

Impact Report 2020-21

Local services, local people, local charity



Introduction

Who we are and what we do

Age UK Rotherham is an independent local charity that works with and for older people in the Metropolitan Borough of Rotherham.

Our Mission

To work with others to improve later life for people in Rotherham

Our Vision

Rotherham is a great place to grow older

Our Values

We are:

- Person Centred
- Challenging
- Inclusive
- Caring
- Innovative
- Professional
- Collaborative
- Asset based

Our aims

To help Rotherham people to maintain their independence and quality of life as they get older.

To give older people the opportunity to take part in activities that will help them to stay healthy and active, maintain social contacts and mix with people from different generations.

Supporting local people

Whilst our services are available to all people over the age of 50, our main focus is on supporting people over 65, especially those who are particularly vulnerable due to declining physical or mental health or who face additional barriers such as money problems or lack of family support.

A message from the Joint Chairs and Chief Executive

This report details the outcomes and impacts of our work for older people in Rotherham during the year 2020-21.

During the pandemic there has been considerable disruption to our daily lives. Everyone has been affected by Covid-19 and some have been affected more than others. It's been an extraordinary year.

Our services and activities were also affected by government restrictions but we quickly established Covid secure ways of working, including remote working, we continued to provide as much of our core activities as possible and developed special activities in response to the pandemic so that we could continue to maintain support for older people at this critical time.

Throughout the year, the level of demand across our services has remained strong; there have been fluctuations depending on the pandemic restrictions at the time but people were still able to contact us through our Advice Line for help.

We adapted our services to support older people during the autumn and winter months, introducing two new services particularly for those who were isolated, shielding or not in touch with family or friends. It's reassuring to hear from the people taking part how much they value the wellbeing calls and virtual activity groups and look forward to the interaction with others.

Without a doubt, our income has been affected by the pandemic. The closure of non essential retail affected our Furniture Warehouse and shop at Maltby and the subsequent loss of income for the majority of the year has hit hard. Restrictions also

meant that we were unable to hold almost all of our fundraising events such as the charity golf day and gala dinner.

However, we were pleased to see the fantastic response to the Rotherham 10k race in May as it went 'virtual' for 2020 and raised more money than ever before. It showed a great community spirit and we are grateful to everyone who took part and to those who supported friends and family.

Looking forward, we are now refocusing our fundraising efforts and exploring new and different ways of raising income that can sit alongside our Furniture Warehouse and are more suited to the current landscape.

As a Board, we will continue to support the management team at a strategic level so that Age UK Rotherham can continue to be there when older people in Rotherham need us. Of course, we can't do this without our staff and volunteer teams, all of whom have responded positively to the changing situation of the last year and for this we are extremely grateful.



Pat Wade
Joint Chair



Chris Rivington
Joint Chair



Lesley Dabell
Chief Executive



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Our key objectives

Our five main objectives for 2020-21

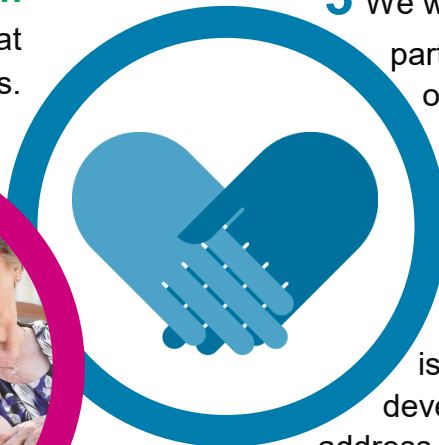
1 We will work with older people, their carers and other partners to **develop and deliver effective and high quality** services and activities that **improve later life** in Rotherham - focusing on addressing the five key priorities identified by older people: Being safe, Staying independent, Feeling less lonely, Keeping healthy and Being connected in the community.

2 We will engage effectively and work in partnership with older people and their carers in Rotherham to **involve them** in the development, delivery and evaluation of our work and ensure they **have a voice in and can influence decisions** about things that matter to them and impact on their lives.

4 We will work towards being a **sustainable and resilient** local charity that **delivers positive outcomes** for older people.

3 We will work in partnership with other organisations, groups and individuals to **promote a positive view of later life** in Rotherham, raise issues and concerns, develop initiatives that address older people's concerns or will improve later life in Rotherham.

5 We will be an **effectively governed, well run organisation** that meets all the legal requirements on us as an Age UK, a local service provider, Charity, Limited Company, employer and volunteering organisation.



Responding to Covid

Adapting to a changing environment

The pandemic meant there was considerable disruption to our services and activities and we had to quickly establish different ways of working.

Thanks to funding from The Big Lottery, we extended the opening hours of our Information and Advice line and also developed special 'Covid response' activities to allow us to continue to support

older people during this critical time.

Adaptations to our services have focused on providing support through non digital ways and include our Virtual Activity Groups and Wellbeing Calls.

Through these services we have helped older people to

manage feelings of loneliness, provide reassurance on the impact of Covid on older people and been able to put them in touch with other specialist support or services.

Virtual Activity Groups

We held **200**

Virtual Activity Group sessions including bingo, quizzes and chat

“Hearing group members laughing in a natural way pretty much confirms how much the groups are enjoyed by everybody who dials in.”

Karen,
Virtual Activity Club leader

Wellbeing calls

We have provided specialised telephone support including

3,800

calls to isolated and vulnerable older people needing reassurance and improving their wellbeing

“Makes me feel if I need assistance I have someone to rely on.”

Wellbeing calls recipient

Advice and Information

We received almost

7,000

phone calls from older people & their carers

We had

4,078

Information and Advice Service contacts

We helped people claim

£2m

additional benefits

We helped and advised

1,016

individual service users

2020-21 Review

A look back at an extraordinary year

2020

April

We **extended** the opening hours of our telephone advice line to cope with **increasing demand** for the service.

This month, we also worked in partnership with John Lewis and the Age UK network to **provide comfort packs to older people using the Hospital Aftercare Service.**



May

People of all ages laced up their running shoes to take part in the Virtual 10K and **raised £10,000** for Age UK Rotherham.

June

Socially distanced **home visits started again** for our Little Bit of Help Service customers.

In 2020/21 our Little Bit of Help Service made

5,248

home visits

July

New rules on wearing face coverings came into force.

'We cannot quite believe it but the event [10k] raised more money than ever before.'

Lesley Dabell

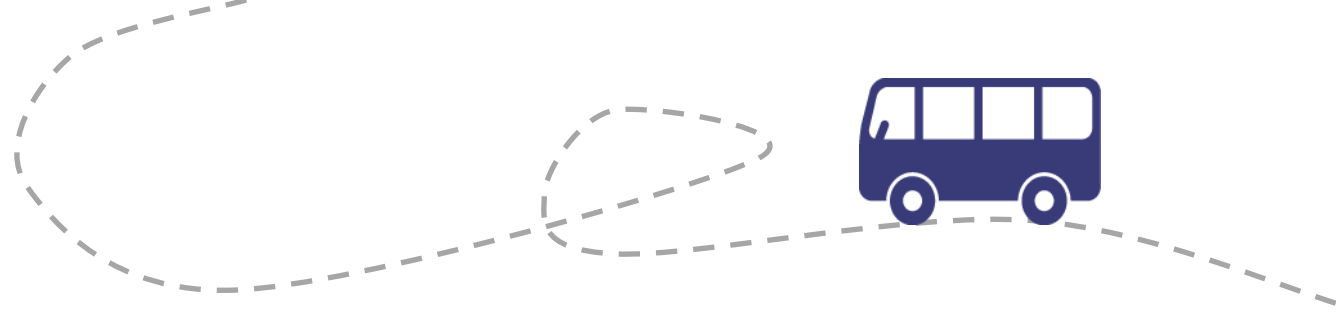
August

We **remembered** the 75th anniversary of VJ day and staff shared their personal stories.

September

In response to the pandemic we launched two new services - our **wellbeing calls and virtual activity groups** to help older people and their carers **stay in touch with others.**





October

To mark Older People’s Day on 1 October, we worked with Rotherham Council on a new video and leaflet to **help older people prepare for winter**.

November

Outokumpu chose us as their **nominated charity** and presented a cheque for £1,000 to our CEO Lesley Dabell.



Also in November, Trustees Week gave us the chance to **celebrate our trustees** and the work they do in governing Age UK Rotherham.

December

We launched our Covid-19 listening survey to find out **how older people were being affected** by the pandemic.

We also published our first creativity newsletter and **worked with local partners** to deliver over 150 goody bags to older people in Rotherham to **spread some festive joy**.



2021

January

Another country-wide **lockdown** begins.

February

CEO Lesley Dabell was interviewed on Rockingham Radio and talked about **how our services can help** older people in Rotherham during the pandemic.

March

We took to social media to **highlight** the increasing number of Covid-19 vaccine scams around and **raised awareness about staying safe**.



Being there for older people

Responding to the needs of older people during Covid

New services launched

In response to the pandemic, we developed two new services - Wellbeing calls and Virtual activity groups - particularly for older people and their carers in Rotherham.

These services aimed to help older people to stay in touch with others during the autumn and winter months, as the coronavirus continued to affect our daily lives.

Both services were ideally suited to people who were isolated, who may have been shielding or perhaps might not be in touch with family or friends and could benefit from either a regular friendly phone call to check they were OK or the chance to join others at our virtual activity club.

Wellbeing calls

Knowing someone is going to call, hearing a friendly voice on the phone and having someone to talk to can be especially important for those who can't go out or who don't see anyone else from day to day. Our wellbeing calls were made by members of our team who are experienced in working with older people.

Dealing with feelings of loneliness is hard enough and keeping up with the changing restrictions around Covid-19 can make things even more difficult. Our team helped people to manage this and provided reassurance about

“ It's been a lifeline, just someone ringing up to check that I am okay. ”

Wellbeing calls recipient

its impact on older people. And, we were also able to put people in touch with other appropriate specialist support or services, if they wanted us to.

Virtual activity groups

For those who were isolated from other people and struggled to get online we introduced our virtual activity groups.

These use telephone conference calling to bring people together socially and take part in activities such as bingo, quizzes or reminiscence.

Typically, the groups have no more than six people on a call with a member of our team always on hand to host the activities, which are tailored around people's interests.

“ Good fun is a very important part of the group and this is very much something we are all achieving, chatting, laughing and passing time on with good company. ”

Karen,
Virtual activity club leader



“ I feel the groups are a benefit as they are something to look forward to each week. I feel happy and look forward to the groups as they help me get through the day, especially when I don't see anybody. **”**

Virtual activity club member



Rotherham 10K goes virtual for 2020

Working together with
Rotherham Harriers,
Rotherham Council and
community partners

The coronavirus restrictions meant the 10k road race couldn't go ahead as planned and instead went 'virtual' with the challenge to do 10k on or around 17th May and help raise £10,000 in support of Age UK Rotherham.

We were amazed by the way local communities showed their support. The fantastic effort and determination by everyone involved including the runners (or walkers or cyclists or toddlers or dogs) who took part, and the organisers of the Virtual Rotherham 10k, meant that the we reached the goal set.

The coronavirus pandemic, and the subsequent lockdown that resulted from it, have been extra hard for older people in Rotherham and elsewhere in the UK. The fact that older people are more likely to be isolated and lonely already, coupled with the fact that they are more likely to be in the 'vulnerable' and 'shielded groups' that have been subject to the greatest restrictions on daily life, has

meant that the impact on older people in our communities has been significant and their need for support has increased at this time.

The lockdown has also had a huge impact on the finances of Age UK Rotherham, because around 50 percent of our annual income comes from our social enterprise, charity shops and fund raising activity, all of which we had to suspend due to government restrictions.

This has meant that we have had fewer resources available to us to be able to support older people in Rotherham, at the very time that they need us more than ever.

We cannot quite believe it but the event this year has raised more money than ever before. The money raised will help us to continue providing essential services to support vulnerable and shielded older people in the borough and their carers in the coming months.

Being there for older people

Working in partnership with the local community

Being thought about

For the last few years we've worked with Rotherham Mears Group to host a Christmas lunch and carol service for around 100 older people.

In 2020, the coronavirus pandemic meant that our usual plans had to be put on hold. Despite this, Mears still wanted to do something special and instead offered to donate and deliver 150 gifts to older people in Rotherham.

This was the perfect opportunity for us to work with Mears again and to let older people know that someone was thinking about them. In



addition to the gift from Mears, each person received an Age UK Rotherham Christmas goody bag containing tea and biscuits, chocolates, a Christmas craft activity, Age UK information leaflets and a Christmas card.

Some lucky recipients also received a handmade Christmas card from one of several young artists who, together, created around 40 unique cards.

As well as their gift from Mears and Christmas activity bag, two life-long Rotherham United fans received a festive treat they'll never forget.

As part of its work in the community, Rotherham United players visited the fans and presented each of them with a signed football shirt. The club posted a special Christmas Day video of the presentations which also included interviews with Diane Keay from Mears and our Engage Rotherham Development Officer, Iain Cloke.



Being community minded

Catering and hospitality students at Rotherham College looking to add some festive cheer created treat boxes packed with festive bakes such as mince pies, Christmas puddings and chutney.

The boxes were delivered to people who are isolated and receive help at home from Age UK Rotherham's Care and Support Services.

“ There have been some lovely reactions from people who were delighted to receive the gifts. Conversations on the doorstep reflected people's struggles with isolation and it felt people were bursting for a good chat. ”

**Iain Cloke
EngAge Rotherham Development Officer**



Being prepared for winter

In October, as part of the International Day of Older People and Rotherham Older People's Month, Rotherham Council and Age UK Rotherham, with help from Rotherham Older Peoples Forum, launched a new campaign to support older people in Rotherham to stay safe and healthy in winter.

A leaflet, aimed at older people who do not have access to the internet, contained information and advice on how to keep healthy and active while staying safe from coronavirus and other illnesses.

The campaign also included a video discussing how older residents can continue with their normal routines while following Government guidelines and keeping safe.

Chief Executive Officer at Age UK Rotherham, Lesley Dabell, said: 'Lockdown has really shown people how we can pull together to support friends, families and neighbours throughout really difficult times. I know that a lot of older people have felt the social effects of shielding and isolating already so it is more important than ever for us to come together as a community to help those who are more at risk of catching illnesses this winter.'



Being creative

Age UK research shows that older people across the UK value the impact that creativity has on their own sense of wellbeing.

That's why we put together a new collection of resources in our Winter 2020 Creative Later Life in Rotherham Newsletter.

Packed with information and useful links to websites to get involved with music, singing, art, dance, poetry and much more, the e-newsletter offered a flavour of what is free, accessible and available to everyone wanting to get creative.



Isolation

The pandemic meant that local community groups could not get together. Keith, from the Maltby Bevan Crescent group, penned this topical poem about isolation.

We all decided that for the best we'd postpone our meetings and give it a rest

We just didn't know what the future would hold but we didn't want to be left out in the cold

So here I am, I must isolate, what's happening now? How long will this take?

I'm watching the tele, the news is bad it's really heart-breaking it's making me sad

The hours go by and the day seems so long oh please open the centre. I miss the sing song

The telephone rings and it startles me but it wakes me from my revelry

A friendly voice now fills my ear a welcoming sound, someone knows I'm here

I recognise the familiar tone thank god here's a chinwag, I'm not alone

I'm missing our meetings, I'm missing my friends, I'm missing the laughter that never ends

I'm missing the quizzes that Keith and Phil do, hope you're missing me because I'm missing you

But I believe this will end one day then I open the doors and here's what I'll say

'Our Centre is open', I'm on my way I've lived to laugh another day

Trustees Week 2020

What's it like to be an Age UK Rotherham trustee?

We're very proud of our trustees and think they do an amazing job governing Age UK Rotherham.

In 2020-21 we had five trustees, each with different working backgrounds, wide-ranging skills, life experiences and interests that ideally support the various aspects of our business.

Together they form our Board of Trustees which is led by our Joint Chairs Chris Rivington and Pat Wade. Each trustee is a volunteer and generously gives their time, knowledge and expertise to ensure our charity can continue to support older people in the Rotherham area.

The onset of Covid-19 meant that the Board could no longer meet in person so, early on in the pandemic, trustees turned to online meetings to ensure business continued in as normal a way as possible.

Usually, the majority of their work is done behind the scenes so Trustees Week in November 2020 provided the ideal opportunity to recognise their dedication and commitment, and put them in the spotlight.

We asked our trustees to share their thoughts about what it's like to be an Age UK Rotherham trustee and posted their comments on our social media.

“ I have thoroughly enjoyed my time with Age UK Rotherham, it is such an important charity, delivering services to some of the most vulnerable elderly residents in Rotherham; even more important in these challenging Covid times. ”

Pat, Trustee

“ One of my key roles as a Trustee is to provide assurance on some of the operational service delivery and developments, exploring potential business and funding opportunities and, in the current Covid-19 situation, support the sustainability of the charity.

Age UK Rotherham plays an important role in the local community and I want to help it to continue to do so. ”

Maxine, Trustee

“ I get the opportunity to use my skills and experience to benefit the charity and the team. I also feel very grateful to be working with a committed and experienced Board who work tirelessly on behalf of the charity and its service users. ”

Martin, Trustee



Our Trustees

Chris Rivington OBE
(Joint Chair)

Pat Wade (Joint Chair)

Barbara Laird

Martin Singer

Maxine Dennis

**Chief Executive/
Company Secretary**

Lesley Dabell

Bankers

Cooperative Bank plc
27 Bridgegate
Rotherham
S60 1SN



Thank you to our supporters



We would like to thank our supporters, funders, customers, staff, volunteers and partners who have worked with us, including:

- Age UK
- Clifton Park Museum
- Encaustic Art Plus
- Engage Rotherham Groups
- EON via Age UK
- Farrell Renowden, Age UK Oxfordshire and Age of Creativity partners
- Healthwatch Rotherham
- John Lewis (Sheffield)
- Love is Louder
- Marjorie Coote Old People's Charity Fund
- Mears Group
- Morrisons Bramley
- Ray Matthews
- Rebecca Bramley
- Rotary Club of Rotherham
- Rotherham Advertiser
- Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group
- Rotherham College
- Rotherham Community Hub
- Rotherham Diversity Festival
- Rotherham Harriers
- Rotherham Health and Wellbeing Board
- Rotherham Hospital Foundation Trust
- Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
- Rotherham Minster
- Rotherham Older People's Forum
- Rotherham Open Arts Renaissance (ROAR)
- Rotherham Pensioners Action Group
- Rotherham Public Health
- Rotherham Rise
- Rotherham Social Prescribing Service
- Rotherham Together Partnership
- Rotherham United
- South Yorkshire Community Foundation
- South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service
- The National Lottery Community Fund
- Tony Beaumont, TTB Transport Ltd
- Voluntary Action Rotherham

Looking ahead

2021-22 and beyond

Photo: Centre for Ageing Better - Licence: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/4.0/>



Age UK Rotherham is in a good position to support the best possible recovery for older people in the Borough through:

- Partnership work that ensures that the needs of older people are considered when developing 'whole community' recovery plans.
- Continuing to review and develop delivery of our core services – Information and Advice, Care Services and EngAge Groups — to meet the challenges of the next phase - maintaining delivery and contributing to recovery.
- Developing, and finding additional resources to deliver, new and continuing

activities that respond to the special needs of some of the most isolated and frail older people e.g. through Welfare and Wellbeing Calls and to participate in remote Virtual Groups, work to improve digital connectivity and the 'Move More Project' so that they are not left even further behind.





- Many older people have shown their personal resilience during the pandemic period. We need to **celebrate and build on** the wisdom and the resilience of people's lived experience, as well as **addressing the effects of Covid** and helping them recover.
- We want all older people in Rotherham to have the **best possible recovery** they can have so that they regain physical, mental and social well-being to pre-pandemic levels as far as they possibly can.
- We need to involve older people and support them to recover. Therefore it is important to keep **listening** to what they are saying they need to help them recover, and **involve them** in finding and developing the solutions they need.

We need your support

Mary's story

Mary* (81) and her husband were inseparable, spending every waking hour together. Since his death three years ago Mary has been at rock bottom and felt that she would never get over her loss.

Mary's health professional thought she would benefit from the activity groups and wellbeing calls we launched in autumn to support people during the pandemic and asked if we could help.

When Mary joined our virtual activity club she was feeling very low. Now, over time, Mary feels that the group has been a great support to her. She says she loves talking to different people and looks forward to them more than anything else at the moment. Mary thoroughly enjoys the groups, especially the bingo and quizzes. She admits that she sometimes struggles with the answers but that it doesn't matter because having a go is more important. Mary now feels less isolated and knowing someone is in contact on a regular basis keeps her going.

* Name changed

Help us to continue to be here for people like Mary

Whether you hold a coffee morning, organise a bake sale or take on a personal challenge every bit helps us to continue to be here for people like Mary.

There are many ways you can donate, from leaving a legacy in your will to donating unwanted items of furniture to our Furniture Warehouse.

We'd love you to support us!

Details about how you can help and how to get in touch are on the back page.

We'd love your support



Donate

Support from individuals, grant providers and businesses is essential to our work with older people.



Volunteer

Our volunteers are important to us. By sharing your skills or simply donating your time you would be helping a great cause.



Fundraise

There are lots of ways you can raise money and we'll provide support to help you along the way.



Campaign

Many people campaign with Age UK to help improve support and services for people in later life.

We'd love to hear from you

For more information about our services please contact:

Advice and Information Service

Tel: 01709 835 214

Care and Support Services

Tel: 01709 786 955

Registered office:

Galax Business Centre, Eastwood Trading Estate,
Fitzwilliam Road, Rotherham S65 1SL

Visit us online at: www.ageuk.org.uk/rotherham

Age Concern Rotherham Ltd operating as Age UK Rotherham is a registered charity No. 1039771 and a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales No.1927474. Our registered offices are Galax Business Centre, Eastwood Trading Estate, Fitzwilliam Road, Rotherham S65 1SL.