



## Information and Advice



### **What we do:**

Every year we give information and advice to thousands of over-50s and their family and friends in Sheffield.

We provide information and advice on a wide range of issues:

- Benefits
- Paying for residential and non-residential care
- Consumer and other money advice
- Housing
- Legal
- Health and disability
- Help at home

### **How we can help**

**Information guides and factsheets.** These cover a wide range of subjects affecting older people and those who care for and support including family and friends.

**Telephone advice.** Call us on 0114 2502850 from Monday to Friday between 9.30am and 4.00pm. This call will be charged at a local rate. If you ring outside of opening hours your call will be diverted to Age UK's national Advice Line who will either help with your query or arrange for an adviser from Age UK Sheffield to call you back

Email us at [enquiries@ageuksheffield.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ageuksheffield.org.uk)

**Zoom/ Teams Appointments** – We can arrange appointments via Zoom/ Teams. These calls may be helpful if you would like support from a family member or friend. Please let us know on 0114 2502850 or [enquiries@ageuksheffield.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ageuksheffield.org.uk) if you would like to book an online appointment.

**Office appointments** are currently unavailable due to COVID restrictions

**Local community venues.** Age UK Sheffield outreach appointments are currently unavailable as a result of COVID restrictions.

**Home visits.** If it would be difficult for you to access our telephone, email and virtual support, we are making home visits in exceptional cases. These are risk assessed on an individual basis. If you would like to discuss this please contact us on 0114 2502850 or you can write to us at **Age UK Sheffield First Floor, South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue, 197 Eyre Street, Sheffield, S1 3FG**

### **What will happen if we can't provide the service you require?**

Sometimes people come to us with problems that we do not have the expertise or knowledge to help with. We are unable to provide consumer debt advice, working age benefit advice, financial advice, legal advice or immigration advice. In these cases we can provide you with basic information and direct you to another organisation for further help. Where possible we will give you a selection of organisations to choose from and we will either signpost or refer you to them.

### **Signposting**

When signposting we will give you the organisation's contact information if you can contact them yourself.

When referring we will contact the organisation on your behalf and share any information that you have agreed us to. We will always get your permission before referring you to another organisation.

Sometimes when advising you we will reach a point where we don't have the expertise to pursue your case any further. This most commonly happens when there is a need to appeal against a welfare benefit decision. We will refer you to another local advice service that can help you if this happens.

### **What you can expect from us.**

We follow five key principles when delivering our service.

#### **1. The service is provided free of charge.**

You won't be charged for any of our information and advice. If we signpost or refer you onto another organisation we will tell you if there is any charge for their service. Any donation you can make will be greatly appreciated.

#### **2. The information and advice we provide is independent of any outside influence.**

We will never recommend a service or provider to you, including Age UK's own services. Where possible we will always provide you with a choice of alternatives and help you make an informed decision. We will never advise someone to do anything illegal or fraudulent. We will immediately stop advising anyone carrying out illegal or fraudulent actions and may notify the appropriate authorities.

#### **3. All information is confidential.**

Any information we keep about you is stored securely and only viewed by staff and volunteers involved in advising you or other people that you have allowed us to share this information with. These may be external auditors that check the quality and accuracy of our work, organisations we are referring your case on to and agencies we are dealing with on your behalf (such as the DWP or an energy supplier). We won't share your information or discuss your case with anyone outside of our service without your consent unless they have been given responsibility to act on your behalf by the Court of Protection or Department for Work and Pensions. We may share information about someone without their consent if:

- they insist on taking an illegal or fraudulent course of action
- we are contacted by a statutory body about a customer who is being investigated for suspected illegal or fraudulent activity
- we are concerned that someone involved in a case is at risk of significant harm. In this case we may notify a relevant statutory body, for example social services or the police. These disclosures will be done following Adult Safeguarding ' procedures that our staff and volunteers have been trained in.

Any data we hold on you is done so in accordance with data protection and GDPR legislation and Age UK Sheffield's Data Protection policy. A copy of our privacy notice is available [ageuksheffield.org.uk](http://ageuksheffield.org.uk) or by calling 0114 2502850. You have a right to view any data we hold on you and can request to view it. If you wish to do this please phone 0114 250 2850 to let us know.

#### **4. All Age Sheffield customers are treated with fairness, dignity and respect**

We strive to offer an inclusive service to all We won't judge anyone based upon the circumstances they find themselves in and we won't try to influence the decisions you make following our advice. Sometimes customers will make a decision that we don't think is in their best interest. We will tell you if this happens and aim to provide enough information and advice to help you make an informed choice. We will respect whatever decision you make. The Information & Advice Service operates in compliance with Age UK Sheffield's Equality and Diversity Policy. A copy of the policy is available at [ageuksheffield.org.uk](http://ageuksheffield.org.uk) or by request from **0114 2502850**

#### **5. Our service is accessible for older people.**

Our offices are suitable for people with disabilities (eg step free access, lifts, toilets and hearing loops. We can also offer information and advice in community languages via an interpreter service. We will take all reasonable steps to provide our service in a manner that is accessible and appropriate to customer needs or circumstances and we will always aim to give you as much time as you need when we see you.

#### **How to make a complaint, compliment or suggestion about our service**

If you would like to give feedback or complain about the service you have received please email [Teresa.Barker@ageuksheffield.org.uk](mailto:Teresa.Barker@ageuksheffield.org.uk) or phone 0114 250 2850 and ask to speak to Teresa.

We are always interested in improving our services so welcome feedback, positive or negative. You can provide feedback in the following ways

- Complete a customer satisfaction card after your visit to our office rating the experience that you have had.
- Leaving written feedback in our customer feedback box
- Writing to Teresa Barker, Chief Operating Officer, SYFR, 1st Floor, Age UK Sheffield, 197 Eyre Street, Sheffield, S1 3FG

Emailing [Teresa.Barker@ageuksheffield.org.uk](mailto:Teresa.Barker@ageuksheffield.org.uk)