

**Age UK Sutton  
Annual Report  
2019-2020**



## A message from our Chair and CEO

### Welcome to Age UK Sutton's Annual Report for the 2019-2020 year.

2019-2020 has been an eventful year - with significant developments in our work, new opportunities to make a difference to older people, and a global pandemic that changed all of our lives.

In 2019-2020, our dedicated staff and volunteers supported older people over 4000 times, with the complexity of people's needs and the number of challenges faced by each individual steadily rising. You can read the stories of some of our beneficiaries, in their own words, on PP 4-15.

We have grown during 2019-2020 - from 18 to 26 staff, complemented by a growing Help at Home worker team. We have introduced new services - most notably Sutton's first commissioned Social Prescribing service, designed to support people who visit their GP for help, and also need non-medical assistance. We are proud to be pioneers in designing, developing, and delivering this ground breaking service for Sutton.

As a result of our influencing work, in January 2020, Sutton became a signatory to the United Nations Age Friendly Communities programme. We have been working with Sutton Council and other partners since then, to ensure that older people influence change and are at the centre of new developments by codesigning and delivering a programme of listening, and action, to secure Age Friendly status for our Borough.

There is much to do in 2020-2021, responding to the Covid-19 pandemic, continuing to evolve our services, and preparing for a milestone in our history - Age UK Sutton turns 30 in June 2021! We can't make this journey alone, and we want to thank every one of our partners, supporters, staff, volunteers, trustees and funders for the part they play in our mission to make Sutton a more Age Friendly Place.

**Kate James, Chair**  
**Nicola Upton, CEO**

[ageuk.org.uk/sutton](https://ageuk.org.uk/sutton)

*"In 2019-2020, our dedicated staff and volunteers supported older people over 4000 times, with the complexity of people's needs and the number of challenges faced by each individual steadily rising."*





# I'm Thomas

When I retired in 2014, after about 6 months I thought, I've got no friends. I've got no one to talk to. My sister suggested Age UK Sutton, and I started getting into all their activities.

It was nice to go somewhere and chat to people. Gave me something different to get out and do, a bit of enjoyment because you were chatting to people and learning what had happened to them during the week and they were learning what had happened to you.

I was going to their 'coffee talk' group at the Woodcock Flying Club on a Thursday and Sue (AUKS/Sutton Uplift Wellbeing Navigator), dished out leaflets saying 'would anyone be interested in these Food and Friends workshops, it's a cooking and social group that's going to be starting up'.

I've always liked cooking. I thought to myself, 'well I might learn new cookery skills',

but really it was the fact that we were going to be doing something together, an activity I thought I would enjoy.

I attended my first workshop and **the staff, volunteers and chefs were brilliant, very welcoming.** The first time I met Jemma (AUKS Engagement Coordinator) she welcomed me, she told me what was going to happen and chatted to people, checking that everything was ok.

I liked it so much, not just the cooking, but the socialising as well, and I ended up going to them all. Each chef brought different ideas..... new ways of adapting things.

I am really glad I got involved.

***"I am really glad I got involved."***

**“I don’t think I would have got through it without her.”**



## **I’m Shane**

**When you’re getting all these letters saying all sorts of things and you’re grieving, your husband’s just died, you’re trying to arrange the funeral and all these people are saying we need this money, you’ve got to pay this, you’ve got to pay that, it’s a horrible place to be.**

**I was totally, totally freaked out.** She (Emily, Age UK Sutton Community Support Officer) took a great weight off my mind, reassuring me that it’s going to be alright, I could get through it.

My husband passed away in February 2019, after a fall which caused an aneurysm. It was most unexpected. I’m disabled myself. I had a bit of counselling at Sutton Carers Centre and **one of the counsellors suggested I go to Age UK Sutton and get help.**

I made an appointment and started seeing Emily. At the time I wasn’t ‘with it’, she helped me sort out all my husband’s paperwork, applying for my own benefits, helped me apply for my PIP (Personal Independence

Payment), getting rent and the council tax support, what I’m entitled to. She helped me do the forms - my brain’s not in the right place, I nearly had a breakdown through it, because of the paperwork. She also helped me apply for funds to help with the funeral.

**Emily just helped me so much, going through all of the processes of sorting everything out, I don’t think I would have got through it without her.** She’s been brilliant, even when I couldn’t go to see her in person, she’s been on the phone. I can’t praise the service enough for the help I’ve had.

# I'm Ann

**Age UK Sutton has been absolutely brilliant for me. I've never ever had anybody speak to me the way you do, friendly, as a person, a human being with a right to be on the earth.**

I'm just so happy I've got Age UK Sutton behind me.

**I was in a lot of debt; I didn't work it out until Age UK Sutton helped me.** Steve (Community Support Officer) helped me work out what support I needed. He phoned Christians Against Poverty and made me an appointment for the next day for specialist debt advice. I went to see them with all the paperwork Steve gave me and I've never looked back. I'm better off now.

He also told me I might be getting the wrong level of Attendance Allowance. I pooh poohed him. Steve helped me fill in the form. When he phoned a few weeks later to check if I had heard yet, I said yes, and I got it. It's helped me get out of debt quicker.

**I don't get out. The isolation of it all,** I feel so lethargic and it's hard to get myself motivated. I look at the carpet and think 'I'll vacuum this tomorrow'.

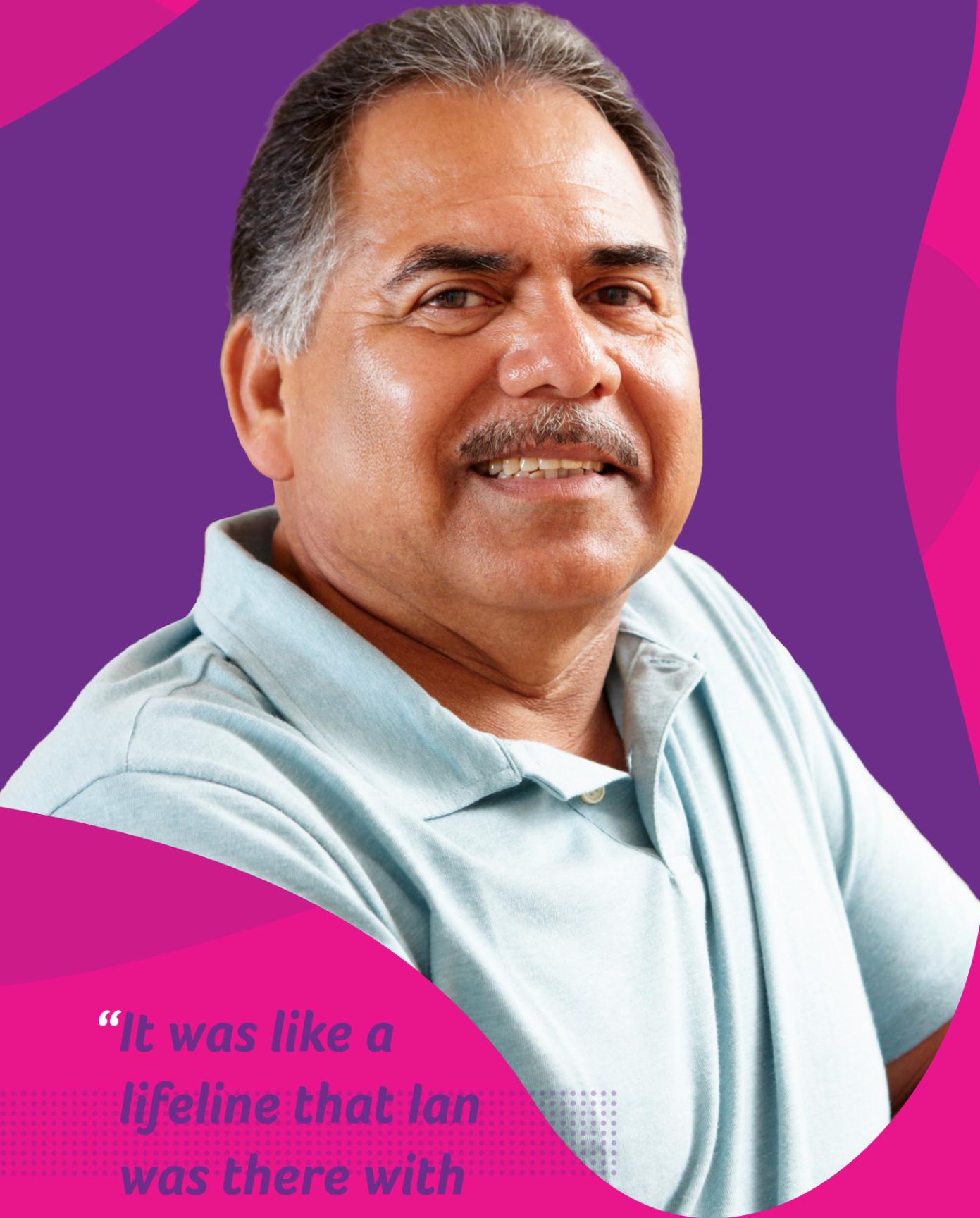
Jules (Age UK Sutton volunteer) rings me once a week. After I'd been in hospital he phoned me every other day because I live on my own. We talk about everything, what I've been up to, if I have any needs. He is an absolutely fantastic guy and he makes me laugh.

**Jules phoned, and he asked me if I was all right, I said 'no, I'm not', and it's the first time I've ever told somebody how I felt.**

I used to get up, have a bit of toast and go back to bed again, all day, every day, no housework, no nothing. Now, knowing I have support and someone to talk to, I get up, and stay up.

***Now, knowing I have support and someone to talk to, I get up, and stay up.***





**“It was like a lifeline that Ian was there with me throughout.”**

## I'm Lee

**I believe in Age UK Sutton. I had total faith and total trust that they were looking after me, they were concerned about me, if they said they were going to do something for me, they would do it.**

I've got many ailments and I also suffer badly from depression and anxiety. I received a letter with regards to my PIP (Personal Independence Payment) appeal. I sat on it for about 3 months, **every time I thought about it or tried to open the envelope, I couldn't, it was making me physically sick to think about it. I was scared, so scared,** and a friend suggested I contact Age UK Sutton, which I did.

**I made a phone call to Age UK Sutton, explained the problem, they listened to what I had to say.** Ian has been my saviour, he's guided me, he's helped me fill out the appeal form which is many, many pages, and helped me work out how to answer all the questions, giving me some assurance there's someone on my side, helping me. The PIP appeal went all the way to the Appeal Tribunal, and took 65 weeks.

Ian's got to know me quite well with what's been going on over the last year. He's compassionate, thoughtful, he has a very calming effect, the way he talks makes such a difference. He says: 'Lee, don't worry, we'll get through this'.

**It was like a lifeline that Ian was there with me throughout.** The appeal went in my favour. You cannot believe how I felt, it was a dream come true.

The extra bit of cash **will just give me a little bit more independence because I don't want to be a burden to my wife, to anybody, I've got my own dignity.** I will even be able to reconsider getting a mobility car now.

“I love to think  
that I’ve helped”

## I’m Hatti

It gives me a purpose, it’s very fulfilling because I’m doing the thing I like to do and showing other people how to do it and having fun at the same time.

I was retiring, I trained as a Nordic walking instructor with the idea I would use it to help other people. I heard about the opportunity at Age UK Sutton and it was the perfect fit.

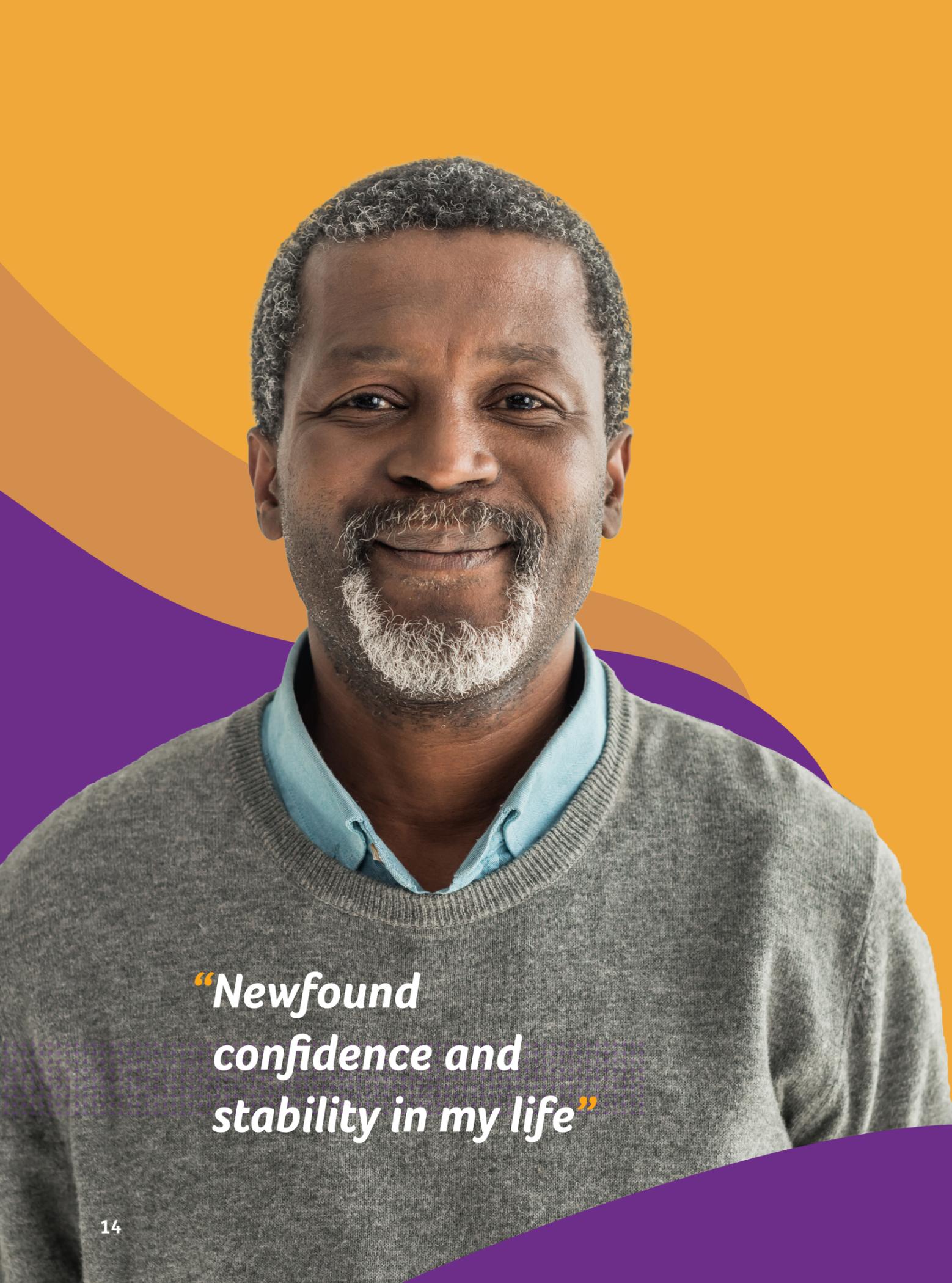
I started there nearly 3 years ago, there were 4 people in the Sutton group, we now have anywhere up to 20 or 25 walkers, and two other groups. The group has grown mainly by word of mouth, **people seeing us in the park, stopping us, saying ‘that looks great, can I join in please?’**

Nordic walking is a great form of exercise accessible to everybody who can walk, but **it’s the mental health benefits as well as the physical, that are just enormous.** Being in the open air having fun, having a bit of a workout while not really feeling like you are, chatting at the same time, perfect. Most people are between 60 and 80.

I’m in close contact with Jemma (AUKS Community Engagement Officer), we discuss how we can promote it more and improve the way we manage things. Age UK Sutton pays for my instructor membership and provides training and all the safety, and admin support I need.

The group gels together as a group, we have a WhatsApp group, **a lot of them meet up at other times, they’ve become firm friends. I love to think that I’ve helped, been the catalyst for all of this happening.**

One of my older members walked up Mont Blanc with her granddaughter, and she said ‘there’s no way I could have done that if it hadn’t been for Nordic walking with you, Hatti’.



**“Newfound confidence and stability in my life”**

# I'm Jules

**I was a broken shattered person when I first came to Age UK Sutton and since then they've helped me start to live as an ordinary human being within the community.**

My good friends suggested I contact Age UK Sutton – ‘I’m not old, I can’t knit and I don’t like bingo’ I said. They ignored me and shortly after my discharge from hospital, AnnMarie (Community Support Officer) came to see me and talked me through the wide range of activities available in Sutton.

One of the things I ventured into was a weekly group in Wallington. With trepidation I went to that group and was welcomed by Sue (Age UK/ Sutton Uplift Worker), she immediately helped welcome me into the group and made me feel comfortable. That was a massive step for me because I’d never been made to feel really welcome in any group.

**Sue guided me in a very subtle gentle way so that I learnt to rebuild some confidence.**  
The newfound confidence and stability in my life and learning

how to integrate with other people and be accepted for who I am, was immense. I still attend that group, and it is a great strength to me.

**As my strength and confidence grew I felt confident enough to ask if I could start to ‘give back’ to Age UK Sutton. I became a volunteer for the befriending service.**

As telephone befrienders we have the time to chat about anything or nothing in particular. A lot of the people I call I count as friends now, I am genuinely concerned about how they’re getting on with their family, or what’s happening with different issues, and that’s a lovely way to be. We both get something out of the calls - a connection.

**For the first time I have started to find myself being integrated into a society which I found to be age friendly.**

**1 Total number of people supported by Age UK Sutton -**

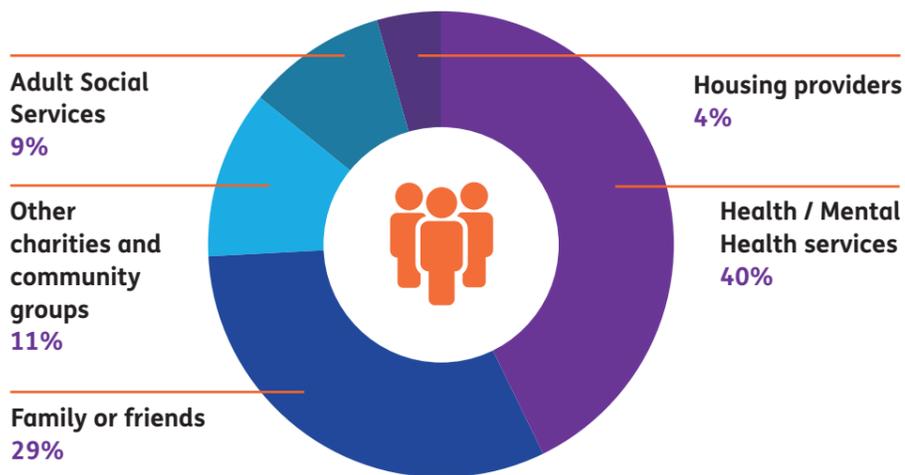
**2985** 

unique individuals some of which will have used multiple services and/or the same service multiple times.

**2 How People Reached Us**

**3250 referrals**

4 out of 5 older people who asked for help, contacted us themselves. Of the remaining 1 in 5, referrals came from:



**3 Why people contacted us**



**4 How we helped**

**1331**

Accessing community and health services

**850**

Enabling independent living

**233**

Staying active with activity and exercise

**153**

Improving mental and physical wellbeing

**141**

Practical and social support after a health crisis

**120**

Participating and engaging in the community

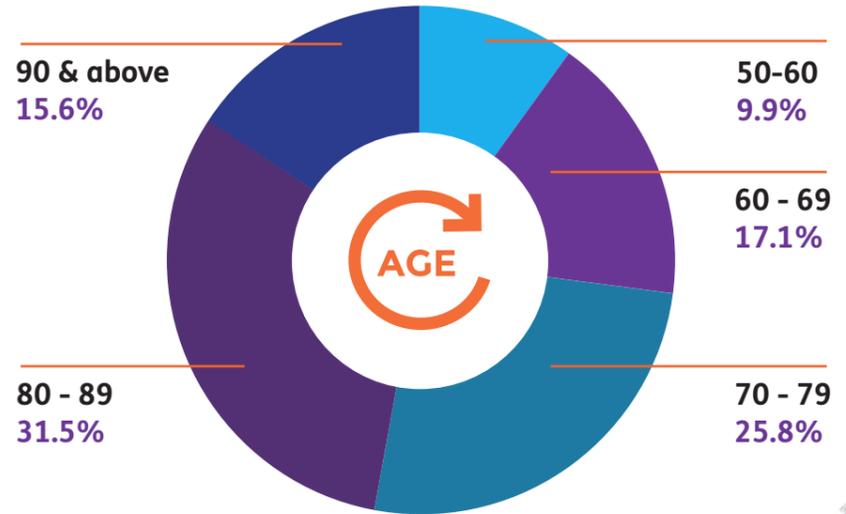
Most of the people we support need assistance with more than one thing - our work ensures people can set priorities and focus on what matters to them.



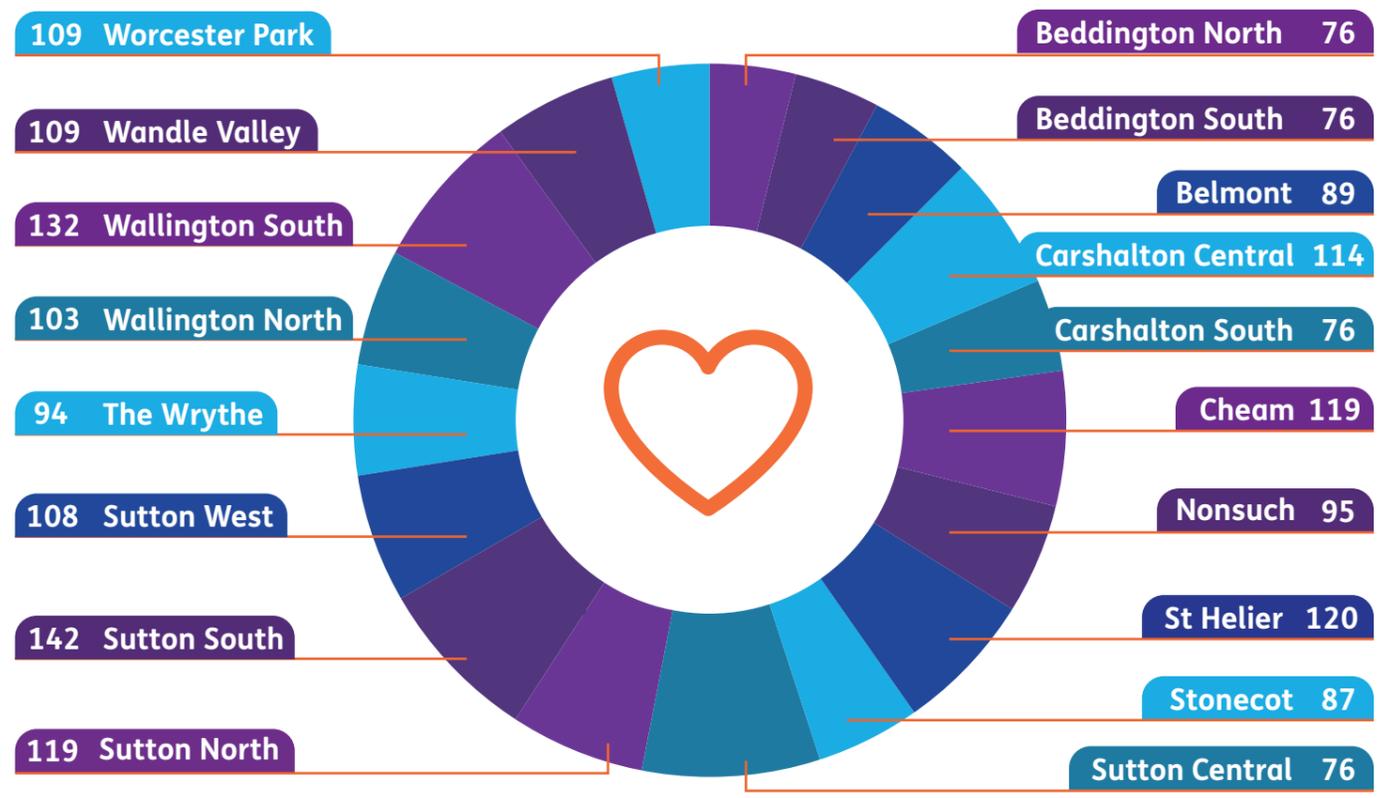
**5** Number of people volunteering

**102** 

**6** Age groups of people we support



**7** Where we support people



## Continuous Improvement and Innovation

**Becoming more effective and reaching out to more older people by strengthening existing relations, learning from experience and building strong foundations have driven service developments throughout 2019-2020**

New social and exercise activities, developing our partnerships with community groups and having a presence in GP surgeries and neighbourhoods across Sutton, are inspiring more older people to try new things, build their social networks and help shape local developments.

Building on the learning from our Santander/Age UK funded Better Later Lives project which ended mid 2019, we introduced Person Centred Goal Setting by developing our own person-centred assessment tool (P-CAT) incorporating LEAF, a validated quality of life assessment for older people, used across all of our services. P-CAT is helping us work with older people in a more holistic way, get a better understanding of their capabilities and what's important to them and to agree a shared plan that will help them achieve their priorities.

With National Lottery Community Fund and City Bridge Trust funding we set up six Community Advice Clinics and a new Outreach programme delivering community engagement events and home based services to make face to face support available to people who struggle to access help.

Since 2017 we have been working with our local Clinical Commissioning Group, Sutton's Primary Care Networks and other partners to design, develop and implement Sutton's all adults Social Prescribing Service. In the summer of 2019 we were appointed the contract holder of a service offering an extra layer of non-medical support including community services, social and confidence building activities that GPs across Sutton can access for their patients. We are pleased to be working with partners including Community Action Sutton, Sutton Carers' Centre, and Sutton Health and Care to develop and deliver these vital local services.

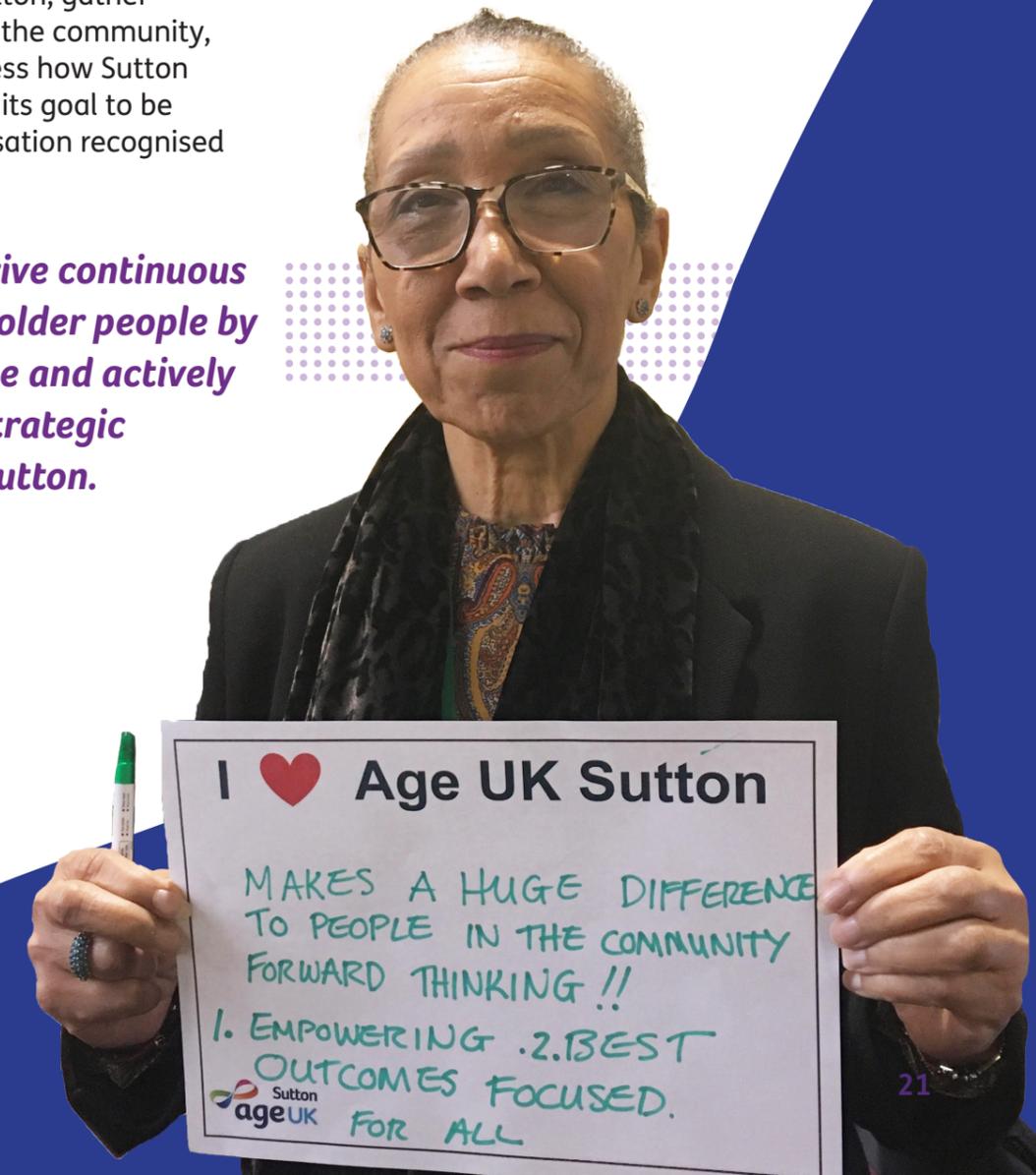
We continue to drive continuous improvement for older people by influencing change and actively engaging in the strategic development of Sutton.

We are pleased to be part of a number of key local development programmes and delivery boards, including the development of coordinated End of Life Care, Falls, Frailty, Domestic Abuse prevention, and Hospital Discharge programmes, and will continue to represent older people's views, and ensure the community sector's role is recognised as we work with partners to solve some complex challenges.

We launched our Age Friendly Programme, in partnership with Sutton Council, delivering a series of events to gather and amplify the views of older people about life in Sutton, gather insight and ideas from the community, and to review and assess how Sutton is progressing towards its goal to be a World Health Organisation recognised Age Friendly place.

***We continue to drive continuous improvement for older people by influencing change and actively engaging in the strategic development of Sutton.***

We have worked with Sutton Council to secure 'Good Growth Fund' investment for the borough. The fund will help build neighbourhood and community capital through a number of innovative regeneration activities including the development of a shared work and events space and roof garden. Older people will soon be involved in designing intergenerational activities around growing, cooking and eating, appointing the contractor and building management company and will continue to have an input into the design of the space.



# Thank you to our partners

Age UK Sutton is committed to working in partnership - which comes in many forms. We are privileged to be part of a vibrant and generous community and want to thank everyone who has helped us. We say a special thank you to the following people and partners.



## Could you support Age UK Sutton to do more?

### Volunteer

We have a range of volunteering opportunities, from regular advice work, befriending, and office tasks, to joining our pool of event and fundraising volunteers

### Fundraise

Could you help raise vital funds to support our work? Whether you do a sponsored walk, fundraise to mark your birthday, remember us in your will, or make a personal donation, every pound you raise or donate works hard, here in the Borough of Sutton, to help older people in need

### Spread the word

Age UK Sutton is here for anyone over the age of 50 in the London Borough of Sutton, who needs support. This could be with a major life event like bereavement or ill health, for help staying active and making social connections, or for practical support and advice.

Many people find us by word of mouth, so help us to be here for everyone who needs us, and spread the word about Age UK Sutton.

We can provide your organisation or group with promotional materials, give talks and presentations, or work with you to develop new ways to reach out.

# Support Age UK Sutton today - every pound you give works hard here in the Borough of Sutton to make our Borough a more Age Friendly Place.

Find out how to give at [ageuk.org.uk/sutton](https://ageuk.org.uk/sutton)  
or text **AUKSGIVE** and your donation amount  
to **70450** (full terms on our website)



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