

Annual Review

2020–2021



Loving Later Life
in Sunderland
for over 70 years!

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Introduction from the Chair and Director

This report demonstrates how Age UK Sunderland (AUKS) has supported older people in the City in 2020/21 during the Covid 19 pandemic and how we realigned, sustained and developed our service provision to meet emerging identified needs.

In addition to telling AUKS's story in facts and figures, the report looks at how we have furthered our Charity's fundamental purpose of promoting the wellbeing of older people across Sunderland by delivering a diverse range of high quality services to some of the most vulnerable older people across the City.

Our Mission is:

To promote and support the wellbeing of all older people throughout the City of Sunderland, improve their quality of life and help them maintain independence.

As we moved into our 70th year, AUKS has continued to remain dedicated to the delivery of a wide range of support services for the older people of Sunderland. Despite increasing financial constraints and the global pandemic we provided much needed support to local people during 2020/21, with over **90,000 contacts** from older people during this challenging time.

The horizon is currently very uncertain for charitable organisations, however despite many unprecedented challenges during 2020/21, AUKS has sustained services and secured funding to develop many critical support services.

During the Covid 19 crisis, the organisation has remained dedicated to the needs of older people to ensure ongoing support for older people at a time when they needed us most.

Through the work of Age UK Sunderland, older people are better able to:

- Improve or maintain their independence for longer
- Feel less socially isolated and lonely
- Improve or maintain their health and wellbeing
- Make informed choices
- Feel safe and more secure
- Enjoy a better later life

AUKS is driven by its quality standards and currently holds ISO 9001, Age UK Charity Quality Standards (CQS) and we have completed the AUK Information & Advice Quality Programme (IAQP). We are also accredited with CHAS and hold a certificate in Safety, Health, Environment & Fire (SHEF).

As the Chair and Director of such a vibrant organisation, we are delighted and proud to be part of such a great team of staff and volunteers who have gone above and beyond to ensure older people were supported during 2020/21. We would like to thank everyone including our many partners across the city for their continued support in improving the lives of older people in Sunderland.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Graeme Miller'.

Graeme Miller
Chair of
Age UK Sunderland



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tracy Collins'.

Tracy Collins
Director of
Age UK Sunderland



Our Board & Other Offices

President	The Right Worshipful the Mayor of the City of Sunderland	
Patrons	Professor Peter Michael Fidler CBE, DL, MSc, RTPI Lord-Lieutenant for Tyne & Wear, Mrs Sue Winfield OBE Sir Thomas Allen, CBE	
Chairman	Mr Graeme Miller	
Vice-Chair	Mr Roy McLachlan	
Hon. Treasurer	Mrs Susan Ritchie	
The Board	Mrs Carol Harries	Trustee
	Mrs Ann Lawson-McLean	Trustee
	Mrs Dianne Hutchinson	Trustee
	Mr Matthew Jackson	Trustee
	Ms Kelly Chequer	Trustee
	Ms Selina Turner	Trustee
	Mr Alan Purvis	Trustee - Commenced 24.09.2020
Director	Ms Tracy Collins	
Company Secretary	Ms Tracy Collins	
Solicitor	McKenzie Bell	
Auditors	Read Milburn	
Head Office	Bradbury Centre, Stockton Road, Sunderland, SR2 7AQ Tel: 0191 5141131 Fax: 0191 5670378 Email: enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk Website: www.ageuksunderland.org.uk	
Registered Charity No.	1086995	
Registered Company No.	4199449	
Area Offices	Coalfields The Metcalfe Centre, Lee Terrace, Hetton-le-Hole, DH5 0AQ Tel: 0191 5269274 Email: metcalfe@ageuksunderland.org.uk Essence Centre The Sir Thomas Allen Centre Mill Hill Road Doxford Park Sunderland Tel: 0191 522 1310 Email: essenceservice@ageuksunderland.org.uk	

Front Door Service (FDS)

Social Prescribing Programme

Enabling older people to stay independent longer

Funded by Sunderland City Council & NHS England, AUKS's Front Door social prescribing programme provides preventative low-level tailored support to enable older people to stay independent for longer in their local community.

The FDS offers a single point of contact and extends access to information, early interventions and flexible low-level community based support to adults who do not require intensive or specialised care or support interventions from statutory services.

Social Prescribing interventions are provided by a team of Front Door Living Well Link Workers who are supported by the wider FDS infrastructure. The team work directly with older people as an interface supporting the referral process in to health, housing, social care and voluntary/ community services.

The wider FDS infrastructure includes AUKS's:

- Advocacy Service
- Information and Advice Service (income maximisation)
- Community Support Clubs
- Keeping in Touch (KIT) Befriending Service
- Volunteering Opportunities



“Thank you for your fast response to my request for support regarding a stair lift, all other services are slow because of COVID except AUKS who are on full throttle”.

“I am so happy with the Worker supporting me as in life you only relate to certain people. I feel I am able to talk to them about anything and grateful for them helping both myself and my twin sister”.

“The Living Well Link Worker is the only person I can talk to without putting the phone down on. Every other person is so hard to talk to and she has been a Godsend to me during these low times”.

The interventions provided by the FDS have shown a significant increase in the wellbeing and confidence of older people and their interactions within their local community.

Over 75% of clients who accessed the FDS needed

support to become more independent as well as having choice and control over their health.

67% of clients reported they needed support to establish social interactions and support networks.



During 2020-21

1,109
new referrals

14,127
total support
interventions

1,266
people supported

FD Advocacy Service

Assisting older people to enable them to find their voice

Funding from the Big Lottery supports AUKS's FD Advocacy Service which is accessible to everyone aged over 50 and is the only one of its kind for older people in Sunderland.

The service is free of charge and provides assistance to people who are experiencing difficulty with resolving issues. The Advocacy Service aims to resolve problems ensuring that the client's voice is heard, achieving a positive impact on older people's health and wellbeing.

Our 2 professional advocates work with volunteer advocates to liaise with and support the older people of Sunderland through a range of disputes. The advocates provide a selection of options from which the client can determine their chosen pathway.

The Advocacy Service is essential in ensuring that every older person has a voice to obtain the support they need to be able to speak up for themselves.

Often in later years, especially when people are moving through life transitions such as bereavement and health issues, life can often prove to be complex and challenging.

Due to Covid-19 the Advocacy Service has also held virtual outreach sessions to promote and raise awareness of the service however as government restrictions are relaxed we look forward to holding face to face community events once again.

619
people supported

2
volunteers

701
issues resolved



FD Community Support Clubs

Reducing social isolation

Our face to face and virtual Community Support Clubs bring people together to socialise with friends old and new and at the same time offer the opportunity to join in with activities.

Due to Covid 19 restrictions our 25 clubs that provide support to 400 older people weekly in all areas of Sunderland were suspended throughout 2020/21. AUKS realigned support using virtual and telephone methods to continue to identify ongoing needs.

Weekly contact was maintained with everyone who previously attended the clubs

via welfare calls and onward referrals to support services during the crisis.

We look forward to reopening our community clubs when government restrictions ease as the clubs provide a vital opportunity to socialise which reduces the impact of loneliness and isolation in older people.

When community support clubs reopen we hope to help older people to:

- lead healthier and happier lives
- tackle loneliness
- get active
- stay independent for longer

829

older people received weekly welfare calls

9,579

number of welfare calls

116

onward support referrals were made



"I don't know what I would do without Age UK Sunderland."

FD Keeping in Touch (KIT) Service

We all know what it's like to feel lonely but did you know that some older people regularly go an entire month without speaking to anyone?

Loneliness is a growing issue for older people. Over half of people aged 75 and over live alone, and 1 in 10 people aged 65 or over say they are always or often feel lonely.

The pandemic exacerbated this issue tenfold which is a growing concern as restrictions ease.

One of the most effective ways of helping to alleviate the feeling of loneliness and social isolation is our KIT service. It is a simple, straightforward way for two friends to have a chat and catch up.

Information is gathered about a person's previous employment, hobbies, likes and

dislikes to ensure wherever possible the right volunteer is matched to our clients. Our volunteers often tell us they get as much reward from delivering the service as the clients do in receiving it.

This year our face to face home visiting service was suspended due to COVID 19 however our 90 volunteers made over 10,000 telephone calls to 387 clients.

As government restrictions ease we plan to restart our visiting service to help support the increased issue of loneliness and isolation due to the impact of the pandemic.



90
Volunteers

10,040
telephone calls

387
clients supported

AUKS Lunch on Wheels

Providing hot tasty meals in the community

The Lunch on Wheels service was developed to meet local older people's needs as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Realigning our provision has ensured that older people have the opportunity to access a home cooked lunch each day.

Each lunch consists of a homemade 2 course meal, a main and a dessert at a very competitive price.

All lunches are delivered to the older person by AUKS drivers. This has resulted in all older people gaining the additional benefit of personal contact with drivers, who are able to hold a socially distanced conversation with clients and identify if there is a requirement for any other support services during their "check in". For many older

people this has been the only contact they have had with other people throughout the lockdowns and restrictions.

Older people who are identified as in need of other services are referred appropriately and are able to gain the additional support that they require.

The service has received many accolades from older people and their families who otherwise would have struggled to get a hot meal due to self-isolating, impacting further on their health & wellbeing.

The Lunch on Wheels service continues to provide over 170 vulnerable older people per week with their main daily nutritional food requirements.



21,747

lunches provided and delivered during 2020/21

500-600

lunches produced and delivered per week

758

older people benefitting

120

Boxing Day lunches & gifts delivered free of charge

Dial a Driver

Providing transport to vital appointments in the community

Dial a Driver is a volunteer car service providing people over 60 in Sunderland with a ride to non-urgent appointments at hospitals, doctors, dentists and podiatrists.

Poor health or lack of mobility can often mean it is difficult for older people to access public transport and they may lack the confidence to do such a journey on their own. Our small team of volunteer drivers use their own cars to provide a door-to-door service, friendly chat and assistance where needed. This can take the stress and worry out of getting to and from an appointment.

While medical appointments are the priority, the service can also be accessed for journeys to day centres, community clubs and some social visits, when the client would otherwise be unable to travel and may become isolated.

During 2020/21 the AUKS Dial a Driver service was suspended due to government restrictions, this service will become operational once more as restrictions ease.



"I would have great difficulties getting to my regular medical appointments on my own on public transport. I can phone Dial a Driver and a familiar face will arrive and support me where I need it, it's a boon"

Community Integrated Teams (CIT)

Living Well Links Social Prescribing Programme

Support for local people who need it most

Funded by Sunderland CCG the CIT Living Well Link Service works to support people who:

- are 65 years old or over
- have two or more complex long term health conditions
- face social challenges as a result of their health such as not knowing their benefit entitlements or struggling to get out of their homes

The service is part of Sunderland's CITs which enables older people to access better, more integrated care outside of hospital, thus helping to reduce unnecessary hospital admissions.

The aim of the CIT Living Well Link service is to put people living in Sunderland in personal control of their health and wellbeing by linking them into community support and assets via social prescribing.

During to the COVID- 19 Pandemic, the service was realigned to meet client needs. The LWL workers completed welfare calls, shopping support and onward referrals to vital support services.

The team have continued to support clients, throughout 2020/21 accepting new referrals, completing initial assessments mostly by telephone, offering a listening ear and emotional support, providing onward signposting into appropriate services. Where necessary the team provided Doorstep Welfare Calls in line with government guidelines.

The service is a great success and our team ensure that the older people of Sunderland with long term conditions are supported to have a better quality of life within their communities.

The team act as a first point of contact to support older people in their homes, care homes and other community settings using a person centred approach which includes their families and carers. Non- medical support is provided based on the client goals, ensuring older people receive the right support at the right time.




"Thank you so much for your support and advice, you have gave me new strategies for coping"

2,093

referrals or signposts (including assisted signposting) to other services have been made

1,056

older people have been supported by the Living Well Link Service during 2020/21

A close-up photograph of an elderly couple. The man, in the foreground, has grey hair and a beard, wearing a grey sweater. The woman, behind him, has short white hair, wears glasses and a yellow sweater, and has her arms around his shoulders. They are both smiling warmly at the camera.

“It’s good to know
we have AUKS to
get in touch with if
we need support”

Hospital Discharge Service (HDS)

Actively reducing the re-admission of older people into hospital

AUKS's Hospital Discharge team are based within the Discharge Lounge at Sunderland Royal Hospital (SRH). The HDS is funded by Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) operating across the City of Sunderland for older people aged 60+. The Hospital Discharge team work closely with staff within the hospital wards and discharge lounge in Sunderland. The HDS focus on preventative support to avoid readmissions back to Hospital.

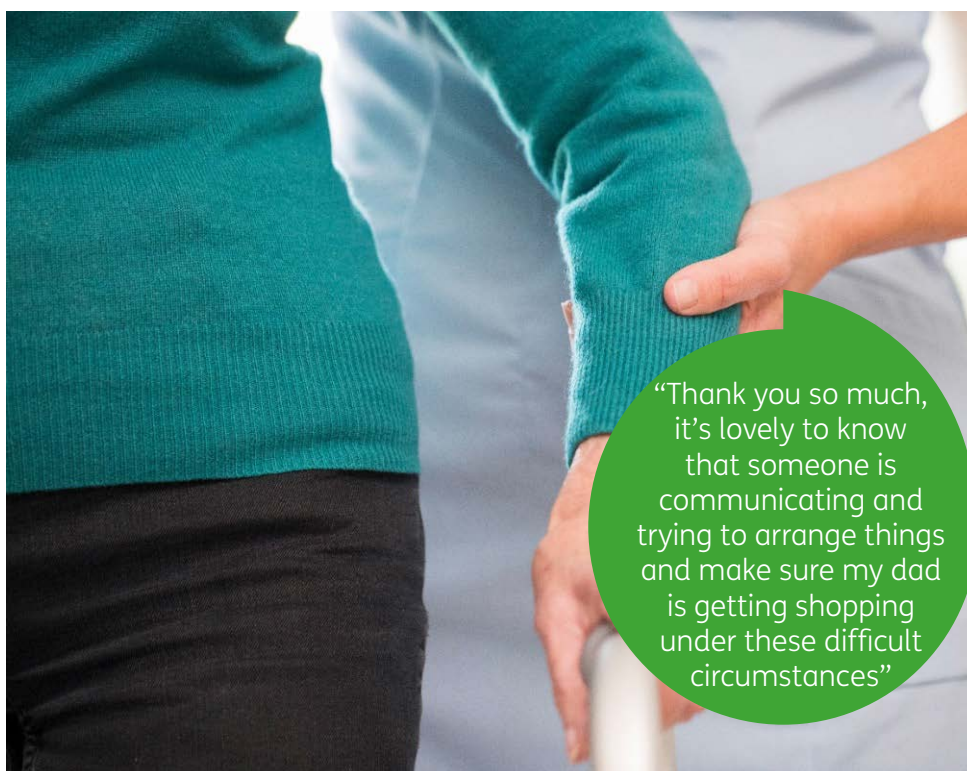
The team offers a flexible range of advice and support within the home. Working with patients over a number of weeks after discharge. The service includes assisting in meal preparation, helping with light domestic work, shopping support and signposting to other support services.

Some clients request ongoing support after the initial HDS intervention and are then referred to other services to support the individual on a longer term basis.

Due to Covid 19, 2020/21 has been particularly challenging year for the HDS which has seen an increase in demand. This vital support service has remained fully operational throughout the pandemic adhering to government guidelines at all times.

In 2020/21 the service also provided crisis food packs and shopping support for clients discharged from hospital. Many clients had no support networks at home due to family/friends/carers self-isolating.

The service continues to build good support systems with other professional services and organisations ensuring older people receive a variety of support interventions.



742
home visits

1,458
patient contact
within the Discharge
Lounge and across
Hospital Wards

403
older people
supported

314
signposting
and referrals

The Essence Service

Sunderland's Dementia Hub for those in the mild to moderate stages of the condition.

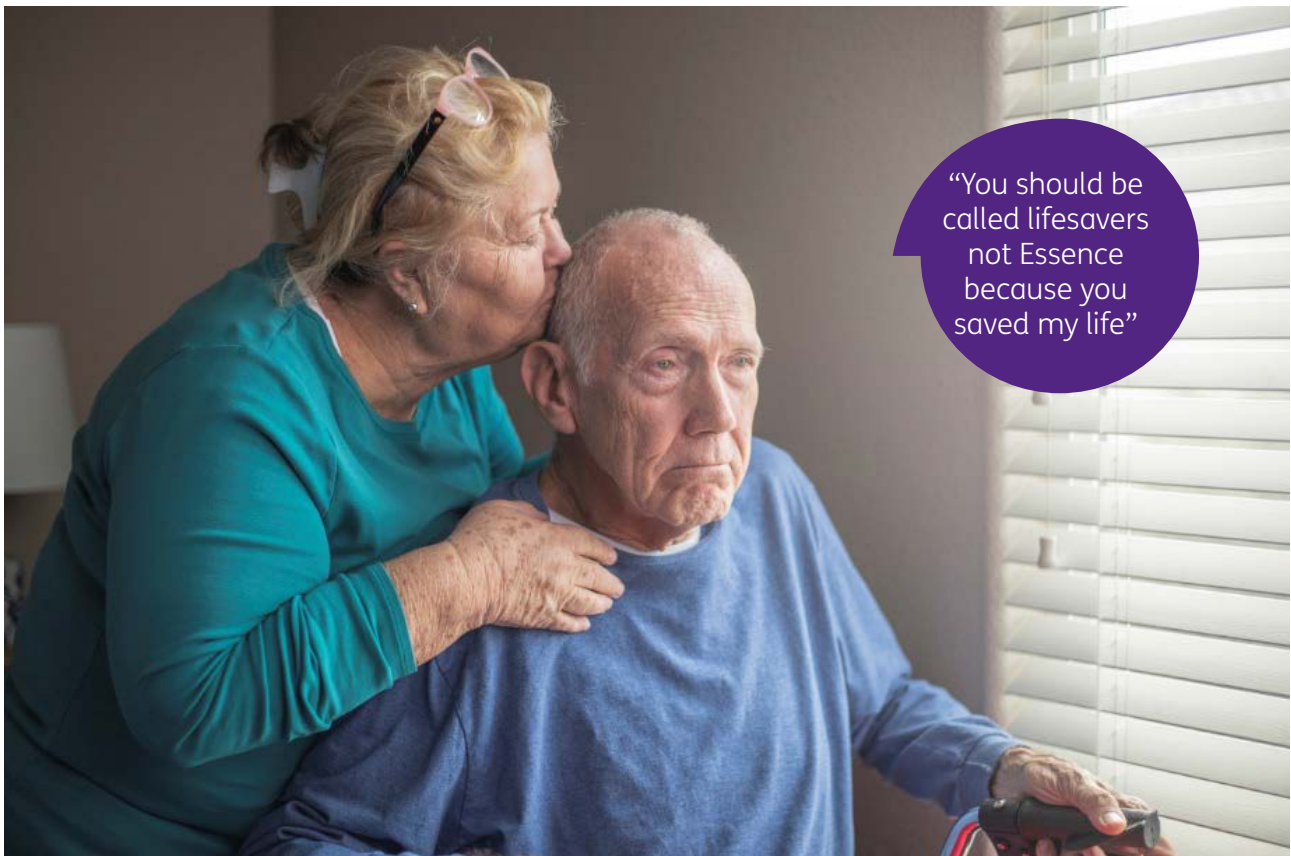


As the only charity in the country to attain the University of Stirling Award for its dementia friendly environment, AUKS's Essence Service has continued to develop and make a positive impact for people with a mild to moderate diagnosis of dementia and their carers.

Our Essence Service is dedicated to ongoing consultation with those with a dementia diagnosis and their carers to ensure the service is client focused and tailored to individual need.

Our feedback clearly demonstrates that the service provides a high level of information, advice, activities and listening ear support which helps people come to terms with and accept a dementia diagnosis in an informed and supportive environment.

We are delighted that the service continues to receive funding from the Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to help us carry out our vital work.



“I can’t praise the Essence service enough, during lockdown and beyond, the online zoom meetings for carers and families is brilliant, it helps when we are feeling isolated and alone. Myself personally I have got to speak to fellow carers and the fabulous staff online, this has helped keep in contact with people through an extremely isolating time.”



Services were realigned due to COVID-19 in line with government guidelines. People with dementia and their carers continued to receive dedicated support remotely via listening ear support, welfare calls and onward referrals to support services.

In addition to providing information on dementia, such as behavioural changes and the different types of the condition, a range of other information and advice has been delivered to people with dementia and their carers, such as:

- maximising income and accessing benefits
- practical support for carers in their home via Essence Lifestyle service (shopping, housework) in line with government guidelines
- information on community and residential care
- wills and power of attorney
- accessing social care assessments

- client centred support plans
- Training Programmes
- Support for carers when their loved ones dementia diagnosis becomes more advanced

Everyone has been encouraged to engage with the Essence remote/digital activity programme during 2020/21 as evidence shows that keeping busy, stimulating the brain and socialising slows down the progression of dementia and maintains general wellbeing.

This included the digital activities below:

- coffee mornings
- arts and crafts sessions
- movement and music
- reminiscence sessions
- independent living skills
- carer peer support groups
- men’s groups
- iPad active sessions

1,557

people have accessed the Essence Service in 2020/21

370

of which were new clients in 2020/21

2,794

virtual attendances in 2020 /21

919

isolation / activity packs given out to Essence clients in 2020/21.

7

volunteers

241

people attended Essence virtual activities



“I have really appreciated the Dementia Awareness Training. It was great to meet other carers, and hear their stories. Although everyone’s circumstances are different, I felt cared for, heard and my concerns understood. It was useful hearing from ‘old hands’ as well as those with recent diagnoses.

The facilitator and trainer was excellent. I felt safe to open up and share. They offered explanations as well as practical ideas which may help as things progress”.

Social Focus

A service for people aged 50+ who have a mild to moderate functional mental health condition, such as anxiety, depression or stress.

3.6 million older people in the UK live alone, 1.9 million older people often feeling ignored or invisible with research finding loneliness can be as harmful to our health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

Source –Age UK

Funded by Sunderland CCG, AUKS's Social Focus Project is a service for people aged 50+ who have a mild to moderate functional mental health condition, such as anxiety, depression or stress.

The aim of the project is to tackle social isolation and looks to reduce symptoms of mental ill health. Following referral, ongoing assessments are completed to identify need in terms of social and mental health issues. The service also acts as a form of signposting and support looking to promote independence to get people integrated back into their community.

Referrals into the service continued to be high during the pandemic and the project has documented a number of very positive outcomes. This year **192** people received support.

The project has been supported by **6** volunteers who have carried out some fantastic work with clients resulting in improved wellbeing. The volunteers are also invaluable in helping us to help to combat loneliness and low level mental health issues.

In response to limited community activities during national lockdowns the service explored other ways to reduce social isolation.

The introduction of Social Focus Zoom Coffee Mornings and Quiz Afternoons proved very popular and well attended.

61 Social Focus Zoom sessions have taken place this year with 19 clients attending 287 times.

In addition, the service delivered isolation packs to help challenge negative thoughts and help to keep people stimulated during the crisis as mental health issues rose, **227 packs were delivered.**

The year has been very challenging for clients however the additional services have been very well received and appreciated.



192

people received support from the project during 2020/21

6

project volunteers

ActivAge

New Activities, New Friends, New Beginnings

Our ActivAge service provides older people with many diverse opportunities to socially engage with others.

During 2020/21 many group activities were suspended in line with government restrictions however a Covid safe environment is available for activities to resume when lockdown restrictions are lifted.

ActivAge activities concentrate on the physical aspects of wellbeing; such as tai chi, yoga, line dancing and seated exercise. You can also exercise your mind, by taking on the challenge of learning how to use a computer/ tablet, a new language or painting with watercolours. You can also take part in one of our themed social group activities.

In response to Covid 19 ActivAge realigned its services, introducing: welfare calls, crisis food packs and shopping support to our ActivAge clients.

Throughout 20/21 when restrictions eased briefly we were able to resume some activities, however this was short lived due to additional lockdowns.

In line with the government roadmap, we aim to offer a very flexible programme of activities covering a broad range of interests.

56

enrolments

244

attendances

806

older people
benefitting

1,495

welfare calls

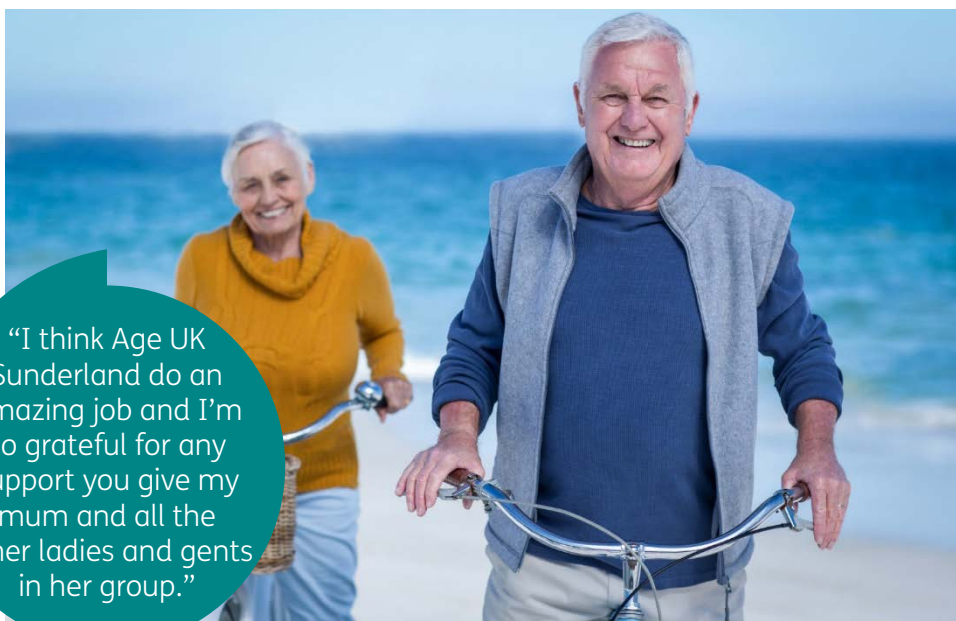
1

volunteer

Courses and activities in 2020/21 have included:

Seated Exercise
Tai Chi – Slow & Gentle
Yoga Improvers
Line Dancing
Dance Fit
Pilates

“I think Age UK Sunderland do an amazing job and I’m so grateful for any support you give my mum and all the other ladies and gents in her group.”



Active Friends

AUKS was successful in attaining funding from the Community Foundation Kellett Fund to implement a project that promotes access to leisure and learning opportunities for older residents living in sheltered accommodation, or extra care schemes, in the City of Sunderland and surrounding areas, Washington and the Coalfields.

There is no better way to keep older age at bay than keeping your mind and body healthy!

Through the Active Friends project we have provided residents of sheltered housing and extra care schemes with an opportunity to become more mentally and physically active.

The aim of the project was to increase social inclusion and reduce loneliness

and isolation; improve mental health and wellbeing by creating a friendly, happy and engaging environment; improve physical health through a variety of stimulating activities for the body and mind.

Activities usually take place in the communal area of the sheltered housing community. However, due to the COVID 19 pandemic, government restrictions and the national lockdowns all face to face activities were suspended. This led us to adapting our activities to ensure that we maintained contact with our clients and provided them with many stimulating and engaging activity packs to help them keep active.

194

older people
benefitting

474

attendances

73

activity sessions

9

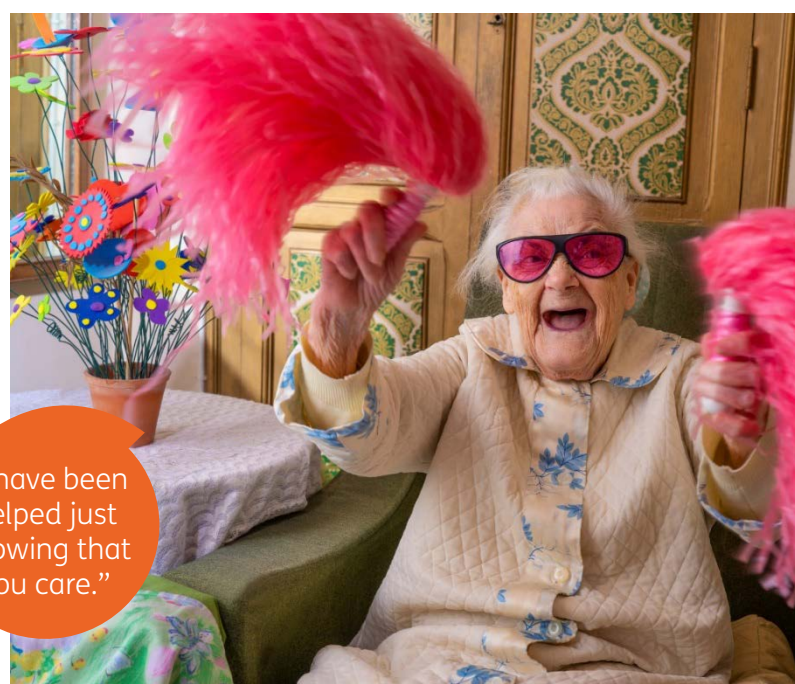
leisure &
learning
activities

11

venues

389

activity packs
delivered



"I have been
helped just
knowing that
you care."

Meaningful Connections

Promotes the inclusion of older marginalised and under-represented groups including LGBT+, and isolated men, supporting groups to make meaningful connections, reducing loneliness and isolation and enabling connectivity in the wider community.

The focus of this project was to effectively engage older people from marginalised populations such as the LGBT+ community.

Research has shown that marginalised populations are much less likely to access support services. This is despite experiencing significant health inequalities and challenges in later life such as loneliness, poor mental health and wellbeing, and increased concerns about growing older.

Due to these factors there is a significant need for bespoke projects that facilitate and encourage better engagement by offering activities that are more suited to and better relate to individual needs.

Meaningful Connections facilitated the integration and inclusion of disengaged older people helping them to access their communities, mainstream and bespoke support, ensuring all older people in Sunderland are able to love later life.

LGBT+ Project

This project delivered tailored one-to-one support and group activities to older LGBT+ people who experience low level mental health needs, including loneliness, anxiety and depression and encouraged social participation through a preventative and enabling approach to loneliness

The project's core aims included:

- Reducing social isolation and loneliness
- Improvement of health and wellbeing
- Increased social connections and community belonging
- Encouraging community involvement by empowering and supporting people to establish their own independent self-sustaining networks
- Improving access to wider support services and mainstream activities

Many interventions during 2020/21 were in line with government restrictions. The project sponsored 2 Sunderland Pride's Annual Events, which were delivered virtually to a worldwide audience via Facebook and YouTube:

- The 1st event engaged with 18,968 people of all ages, of which, 99.1% were from the UK, 20% of these people being over the age of 50.
- The 2nd event engaged with 17,765 people of all ages, of which, 97.5% were from the UK, 15.3% of these people being over the age of 50.



72

older people

6

activity groups

357

attendances

502

welfare calls

9

volunteers

Information and Advice Service

Helping people to claim their entitlements

AUKS's Information and Advice (I&A) Service provides a free and confidential service which is a much needed support to people aged 50 plus across Sunderland.

The I&A team provide help with checking client benefit entitlements, offering advice on how to claim and assistance to complete benefit forms.

The I&A team ensures those claiming welfare benefits are receiving the full entitlement they should be receiving. The I&A Service signposts and refers clients where appropriate to other services and organisations providing supplementary information about supportive services and community care matters.

The I&A Service responded successfully to the Covid-19 Pandemic and national lockdowns, making swift adjustments in delivery of the service to ensure that no older person would miss out on the ability

to maximise their income. The I&A service changed from predominately face to face meetings and home visits to a telephone service to help protect clients and staff from exposure to the Covid-19 virus.

In exceptional circumstance face to face and home visits took place with clients and staff adhered to strict AUKS standard operating procedures and government Covid-19 guidelines to ensure that all concerned were protected.

Maximising benefit entitlements empowers local older people in receipt of low levels of income to help them better maintain their independence and to improve their general health and wellbeing. Additional funds enable people to access services and support that helps to reduce loneliness and isolation.

In addition, the I&A service has empowered people considerably by helping to reduce their day to day concerns about general living costs.



"Thank you very much for all your help in helping us to obtain additional benefits, we could not have managed this without your help. What you did was, and is greatly appreciated."

1,844

people supported
in making claims

429,008.07

back dated benefit arrears

£3,386,465.68

in additional benefits



“It’s so lovely to know that this service is available and with the year we have had, it just means a lot to us”

LIFeStyle Service

Offering support in and out of the home

We have an invaluable team of experienced LIFeStyle workers who provide help and support to older people across the city. This has been crucial over the last year when we have seen demand rise as a result of older people shielding and isolating due to Covid 19.

Throughout 2020/21 our clients received shopping and housework support, delivered in a Covid-safe way with all staff adhering to strict protocols and risk assessments. Unfortunately, the pandemic and subsequent restrictions meant that we were unable to continue the companionship element of the LIFeStyle Service.

Shopping support proved to be a lifeline to many older people who needed to self-isolate, ensuring their daily essentials were brought safely to their door. LIFeStyle workers have assisted clients in crisis and gone the extra mile when issues have arisen to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

AUKS received Covid Appeal funding from Age UK National/Department for Digital Culture Media and Sport which enabled us to offer 237 clients up to 10 hours of free support. This has enabled us to reach some of the most vulnerable older people in Sunderland during a particularly challenging time.

22
LIFeStyle workers

6,762
hours of support

344
individuals supported

1,459
hours delivered via
the free COVID 19
appeal funding



"The LIFeStyle team are worth their weight in gold with so much on my plate at the minute."



“My mam is able to continue to live independently through these worrying times because of this service.”

Redwood Day Service

Support to reduce social isolation and maintain independence

Our Redwood Day Service has faced a challenging year with long periods of suspension due to Covid-19 restrictions. When it was operational it continued to offer a high standard of activities and events throughout the year at competitive rates.

In response to Covid-19 restrictions, our Day Service temporarily relocated from the Bradbury Centre to the Metcalfe Centre in Hetton-le-Hole when restrictions allowed. Exclusive use of the space enabled clients to use the outdoor space when weather permitted and also helped clients and staff maintain social distancing.

The Redwood service provides a tailored 1:1 experience for each individual, including transport to and from the session and an offer of a freshly cooked 2 course meal. There is also a full activity timetable available.

27

people supported per year

277

sessions



Metcalfe Dementia Support Service

Supporting the needs of people with moderate dementia

The Metcalfe Dementia Support Service was launched in February 2020 as a dedicated day service for older people living with moderate dementia who live within the boundaries of Sunderland. However, the advent of COVID 19 meant that the service was suspended during 2020/21.

This service is based at Lee Terrace in Hetton-le-Hole, in a centre with a high quality, colourful, dementia friendly design and was set up to offer tailored support from trained and dedicated staff. The Metcalfe Centre includes an outdoor area

with a sensory garden for additional stimulation and enjoyment. Activities are designed to help stimulate those living with a moderate diagnosis of dementia, as well as providing much needed respite support for carers.

While the service was suspended, clients received support remotely via telephone welfare calls and onward referrals as emerging needs were identified.

Our aim is to safely relaunch this chargeable service to benefit clients, families and carers during 2021/22, in line with the government guidelines.



Activities and Events

AUKS supports older people across the whole of the City and has outreach hubs at Washington and Coalfields. Ably assisted by a number of volunteers, working with a range of partner agencies, we are able to support many local older people from the heart of local communities.

Coalfields

Many of the clubs in the Coalfields have been suspended during the past year, however we are now planning the reopening of our community support clubs during 2021/22 and we are excited about offering a variety of activities and events throughout the coming year if everything goes to plan.

Working with our Essence Service, we hope to host a weekly outreach session in a community venue (Houghton Library) within the coalfields.

This will be an opportunity for local people with a dementia diagnosis and their carers to meet and talk to people in similar circumstances, enjoy a range of fun activities such as new age curling, bocce, quizzes, reminiscence sessions with old photos from the local area and access support from Essence staff.

Washington

All enquiries regarding Washington should be directed to AUKS on 0191 514 1131.

We hope to recommence the dedicated Washington Essence outreach Group (held weekly at Washington Arts Centre) during 21/22. Games such as Fun Bingo, Botcha, New Age Curling, and puzzle games are played, and competitively pursued by all.

We work in close partnership with a number of organisations in the community to promote our services and we have worked closely with ASDA in Washington during 2020/21 who donated crisis packs to enable us to support local people during the pandemic.



Campaigning

AUKS have continued to support Age UK's national campaigns in 2020/21 and these have included:

Innocent Smoothie Hats

We would like to thank our volunteer knitter Linda Newton for knitting 2,000 Innocent Smoothie hats for us during lockdown.

For every hatted smoothie that gets sold, AUKS will receive 25p to help older people and reduce loneliness.

Whether you're new to casting on or already know your garter from your stocking stitch, it's easy to get started. You'll also be part of the huge knitting team helping us to reach such monumental target for a great cause.

A wide range of knitting patterns to suit all abilities and styles can be found on our website. Alternatively, you can come up with your own unique and wonderful creations.

If you would like to find out more or to arrange a collection, please contact enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk or 0191 514 1131.



Promotions and Marketing

AUKS have been providing help and support to the older people of Sunderland for over 70 years and we are the largest local independent charity, working and campaigning on issues affecting all older people within the boundaries of the City of Sunderland.

With regard to our services, we aim to position ourselves in public spaces with high volume footfall, with regular promotional stands. This approach maximises our potential to introduce our services to new people as well as creating networking opportunities with other organisations learning about the services that they provide, better equipping ourselves to inform our client base.

During 2020/21 this approach has been problematic due to government restrictions, as a consequence we have used the following methods to promote our services within the Sunderland area:

- Virtual Events
- Virtual drop in sessions
- Press Releases which are sent to our local media to promote news events with great success.
- Via our social media sites (Facebook, Twitter & Instagram) to promote our services and any news we needed to share.
- Due to the pandemic there was less need to promote and market our services as AUKS was seen as a central hub by older people in need resulting in an exceptionally high demand for our services.



Health and Wellbeing Guide

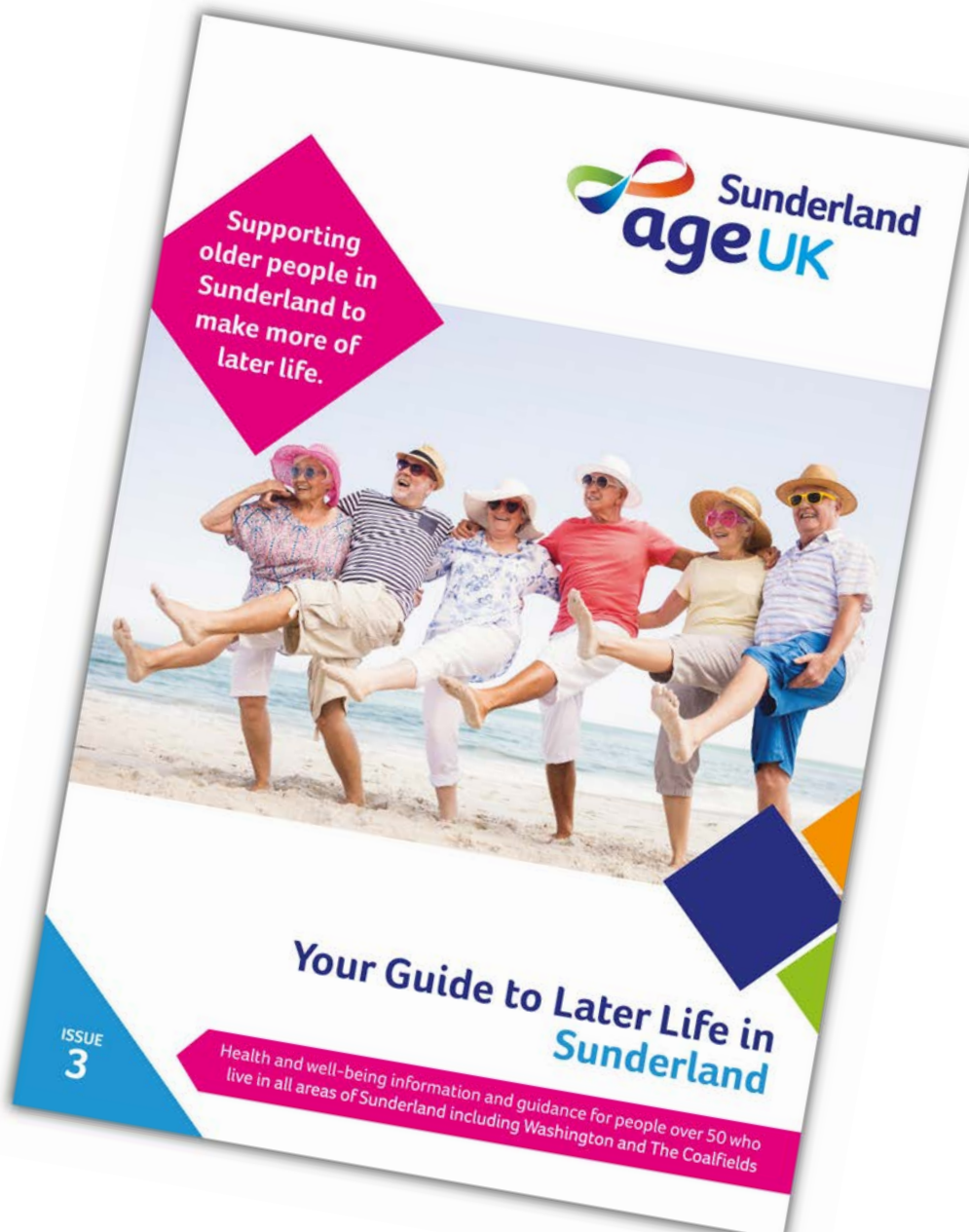
We continue to produce AUKS's Health and Wellbeing Guide.

This guide contains health and wellbeing information and guidance for the over 50s.

There is information on the services and activities provided by AUKS and how to access them.

There is also information aimed at older people or their carers who may need to access social care support, either now or in the future.

The contents of this guide also reflect current guidelines that have been sourced from a variety of government agencies, including the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and NHS Choices.



Donations and Fundraising

Our thanks go to everyone who has been involved in fundraising for us during the Covid 19 crisis. It's with the generous support of donors and fundraisers that we are able to have a positive and lasting impact on the lives of vulnerable older people in Sunderland.

To fund our work, we seek to achieve a constant flow of income through a balance of commissioned services and fundraising.

We would like to give a special thank you to all of our commissioners for continuing to fund our vital work that improves the lives of older people in Sunderland.

Due to Covid 19 we were unable to organise fundraising activities and events during 2020/21. Sadly, our annual Christmas Spectacular was cancelled due to government restrictions which was a big miss from our calendar.

We were very grateful for all the donations received at the onset of the pandemic. These donations supported our work as the extent of the pandemic's impact on older people became more apparent. We are grateful to everybody that made donations at this time and throughout the rest of the year.

Individual fundraising and donations

AUKS has 2 online donations pages, using Just Giving and Virgin Money Giving. People make individual donations via these accounts but some choose to use the pages as a way of remembering lost loved ones, and to say thank you for the support their relatives and friends received from AUKS in later life. 2 recent examples of this generous support raised a combined total of £2,500 and we are grateful to all of those that donated in memory of their loved ones during 2020/21.

Another example of generous support was the donation of £100 worth of shopping vouchers we received from a local businessman, for use as a raffle or competition prize. The donor

wanted to say thank you to AUKS for the services received by his parents, including personal support, financial advice and regular Lunch on Wheels deliveries. This recognition of our work and kindness was a real boost to all at AUKS.

In previous years we have also received legacy donations, both large and small, from clients as part of their will.

Pay It Forward

Many of the services offered by AUKS are provided free of charge. They are designed to support those in need and to help improve personal situations, finances or overall quality of life.

We ask clients that have benefited from these services to consider making a donation to help sustain our work for others which contributes to meeting the ongoing cost of services.

'Pay It Forward' is a way for clients or their families to recognise the professional support they have received by making one-off or regular donations to AUKS.

The addition of Gift Aid by UK taxpayers also adds an extra 25% to any donations we receive. Contact AUKS if you would like to know more about how you can 'Pay It Forward' and support our vital services.

RSA community grant for the Essence Service

RSA is a multinational general insurance company with UK headquarters based in London. One of their employees nominated our Essence Service for a £500 donation from RSA's Community Grant Programme. This very kind gesture was in recognition of the excellent dementia services and support received by the employee's relative and other family members.

Feeding Families

Feeding Families is a charity based in the North East that started by bringing communities together at Christmas. Families and individuals in need are linked by the charity to donors who collect food for hampers for the festive period.

In December 2020 Feeding Families arranged for AUKS to receive 60 hampers from these generous donors. We would like to thank all of those involved on behalf of our clients that received Christmas hampers.

Mecca Bingo Sunderland

AUKS was proud to be named Mecca Bingo Sunderland's chosen Christmas charity. Despite long periods of closure without any customers, their team helped to raise around £450 in donations and an unbelievable number of Christmas Hamper food donations that filled one of our mini-buses!

We are grateful to the Mecca Bingo team and customers for recognising our work and for the support that they provided to older people over the Christmas period.

And a big thanks to . . .

All of the individual and group donors including Trust funders and AUK National who have supported Age UK Sunderland over this exceptional year.



The Mecca Bingo Sunderland Team with AUKS driver Alan Bell, filling our minibus with Christmas food donations.



“Thank you so much for assisting with my Attendance Allowance application. I would never have been able to complete it without your help you were so kind and patient!”

Partnerships

As the leading charity for older people in the City, AUKS supports a wide variety of partnerships and community work. A number of the key partnerships we engaged with in this year are detailed below:



Sunderland City Council

We continue to work closely with elected members and officers to support older people across the City and continue to have representation on:

- Sunderland Safeguarding Adult Board (SSAB) Quality Assurance Sub Committee

Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group

AUKS works in partnership with Sunderland CCG and has representation on a number of groups in relation to the All Together Better programme of work, to ensure that older people's lives are improved and that services and support are in place to maximise independence. Choice and control, whatever their individual needs are.

Supporting Community Development

AUKS is active in supporting community development for older people within the City. Community development is a way of strengthening civil society, by prioritising the actions of communities, and their perspectives, in the development of social, economic and environmental policy. It seeks to empower local communities, around specific themes or policy initiatives. It strengthens the capacity of people as active citizens through their community groups, organisations and networks, and the capacity of institutions and agencies to work in dialogue with citizens, to shape and determine change in their communities.

Local Business Partnerships

AUKS is also working closely with businesses in the City including:

- Sunderland BID
- Business in the Community

With thanks to all of the above and many others for their continued support and partnership working with AUKS, helping us achieve our goal of making our City a better place for older people to live.

Voluntary Sector

AUKS also works in partnership with many voluntary sector partners across the City, working in collaboration strengthens partnerships and improves support for older people.

Sunderland Pride Group

Joining forces with Sunderland Pride Group, AUKS received funding to support and reduce loneliness, increase community connectivity and improve the wellbeing of older LGBT+ people in Sunderland.

As part of the project we ensured that the annual Pride event is more inclusive and representative of older LGBT+ people's needs. In 2020/21 we supported the annual Pride digital event.



Volunteering

We have 252 dedicated volunteers who provide approximately 1,000 hours of their time per week helping to run our service across the City including the Washington and Coalfields areas.

The recruitment of volunteers remains strong with new volunteers joining us from a range of backgrounds, experiences and varying ages, this ensures our volunteer base is diverse. Volunteers offer an impressive range of skills, as well as great reserves of energy and enthusiasm. The volunteer recruitment procedure is robust and includes the completion of an enhanced Disclosure & Barring Certificate (DBS) and 2 references for all volunteers.

Our volunteering opportunities are located all over the Sunderland area, to ensure our volunteers are kept informed and updated we hold quarterly informal Get-Together sessions where volunteers can drop in for an update and to meet others.

The Volunteer News newsletter continues to be published every quarter to keep our volunteers up to date with news stories, profiles, information and the regular training opportunities which are available, such as dementia awareness sessions and safeguarding.


The COVID 19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns greatly increased the demand for weekly telephone calls to older people who were required to shield and were unable to see relatives and friends. The telephone befriending volunteer team has greatly increased to ensure that as many people as possible who required telephone befriending received weekly contact. A small team of volunteers also carried out weekly shopping for older people during the crisis.

The Pandemic has also meant that some of our volunteering activities have been temporarily suspended or carried out in other ways - such as our innovative virtual Christmas Get Together meeting, held successfully on Zoom.

If you would like to find out more about volunteering for AUKS, contact our Volunteer Co-ordinator on 0191 514 1131



“Volunteering has given my life the structure I had lost, I now have something really positive to look forward to”



“I have skills I can offer and I can see I am still making a contribution as a Volunteer of AUKS”

News and Events

Boxing Day Lunch

“No one should have no one” at Christmas time, and AUKS delivered over one hundred two course Boxing Day meals with all the trimmings and other goodies to lonely, isolated older people across the City over Christmas as a special gift from us all.

Our friendly drivers brought cheer to many who sadly did not see anyone over the holiday period. Please ensure that the older people in your lives are supported safely and reassured that they are not alone, for what for many is a very difficult time.

We would like to give a special thank you to everyone who donated and helped to make this happen.



Our fabulous team on Boxing Day working hard to ensure the most vulnerable older people in Sunderland received a Christmas meal.



Age UK Sunderland Hits Platinum Supporting Older Wearsiders for 70 Years!

During 2020 AUKS celebrated our 70 year anniversary of supporting older people across Sunderland as a strong, local and independent charity run by and for the people of Sunderland.

Graeme Miller, Chair of AUKS commented:

“We are so proud that we are celebrating 70 years of supporting older people across Sunderland. The organisation has gone from strength to strength over the years and remains dedicated to ensuring older people’s needs across Sunderland are met and continues to campaign on issues that affect some of the most vulnerable people of the City.”

Tracy Collins, Director of AUKS explained *“Now is not the time to back off our older population, who need more love and support than ever. We are urging everyone to provide reassurance as many older people’s health and wellbeing is deteriorating as a direct result of the pandemic. As a charity we have seen a rise in mental health issues and as the pandemic progresses we hope that everyone looks out for and provides support to older people in our local communities.”*

Pictured below left to right, Tracy Collins, Director of AUKS and Graeme Miller, Chair of AUKS.



BBC Newcastle News

BBC Newcastle News filmed at the Bradbury Centre on Wednesday 30th September 2020 to highlight some of the great work achieved by AUKS during the pandemic via a regular Lunch on Wheels client Elizabeth Wilson and AUKS Driver Alan Bell.



Coronavirus (COVID-19)

While the long-term impact of the coronavirus pandemic remains an unknown, the impact has had a very significant effect on older people in Sunderland. It's clear that older people, especially those with underlying health conditions, have been the hardest hit.

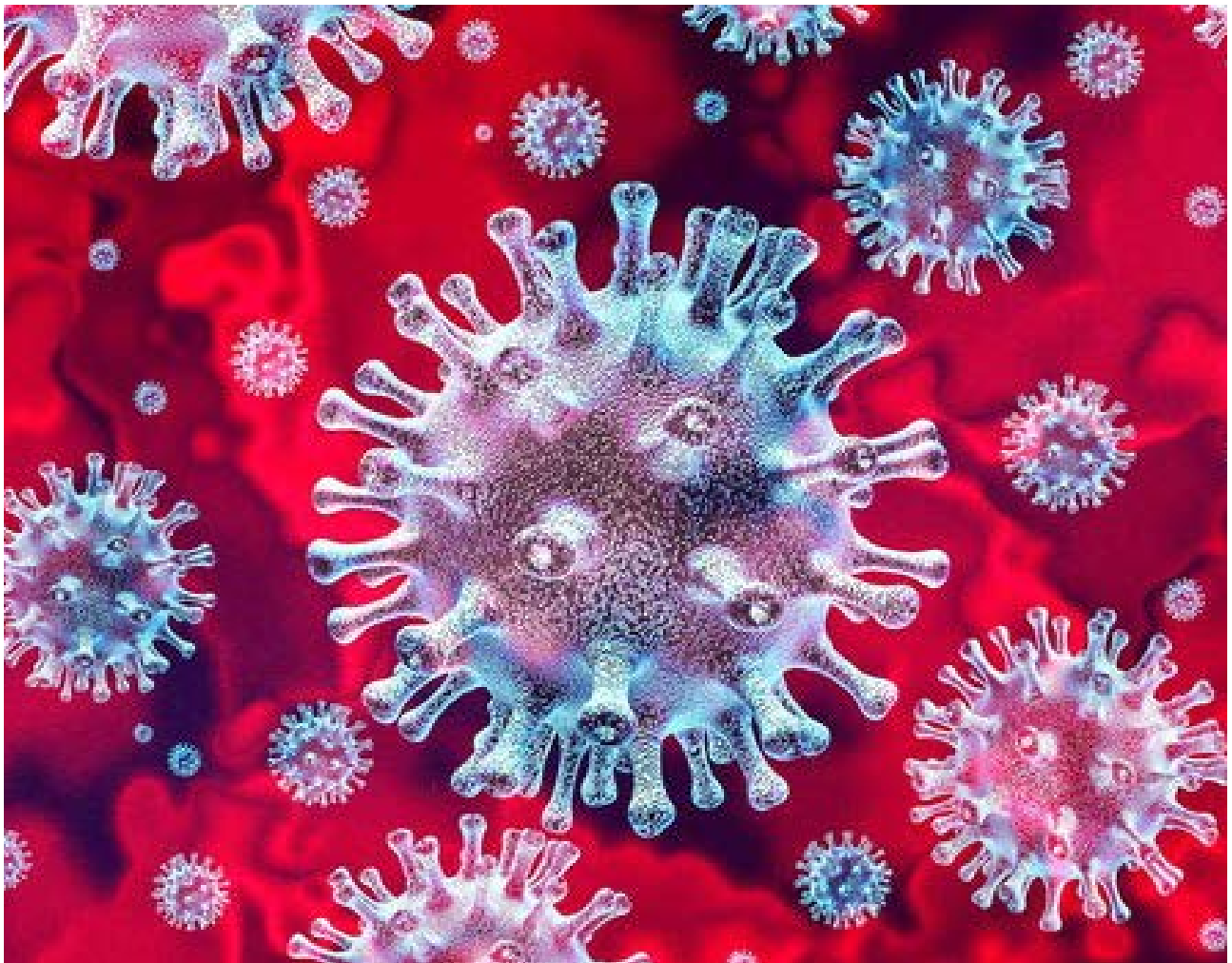
AUKS is dedicated in providing ongoing support to older people across the city during this challenging time and as lockdown restrictions ease.

Tracy Collins Director of AUKS commented "Coronavirus is a clinical challenge and we are urging people to adhere to the latest government guidelines, however we believe

the social impact poses the same risk. Some older people can rely on great support from their families but not everyone is so lucky so we are working very hard to ensure that there is support available to help get them through.

AUKS will continue to support many older people on a daily basis and we are determined to be there offering support to older people throughout the period to come, ensuring services are delivered safely and effectively.

AUKS is continuing to provide dedicated support to older people during this uncertain time.



Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all of the funders of our services. Their continued support enables us to fulfil our mission statement for the older people in the city.



Department for
Digital, Culture,
Media & Sport





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