



Your support is needed in worrying times for the older people of Teesside

Annual Review 2021-22

For the most vulnerable older people in Teesside, the Covid Pandemic has been a traumatic period, made even worse by the cost-of-living crisis which began to develop in the second half of 2021 and which has continued to gather momentum.

This short annual review of Age UK Teesside's work in the 12 months ending March 2022 aims to summarise progress we have made in helping to meet these challenges.

Throughout Covid, we continued to deliver our wide range of support services and added a number of significant new activities. Our successes included:

Middlesbrough Dementia Advisor Service: We successfully tendered for this four-year contract with Middlesbrough Council, leading to the recruitment of three new staff based at the Dementia Hub in Woodside in Middlesbrough. The Age UK Teesside team provides advice, social and mental agility sessions, home visits and support groups in community hubs.

Middlesbrough Hoarding Service: Middlesbrough Council awarded Age UK Teesside this three-year contract, allowing us to recruit a specialist clinical therapist to deliver the service.

Information & Advice: This busy service delivers face to face welfare benefits advice and form-filling for the older people of Teesside. In Hartlepool it has been funded for a further three years by the Henry Smith Foundation. In Middlesbrough, the FIG Advice Service is

funded by Middlesbrough Council and is delivered in community hubs in partnership with Citizens Advice, Actes and CHAC.

Eon Entitlements: Age UK Teesside ensures that older people are claiming all of the benefits that they are entitled to as they grow older. Telephone and face to face appointments are available.

Phoenix Project: Funded by Middlesbrough Council, this project has for many years delivered social activities for older people with enduring mental health conditions across the borough.

Better Health Better Wealth: Funded by Stockton Council, this service tackles loneliness and isolation as well as financial benefits support for over-65s in the borough. The project delivers social activities, a befriending service, social assessments and welfare benefits advice.

Befriending Service: Across Teesside this service provides befriending by our volunteers for the most isolated and lonely. It also encourages older people to join walking groups and social activities.

Time For You: This Middlesbrough service supports carers and the cared-for person to enjoy some time away from each other, whilst the cared-for person is supported by a volunteer.

Time Out Project: This pilot project, in partnership with Carers Together and Redcar & Cleveland Mind, supports carers and the cared-for in the borough to have respite time apart through a sitting service.

Veterans Not Forgotten Project: In Middlesbrough Age UK Teesside works with older armed forces veterans in peer groups facilitated by a veteran volunteer.

Veterans' Befriending Teesside is a much-needed service to support older veterans across Teesside who may be housebound or unable to attend social groups by offering volunteer visits on a regular basis.

Safe Steps Teesside: This Teesside-wide project provides support for older women who may have experienced domestic abuse.

Re-Connect Teesside: This has been a vital service introduced in response to the Covid pandemic. A therapist spends time with older Teesside people in their own homes to build confidence and tackle concerns about leaving the house.

Digital Explorer Redcar & Cleveland: This service addresses the need for digital support for older people who would like to use devices and the internet to connect with the outside world. This support can be face to face in the home or in a group social setting.

Rekindle Project: This Middlesbrough project tackles the lack of digital skills in our older

people, both through one-to-one and group sessions.

Keeping Well at Home TV: This service allowed older people to tune in to a channel on their own television without needing broadband. The programme aired daily and showed different exercises and healthy tips. The programme had over one million views in its first weeks.

Get Active Feel Great Teesside: This programme encourages older people to exercise by attending a group chair-based exercise session with a qualified trainer. This benefits both physical and mental wellbeing.

Over 50s Fitness: Age UK Teesside delivers Zumba Gold sessions to people aged 50-plus across the area.

Eon Handyman: We provides home visits by a handyman to look at ways of saving energy and money. Energy-saving light bulbs, radiator foils etc can be fitted free of charge.

Covid 19 Advice Service: This service delivered information messages and up-to-date bulletins regarding the Covid situation.

Smart Meter Advice: We enabled older people to discuss the benefits of a smart meter through home visits and telephone advice.

TEWV Resilience Fund: Tees, Esk & Wear Valley NHS funding allowed us to continue our work around re-connecting older people to the outside world through therapy sessions.

Dementia MCST Programme: Twelve week programmes for people with dementia focused on improving memory through social interaction and activities across Teesside.

Older Offenders Project: Age UK Teesside successfully provides social activities for older vulnerable prisoners at Holme House and Frankland Prisons.

In total, we delivered invaluable support to 13025 older people across Teesside. We can only do so thanks to the dedicated work of our staff and volunteers, to whom we are truly grateful.

Of course, we are also dependent on fundraising to pay for many of our services. We are now recovering from the suspension of community fundraising during the pandemic and we have planned a full programme of fundraising events for 2022-23.

We are also indebted to the generosity of our corporate sponsors, including Beaverbrook Jewellers, Sainsbury plc, Jackson's Solicitors, Watt Beauty, The Ship at Redmarshall, Tilly Bailey & Irvine, Jacqui Paterson Vets and Muckle LLP.

Age UK Teesside's online shop is also proving a big success, helping to generate funds from the sale of "nearly new" clothing, jewellery and gifts. We hope this will prove an even bigger success in the future.

A combination of the conflict in Ukraine, the aftermath of Covid, massive rises in energy costs and the cost-of-living crisis makes for worrying times for all of us, especially in a disadvantaged area such as Teesside.

However, we remain committed to our objective of making life as safe and fulfilling as possible for the older people of Teesside, whatever their circumstances. Please support us in any way you can.

Peter Whelan
Chair of the Board of Trustees
Age UK Teesside