressed with both the expertise and much needed patience of both the staff and volunteers".

Thank You

Through this report we also want to express our thanks to our valued staff and volunteers, - along with our trustees and supporters - for their dedication, resilience, passion, and energy in delivering our services and activities day-in, day-out.

The charity has continued to benefit from a loyal and committed volunteer team, which includes 13 volunteers who are aged 80 and above. The charity now has approximately 100 volunteers. In all, approximately 400 hours per week are volunteered to the charity, without which our programme of services for older people could not be delivered effectively. The weekly value of this volunteer support is estimated at approximately £4,400.

Thank you also to the many organisations that have funded our work in the last year (the principals listed below), and to all our many service users, their families and other individuals who have made donations and raised funds to help us continue our work.

Grant & Contract Funders

- Age UK England
- Big Lottery Fund
- Stoke-on-Trent City Council
- Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council
- NHS North Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Group
- NHS Stoke-on-Trent Clinical Commissioning Group
- Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Partnership NHS Trust
- Staffordshire County Council Public Health
- University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust
- Staffordshire Community Foundation
- Keele University
-

Corporate & Other Supporters

- Santander Bank
- Vodaphone
- Autonet Charity and Social Committee
- The Directors at Solidor Group
- Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent
- St Joseph's Preparatory School
-

Trustees

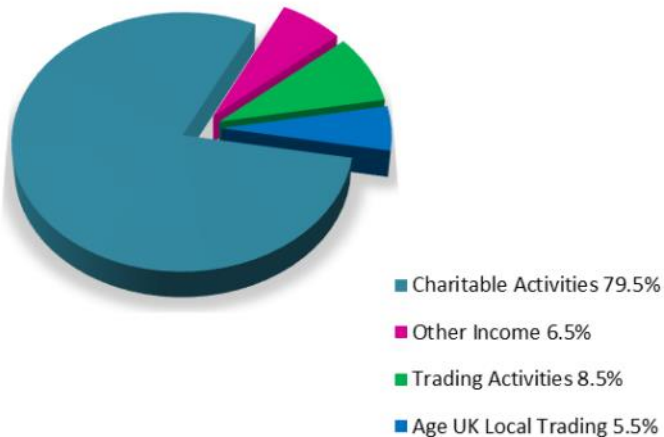
Terry Walsh, Chairman
Nigel Downs
Will Boyce
Prakash Samani
Jean Gibson
Teeranlall Ramgopal
Clare Heywood (May 2016 - January 2017)
Jackie Reynolds (joined May 2016)

Senior Management Team

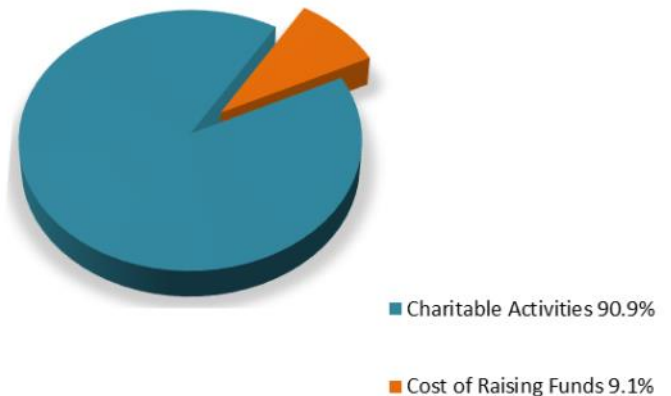
Peter Bullock, Chief Executive
Jayne Dawson, Finance & Administration Manager
John Larkham, Services Manager
Sue Kewley, Help at Home Service Manager
Sophia Snell, Business Development Manager (left
2017)

Income Generation

INCOME: £0.921m



EXPENDITURE: £1.025m



Total funds carried forward at the end of March 2017 are £215,735.

The income and expenditure figures are based on the full audited accounts for the year ended 31st March 2017.

Copies can be obtained from Age UK North Staffordshire registered office. The annual accounts are submitted to the Charity Commission and Companies House.

Trading Company

Over the year no direct trading activity has taken place in the Company as the charity has benefitted from the third year of the strategic collaboration with Age UK Local Trading (Age UK Nottingham) aimed at developing business handling capacity, and increasing sales and covenanted income to the Charity beyond what the AUNS Trading Company could achieve as a 'stand-alone' operation. This charity has a seat on the Age UK Local Trading Board.

AUNS's share of the overall covenant achieved and paid over by Age UK Local Trading to the charity was £51,123 (2015-16: £73,142). The difference in the two years' performance is primarily accounted for by the decline in the sales of energy due to changes in business terms at national level.

Longton Charity Shop

Despite the difficult trading conditions, our dedicated, largely volunteer shop team generated income from the sale of donated goods of £78,346 (2015-16: £79,477); and the overall surplus generated was £19,190 (2015-16: £19,636).

Help us to help older people

We always welcome public support to help us continue and expand our work.

- donating money
- remembering the charity in a will
- doing some fundraising activity
- becoming a volunteer
- supporting our campaigns
- shopping in our charity shop
- buying products and insurance services
- telling other people about our services
- donating items to our Longton charity shop



Thank You!

Hanley Office

83-85 Trinity Street, Hanley, Stoke on Trent, ST1
5NA

Tel: 01782 286209

**Hanley office—Insurance Services only: 0800 028
5497**

Longton Charity Shop

59 The Strand, Longton, Stoke on Trent, ST3 2NS

Tel: 01782 598373

Burslem Office - Help at Home Service

Unit 9T, Burslem Enterprise Centre, Moorland
Road, Burslem, Stoke on Trent, ST6 1JQ

Tel: 01782 827923

**Burslem Office: Insurance Services only: 0800 028
5497**

Visit: www.ageuk.org.uk/northstaffs

Email: info@ageuknorthstaffs.org.uk

Age UK North Staffordshire is a registered
charity and a company limited by registered
guarantee and registered in England and Wales
Registered Charity No: 1087774

Company Registration No: 4190897

