



# **ANNUAL REVIEW**

**April 23 - March 24**

# Introduction

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## Thank you for a fantastic year!

It has been another busy year for Age UK Richmond. We saw continued high demand across all our services areas, we built on our partnerships and developed new areas of support for local older people.

One of the highlights of the year was to have been chosen as one of the Mayor's charities. Several fundraising events took place including quizzes, wine tasting and a fish and chip cruise on the Thames. These also helped to raise our profile and awareness of the charity's work. We thank the Mayor and her team for their support.

Demand for Information & Advice - particularly welfare benefits help - was significant during a year of continued high cost of living. Our staff & volunteer advisors helped 1,699 local older people with the free advice they needed.

We continued to develop our wide range of social & wellbeing activities across the borough, working closely in partnership with other local community groups. We offered these at our three centres, at other community venues, online and at home. Our 'Connect To Tech' digital skills programme continued its great work to enhance digital skills that help older people live independently.

We introduced a new mental health peer support service for older people - an area that is often overlooked. We worked closely with NHS South West London & St George's Mental Health NHS Trust, Richmond Borough Mind, Richmond AID and Crossroads Care Richmond & Kingston to deliver this support.

Our Nightingale hospital discharge service continued to provide much needed help to older people when they were discharged from hospital or became unwell in the community, lending a hand to the NHS by speeding up discharge and reducing early readmission.

Our home services teams continued to provide much needed reliable and trustworthy practical help to older people at home - including handyman, housekeeping and gardening.

We continued to make good progress with Dementia Friendly Richmond, and would like to thank all those organisations, businesses and individuals who are working with us to make the borough a more dementia inclusive place to live, work and visit. We are pleased that at the end of the year 110 organisations had joined. We also continued to work closely with the 19 organisations that form part of the Community Independent Living Service (CILS) Partnership, which we lead.

Looking forward, we will continue to look for ways to improve and expand our support for all older people, particularly the most vulnerable. We are keen in particular to try and ensure older adults with dementia and carers are able to get the assistance they need.

Finally, I must thank our team of dedicated staff who are committed to providing high quality services to older people. They are backed by a group of over 100 enthusiastic and skilled volunteers. Without the contribution of staff and volunteers, we could not deliver the level and quality of service we currently do.

**Kate James**  
Chair

# About Age UK Richmond

Age UK Richmond is a local independent charity. Everything we do is dedicated to supporting older people living in Richmond upon Thames. Our mission is to provide support to help local older people to live healthier, happier and more independent lives and our vision is to aspire to create a community where all older people can love later life.

We do this by delivering flexible and responsive services to as many people as needed across the borough, particularly those who may be considered more vulnerable while always looking to listen, develop and improve.

We also collaborate and work in close partnership, we believe strongly that by working with others we can collectively provide better support to local older people. We have 40 dedicated members of staff and over 100 volunteers helping us deliver our services.

***'May I take this opportunity to thank you and Age UK Richmond for the excellent service we have enjoyed. We used the handyman, gardening and benefits services. Everyone has been so helpful and professional and my wife and I are very appreciative of the kindness shown.'***



**4,058 local older people  
accessed our services with  
over 57,000 client contacts**



# A lifeline to many

The year saw continued high demand for our Information & Advice service – delivered for free to older people throughout the borough. Financial and welfare benefits advice was in particular demand linked to a continued high cost of living that impacted older people on low incomes and renting in particular.

1,699 older people accessed the service in the period. 87% of those using the welfare benefits services providing feedback said their financial position had improved and 85% said their sense of wellbeing had increased.

***‘I am absolutely delighted with all the help received from the Welfare Benefits team to help me claim Attendance Allowance, which I will start receiving next week. Age UK Richmond is wonderful and that extra income of £72.65 a week will make a huge difference to me.’***



**1,699 older people accessed  
our Information & Advice  
and Welfare Benefits Service**

## MRS. G'S STORY - 86 YEAR OLD WIDOW LIVING ALONE WITH DEMENTIA

Mrs G lives alone in the borough. She has a son who lives a distance away from her, however he always books appointments needed by his mum as she has Alzheimer's - a type of Dementia. She is able to remain living at home, with some help and support. Mrs G's son uses Age UK Richmond to get his mum assistance with handyperson and gardening jobs.

***He said 'Mum can no longer go out independently and lives for her gardening appointments. She loves sitting in her chair downstairs watching the gardener work away. She takes great pleasure in having a well maintained, beautiful garden and feels safe having somebody who has been vetted'.***

Mrs G also benefits from our handyperson service and had outdoor grabrails installed by Brad, one of our handypersons. This has made a huge difference for her as she is able to get out into the garden without falling, something she had been extremely worried about.

***Her son said 'Brad was great, really efficient and knowledgeable. So good with my mum, good rapport. Just got on with the job. For us this is such a valuable service. I would struggle to know where to go to for assistance if Age UK Richmond did not exist.'***

**96% of those using the handyperson service providing feedback said it helped them feel safer, reduced the chance of a fall or helped them get around the home more easily**

# Reducing loneliness

Our social & wellbeing groups and activities continued to be well utilised during the year with 1,302 older people using this support – with continued high demand for exercise sessions, outings and other social activities. As well as at our three centres, services were also provided at a range of other locations in the borough and online.

We continued to provide telephone befriending and our Community Connections service for some of the most isolated. Such support plays a key role in tackling social isolation, building connections and improving wellbeing among local older people.

**84% of those providing feedback said our wellbeing services helped them remain independent or improve health and mobility.**

*'I moved to Barnes six years ago and have Age UK Richmond to thank for classes where I enjoy exercise and also have made many friends. When I started physiotherapy in hospital, the falls classes at the centre meant my muscles were in really good shape and it has meant I have got more mobile very quickly.'*



**1,302 older people used  
a Social & Wellbeing  
group or activity**

## MR. M'S STORY - 76 YEAR OLD LIVING ALONE IN SHELTERED ACCOMMODATION

Our Nightingale team received an initial referral from Kingston Hospital in October after Mr. M had a fall at home, and a second referral following a further fall and stroke in December.

During our first intervention, we installed a key safe and assisted Mr. M with shopping and also provided information about services offered by Age UK Richmond and other organisations in the borough.

Following his second hospital admission, we became much more involved. We assisted Mr. M with grocery shopping and during the visit, we realised that he needed other items for the house and some clothing.

We also changed the bedding and did his laundry as he needed support with that due to health challenges. We agreed to purchase new bedding, pillows, duvet, and discussed helping him to buy a bigger fridge.

We referred him to our Welfare Benefits team to apply for Attendance Allowance and look at a grant for a new fridge.

Mr. M needed a hospital bed and there were a few issues with the delivery. We assisted him to resolve this with the providers. The bed was not working properly after delivery and Mr. M was distressed. After further investigations, it turned out the bed had not been installed properly. We assisted and left him with a fully functional bed.

Mr. M was also referred to his local neighbourhood care group for ongoing support and he also accessed our Age UK Richmond 'Connect to Tech' Service to help him learn how to do shopping online.

**Our Nightingale Service supported  
514 older people, an 18% increase on  
the previous 12 months**



# Narrowing the Digital Gap

Our free of charge 'Connect To Tech' digital inclusion service provided 837 sessions of support, through one to one lessons and in groups, at different community locations and in homes. 52% of older people using the service lived alone and 68% were over 75 years of age.

Our support included an intensive tablet loan scheme for those who are totally new to technology, with tutoring delivered by volunteers. 89% of those receiving support stated that their IT skills had improved by using the service.

Feedback shows the real difference the service has made in terms of improved skills, wellbeing and connectivity.

***'Thank you so much, Ebru. Knowing that you are there to help me with technology is so very welcome and important to me. I don't have anyone nearby I can ask when something goes wrong.'***



**52% of older people using the Connect to Tech service lived alone**



## EVE'S STORY - 87 YEAR OLD LIVING ALONE WITH SIGHT IMPAIRMENT AND PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

Eve does not have any family members who can help her. She has the support of a local Neighbourhood Care Group and she goes to their centre in Hampton every week on Thursdays by using their transport.

On one of those visits, she heard an Age UK Richmond staff member give a presentation about our services. Eve was interested in the Tablet Loan Scheme and took the relevant leaflet home with her.

She said 'I realised I was left out of modern communication.' She was using a basic mobile phone and thought it would be useful to learn new things like emailing. If she could learn to use a tablet, she could watch BBC iPlayer which would be easier to watch than her TV due to her sight impairment.

Eve contacted Age UK Richmond and received one of the tablets with a built-in SIM card. She was also matched with an IT tutor who started to visit her for home lessons.

Eve is quite an expert using her tablet now and sometimes uses it to look things up using the accessibility option. She also enjoys watching her favourite programmes with it. She says 'You have got to move with the times. I was absolutely delighted when I was able to watch my favourite documentaries sitting in my comfortable chair with my feet up.' Later, she got an Alexa as well, which she uses for asking questions and also to hear the daily weather forecast.

Eve is now able to make Zoom calls on her tablet. 'I was surprised to see I can make a call with the tablet. I even participated in a Zoom meeting about music lately.' She advises other older people to go for it. She adds 'Because you don't have to learn everything. Just learn what you find helpful and interesting for you.'

**Our Connect to Tech Service delivered 837 sessions of support - one to one, in groups, at community locations and in homes**

# Supporting those living with Dementia

Our Dementia Friendly Richmond programme aims to make Richmond upon Thames a more dementia inclusive borough, working in partnership with organisations, businesses and individuals. Organisations pledge two actions when they join, and also have access to free dementia friendly training and support. Over the year, the number of organisations involved with the partnership increased by 35% to 110.

## Supporting those with mental health conditions

We worked in partnership with NHS South West London & St George's Mental Health NHS Trust, Richmond Borough Mind, Richmond AID and Crossroads Care Richmond & Kingston to provide free peer support to older people with a severe or enduring mental health condition as part of their recovery journey.

***'I dreaded peer support, but it has actually been the best thing to have happened. Mia is wonderful and very supportive and encouraging. Through her I am now doing art and writing and have just started an online course. All of which I would not have had the confidence to start otherwise.'***



**110 Dementia Friendly  
Richmond Organisations**

# Independent living for longer

Our highly popular and trusted home services include handyperson, housekeeping and gardening – all designed to improve safety, enhance independence and wellbeing.

Our Handyperson Service focuses on smaller jobs that older and vulnerable people would find hard to get other tradesman to do but make a real difference to independence and wellbeing. It is heavily subsidised or free of charge, in order to be accessible and affordable for as many older people as possible. During the year, we also introduced a further reduction in cost for those older people in receipt of pension credit. 1,690 handyperson visits were completed during the period to 842 older people. 83% of those providing feedback said the service helped them live independently.

***‘I wouldn’t be without the handyperson service, I have every faith in it. I have had a steady drip of dodgy phone calls and people at the door. Age UK Richmond do a first-class job and is truly a relief. The main thing is I know who and when someone is coming so I’m not nervous about opening the door. I can’t praise Brad highly enough, he is excellent. He does exactly what I ask for and is incredibly tidy.’***

Our housekeeping service provides a highly valuable service to help older people live independently at home and is often used alongside packages of care. 4,160 housekeeping visits were completed during the period.

## Our support to those alone & unwell

Our Nightingale home from hospital service continued to provide much needed help to older people when they were discharged from hospital or became unwell in the community – supporting the NHS by speeding up discharges and keeping older people supported at home to avoid early readmission. 514 older people accessed the service during the period, an 18% increase on the previous 12 months.

***‘Any referral I have made, has always been fulfilled with great efficiency and care. Timely key safe installation with the added support offered at home have helped with bed pressures in the hospital.’***  
**NHS Manager**

# Our strong partnerships

Our leadership of the Community Independent Living Service (CILS), working with Richmond Council and 19 other local charities continued during the year. Together, over 3,000 older and vulnerable adults of all ages were supported.

We developed this partnership in the last year using funding from Age UK London to improve our impact and outcomes monitoring process, with a particular focus on the smallest partners working with the least staff capacity.



We also worked in partnership with NHS South West London & St George's Mental Health NHS Trust, Richmond Borough Mind, Richmond AID and Crossroads Care Richmond & Kingston to provide free peer support to older people with a severe or enduring mental health condition as part of their recovery journey.



**CILS helped over 3,000 vulnerable adults of all ages with practical, social and wellbeing support**



# JIM'S STORY - A MAN WITH IMPAIRED MOBILITY LIVING ALONE IN SHELTERED HOUSING

Jim contacted our Information & Advice Service after it was recommended to him. Jim felt his financial situation was taking a toll on his mental health and emotional wellbeing as he was very short of spare money. Jim also has impaired mobility, due to problems with his left knee, and rarely leaves his flat due to poor balance and the fear of falling. He is also not able to use stairs.

Jim moved to the borough to be nearer his sister and brother-in-law. However Jim said he often felt 'stuck and fed up' due to not having enough money to go out and join in local activities. Jim had been admitted to A&E following a period of illness and alcohol misuse.

Jim is visited daily by carers to assist him with personal care. He enjoys spending time in the garden, but that was not possible due to a lack of maintenance of the garden.

Our Welfare Benefits team carried out a comprehensive assessment and recognised how Jim could benefit from our support in multiple areas of his life.

A full benefit check was carried out. Attendance Allowance - a non-means tested benefit - was claimed on his behalf. He was also given a one off £300 grant to alleviate immediate financial constraints. We also contacted Thames Water to support Jim with applying for the Thames Water SureWater Scheme to help reduce his costs.

Jim also had a visit from Age UK Richmond's Gardening Service for support with maintaining his garden, which he really enjoyed. He was introduced to our Wellbeing Services programme to help him socialise and meet other people in the area.

Jim was hugely grateful for all the support and guidance received from Age UK Richmond and he reported an improvement in his overall wellbeing. Jim is now regularly engaging in local activities and community events. Jim's financial situation has improved, which means he has more income to spend on social activities and to pay for additional care he needs around his mobility.

Jim has reported he is no longer misusing alcohol and feels his quality of life has significantly improved thanks to our help.

**Our Welfare Benefits team carried an average of 150 home visits in a typical month**

# Getting the community & younger residents involved

Our staff and volunteers once again have been key to our success. Volunteers provide help throughout the organisation, including with office support, digital skills tutoring, fitting key safes and helping at our wellbeing activities.

We also encouraged intergenerational interactions and welcomed students and young people from the community, local schools and nurseries to work on projects and activities with older people.

In our annual volunteer survey, 83% of those responding said volunteering helped them feel more positive, 85% said they felt more connected to the local community and 96% of those responding felt their volunteering made a difference.

***‘I feel I’m making a small difference in helping those in need.’***



**3,800 volunteering hours spent helping  
at our Social & Wellbeing Centres**

# Supporting Age UK Richmond

Age UK Richmond upon Thames is a local independent charity, solely responsible for raising our own money to deliver our much needed services in the borough each year.

Our work is only possible because of the continued support from our local authority and local charitable trust funders; Hampton Fund, Richmond Parish Lands Charity and Barnes Fund. We are also very grateful to the NHS, Age UK National, Age UK London, Emanuel Hospital Foundation and the Gibson Charitable Trust for their support during the year.

We are grateful to local individuals and corporations for supporting us with sponsorships, regular donations, fundraising initiatives and legacies.

Every single donation is important to us and goes a long way to help someone who needs us. Please contact us or visit our website to find out more about the different ways of supporting us.

**Thank you to our funders,  
donors & supporters**



**Emanuel  
Hospital  
Foundation**





## TALK TO US



The White House Community Centre,  
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