

**This extraordinary year that changed our lives has been so hard for so many.**

In response we developed new services, supporting older people unable to leave home and our Advice line handled a 300% uplift in calls over a 2 month period.

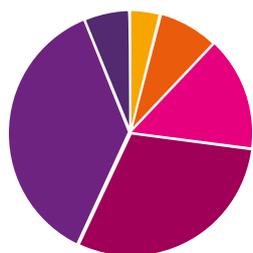
**Sue Zirps, Chief Executive Officer**



# Making a difference to people's lives

During this Covid-19 year we worked with more than **5,315** people who benefited from our services and social activities. The majority of our clients (73%) are aged over 75.

**70%** female  
**30%** male



- 4% under 55
- 8% aged 55-64
- 15% aged 65-74
- 30% aged 75-84
- 37% aged 85-94
- 6% aged 95-104

**30%** of our clients are listed as disabled. Top disability issues and queries are related to **Mobility**, followed by **Dementia** and then **Arthritis**.



We work across all Surrey districts and boroughs focussing on areas of most need and where service provision for older people is more limited.

The graph below shows the distribution of where our clients live:



## Adaptability in the time of Covid

Age UK Surrey developed two new services at the start of the first lockdown in March/April 2020 to meet the needs of our older Surrey residents.

We introduced a **Shopping and Prescription Collection** service using new volunteers.

Followed by a **'Check in & Chat' Telephone Befriending** service as many people became very lonely due to being housebound and living on their own.

*"I would like to say that I was so pleased when Caroline called me asking if I needed help!! As I'm immuno suppressed I have actually been isolating since March 12th and have been instructed to "shield" until June 30th ... I was unable to secure online groceries but that is now happening for me! A relief I must say!" - Shopping & Prescription Collection client*

**403** referrals were received.  
**173** clients were supported with their **Shopping and Prescription Collection** by **140** micro volunteers.



**286** referrals were received.  
**191** clients using the **'Check in & Chat'** service were supported by **155** micro volunteers.



## Providing information and advice

We work to provide older people, their carers and families with improved access to information and advice, delivered over the phone and face to face.

During the last year, the demand for this service has been huge as people were worried about the pandemic and had queries about lockdown, being lonely, support with shopping, benefit entitlements - to list just a few.

**2,857** clients made use of our **Information and Advice** service.

We responded to **7,515** enquiries, a 53% increase on 2019-20.

**30%** of enquiries were health related, with a further **26%** relating to State Benefits.

Our staff and **14** volunteers helped clients to claim **£1,654,700** of additional benefits.

Outreach visits have not been possible this year; all work has been carried out over the telephone.



*"This is to thank you for your amazing help in filling in the Attendance Allowance Form for my frail 93 year old Father. I had tried to fill it in myself a year ago but gave up. The form made me feel that he was not eligible even though he was.*

*I am 68 and reasonably well educated, but was completely dumbfounded by the questions on the form and how to answer them. I cannot imagine what it must be like for people who are not as lucky as I am, or do not have a family member to get them help. Your patience in explaining how the system works and helping me fill in the form was invaluable. I do hope this service will continue for the benefit of the people who need it". - Jenny, client's daughter*

## Maintaining independence at home

Our **Help at Home** service provides practical support such as cleaning, laundry, cooking and gardening to enable people to continue to live independently in their own homes.

Due to Covid-19, the service was put on hold from April to June 2020 and no fees were charged to clients. Many clients did not want their Home Helps to visit for some or most of the period so overall numbers of clients reduced by 18%.

**1,796** clients were supported by **519** self-employed **home helps**.



**532** clients were supported by **111** self-employed **gardeners**.



*Tricia Pull works as a Home Help and is in her 27th year! She began because it fitted in with her young children's schedule but says now, "It's my favourite job. I like cleaning; I find it quite therapeutic."*

*Tricia has become good friends with her clients. "You can always have a good old chat. Most people love chatting and I'm quite good at chatting" says Tricia with a laugh. An elderly gentleman who Tricia has worked for since 2001 has now, due to Covid-19, moved away to be with his daughter. Tricia still telephones him regularly and every once in a while will check up on his bungalow.*

# Other services and social activities

77 users made 339 trips using **Guildford Shopmobility** despite only being able to operate for a few months between lockdowns.



**Computer Drop-In Centre** sessions were suspended but technical support was offered by telephone to 58 clients.



**GO50** activities were severely restricted. 57 individual walks were offered as an alternative.



40 men and women normally attending **Men in Sheds** met weekly on Zoom instead.



**Tea and Chat, Cafe Culture, Haslemere Lunch Club** sessions and **Falls Prevention Classes** were put on hold last year. Lead volunteers telephoned registered clients weekly.



Face-to-face **Befriending** visits were suspended and 110 volunteers kept in touch with 205 clients by telephone, letter writing and Zoom.



Only 2 sessions were permitted at **Farnham Community Hospital** each with 2 volunteers.



*"I have been using the Guildford Shopmobility service for around 3 or 4 years now. After the initial try, I immediately signed up for annual membership and I have not looked back since! I would thoroughly recommend Guildford Shopmobility. Whether it's just to enjoy cruising around Guildford without the effort of having to walk and deal with the town's hilly terrain - or like me, you have real mobility issues!! - Anil, Shopmobility client"*

## Our supporters

We simply couldn't have done the last year without our incredible team of staff and volunteers. A big thank you to each and every one of them. Their passion and determination has made sure we can still be there for older people living in our community when they need us most.

*"Volunteering has been an immensely rewarding experience, particularly against the backdrop of the pandemic, when feelings of isolation and loneliness have touched us all" - Gus, Volunteer*

440 active volunteers lent a hand during the year, donating more than 14,000+ hours of their time.

This is the equivalent of more than **£125,000** (based on the national living wage).

