



Fit for  
**2020**



# These are the 12 steps we are taking at Age UK Wakefield District to help older people live well

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We have been working within the Wakefield District for more than 30 years to help make older age as healthy and fulfilling as possible. Fit for 2020 is a celebration of the Organisation's success and template for future innovation.

Building on foundations of good governance, generosity and a commitment to people in the Wakefield District we intend to continue developing services and activities with partner organisations to meet changing needs.

*Age UK Wakefield District was previously known as Age Concern Wakefield District.*

A full copy of our **Annual Report and Accounts** is available at [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)



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# 1 Giving information

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Age UK Wakefield District's Information and Advice Service works with individuals to provide information and advice to older people, their carers and professionals on a wide range of issues such as housing, social care and maintaining independence.

Enquiries are taken through our drop-in service at Age UK Wakefield District's office in Castleford and by telephone, email and fax.

Information and advice supports people across all our services often making a significant difference to people's income through access to benefit uptake. We also provide a much valued short term Equipment Loan Service including wheelchairs and walking frames - free of charge for up to six weeks.

"I fell and fractured my hip two months ago and have been stuck indoors at home. I rang you and within an hour my husband and I could collect a wheelchair from you and I can get out and about again, so I'm off to enjoy myself!"

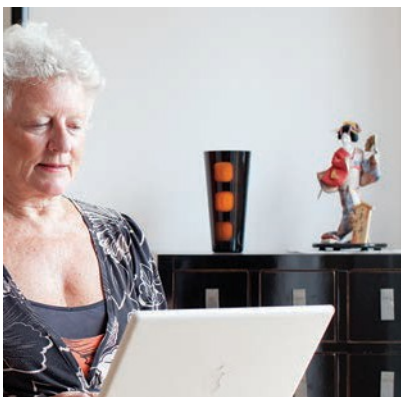


**Our Helpdesk takes over 4,150 enquiries from more than 1,800 clients.**



Last year our Information & Advice Helpdesk helped local people apply for **£2.7 million in unclaimed benefits**

In the last 6 months we loaned equipment to **117 carers/ professionals**



We work with **over 80 other agencies** where further assistance is required and **support individuals at home, in community settings or in hospital**

Annually we manage around **200 complex** advocacy cases



## 2 Valuing our volunteers

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An Intergenerational project with St.Austin's Catholic Primary School in Wakefield has matched volunteer Reading Friends with pupils at the school to support them to develop their reading, self-confidence and enjoyment of books.

Age UK Wakefield District offers lots of different ways to volunteer, giving volunteers a chance to share their skills and experiences and hopefully learn something new too. Our volunteers help in many ways:

- Giving advice that changes lives
- Supporting people through loss and serious illness
- Working with young adults and school children
- Participating in the governance of the Charity

Volunteers can also support us in the traditional ways, as befrienders, fundraisers or working in our shops, all of which are extremely valuable and important to us as we can continue to support older people across the Wakefield District.



Over **150 active volunteers** across our services and projects in **17 different volunteer roles**.





“ The best part of being a Reading Friend for me has been the amazing children. The lift that they give me each week and seeing the change in their reading and their confidence is immense. The whole thing has been just so rewarding! ”

“

I can't speak highly enough of the way that Hailey looks after me, I wasn't very keen on accepting help but my family encouraged me to try the service out. Thanks to Age UK life is much better. Hailey is wonderful and definitely worth all the money in the world!

”



# 3

## Enabling independence

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In Wakefield District there are more than 20,000 people over the age of 65 living alone, with another 20,000 providing unpaid care to others in need of ongoing support. At Age UK we believe that enabling individuals to retain their independence is vital if people are to enjoy later life.

Our Home Support Services mean that when an individual needs assistance with some of the simplest daily tasks we can be there for them, this can include anything from helping with cleaning, to accompanying people on GP or hospital visits or even taking a trip out.

Every year we do more than 1,200 shops for older people, ensuring that their shopping is delivered directly to their door. After a friendly call by a member of staff or volunteer we organise anything from weekly shopping to the purchase and delivery of larger items, managing the liaison with supermarkets and cash free payments.

**More than 95% of the clients ordering goods chose to order fresh food and vegetables and everyone said that we helped them have a healthy diet.**

# 4

## Supporting change with Advocacy

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Sometimes unexpected life changes can create challenges that feel too great to overcome. At Age UK Wakefield District we believe that, with a small amount of support, individuals can be given the confidence and assurance to cope with what are often difficult circumstances. We know that if we can offer help early enough individuals are better able to retain their independence.

Alice is 82 years old and has recently moved into Extra Care Living Accommodation, since the move her daughter has given some assistance with her finances, but as she is a busy working mum she only has limited time for this.

Alice is used to being in control and was becoming distressed that she didn't know how much money she had or how to manage it. She didn't want to appear ungrateful for her daughter's help but was desperate for things to change.

With the support of an Age UK Advocacy Worker Alice was able to regain full control of her finances and find the confidence to speak to her daughter. She is now able to make choices about the things that she does and enjoy life more.





“You’ve been brilliant in sorting out my finances and I can’t thank you enough.”

Advocacy workers express or represent the views on behalf of individuals who lack confidence or capability, enabling conflict resolution, constructive change and improved access to health and social care services.



# 5 Encouraging an active lifestyle

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It is well known that regular physical activity can reduce the risk of developing many chronic conditions, as well as having many positive benefits for our mental health. As we grow older exercise helps to maintain our health, our sense of wellbeing and prevent declining functionality. We may find it difficult to participate in sports that we once enjoyed but part of the trick to staying healthy is to find new ways to keep active!

Through various partnership initiatives we have been able to expand the opportunities for older adults to remain active through sport and exercise. Local activities including Walking Football and Walking Rugby have been developed with community sports providers to compliment Boccia Bowling, Pilates and chair based exercise classes. We are always ready to explore new opportunities alongside other more 'traditional' approaches such as cycling and walking.

**Loneliness** is detrimental to people's **mental and physical wellbeing** and has been proven to be as harmful to our health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

*Social relationships and mortality risk: a meta-analytic review, Holt Lunstead J, Smith TB, Layton JB, PLoS Med 2010.*



“ Age doesn't matter,  
ability doesn't matter,  
we just come together  
to have fun . . . it gives  
us something to look  
forward to every week.

”



## 6 Offering support

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At Age UK Wakefield District we value partnerships that strengthen the services we are able to offer. We know that the expertise of other organisations helps us to do more for older people. The Cancer Support Programme is run in partnership with Macmillan to provide for patients living with breast, colorectal, gynaecological or prostate cancer. Combining our expertise in understanding the needs of older people with Macmillan's insights we are able to offer initial one-to-one guidance, group support with peers and links into wider caring networks.

For some, living with cancer is part of a wider complex personal landscape - when an individual has been a full time Carer for a partner who is also living with long term conditions it can mean that life becomes very challenging ...

When we met Edna and Jack we completed a LEAF assessment (page 27) which enabled us to put appropriate interventions in place. We were able to offer practical and emotional support as well as ensuring that Attendance Allowance was applied for, an emergency wheelchair accessed, participation at a local group begun, and a referral made to the Wakefield Well Woman Centre.

**WE ARE  
MACMILLAN.**  
CANCER SUPPORT





On average individuals receive **12 hours of one-to-one support** from a trained Age UK specialist support worker. Taking **over 200 referrals** a year we offer **support** to individuals, their families, friends and carers.

“ Thank you so much for your support and information - we wouldn't have known where to turn if it wasn't for your help. ”



**Bereavement** is a natural part of life but when life is already difficult normal responses may become heightened and individuals can sometimes become depressed needing attention from their GP. **Talking to someone** who **understands** is known to help and over the years we have **supported** people through bereavement offering **one-to-one support sessions** followed by **group support**.



# 7

## Coming to terms with bereavement

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Judith lost her mum recently and came to Age UK Wakefield District for help. She was feeling unwell and overwhelmed with having to deal with the practical and financial issues surrounding her bereavement.

The Bereavement Advice and Support Service provides practical and emotional support to people over the age of 18 ensuring that legal and independent financial advice is accessed when necessary. There are three bereavement groups across the District providing peer support, developing new friendships and social interaction after loss.

On meeting Judith we carried out a LEAF assessment (page 27) and as a result were able to plan together, over a couple of sessions, the help that Judith needed. We were able to ensure that appropriate legal advice was gained, offer support to Judith through difficult family circumstances and help her find a way towards a more optimistic future.



**82% of the people who used the service said it reduced their need to go to their GP for bereavement support.**



“

I am  
extremely grateful towards  
your wonderful  
service and in  
particular your  
lovely people.

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# 8

## Assisting older people home from hospital

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Every day older people are admitted to hospital wards from Emergency Departments because assessment reveals that there are other unmet, low level needs which mean it is not safe, or advisable, to return the individual home (despite being medically fit). Over the past five years the number of older people transferred to the wards in Wakefield has increased by more than 70%.

Where there is no medical reason for a hospital stay the overall health of older people is often compromised, individuals frequently struggle to return to their previous levels of independence.

Age UK Wakefield District's Hospital to Home Service has been able to play an increasing role helping individuals home from hospital. Trained support workers drive individuals home ensuring that the journey is smooth and stress free. We also make sure before we leave the client that they are safe, secure and comfortable and that they are able to access any further support that they may need either from Age UK or other providers.



The **Hospital to Home** is a CQC registered service operating **seven days a week**, with a **dedicated 0800 number** for incoming referrals.

# 9 Rebuilding confidence

Sudden unexpected life change can have a dramatic effect on an individual's wellbeing. As we age even small things such as time spent in hospital, loss, bereavement, a fall, illness, relocating or even a friend moving away can upset the balance of life and leave us feeling unable to cope. When we are younger we may need extra support to find the confidence we need to get back on our feet but this is especially true as we become older.

The Social Contact Scheme offers individuals time limited one-to-one support aimed at restoring confidence and returning people to fuller, more active lives. We use our LEAF assessment tool to understand each individual's circumstances. This enables us to identify areas of need and put in place care planning support, empowering each individual to achieve their personal goals.

A recent British Medical Journal reported that there is a direct correlation between a **healthy retirement** and the number of **social activities or groups that we participate in**.

*BMJ, Feb 2016 Social group memberships in retirement are associated with reduced risk of premature death: evidence from a longitudinal cohort study Steffens, Cruwys, Haslam, Jetten, Haslam.*

“ I spent most of September in hospital and thought I would receive help when I returned home, unfortunately this didn't happen and I had to rely on my son who works full time and lives in Bradford, it was not fair on either of us. Then my son rang **Age UK**, a lady came the same day and has done so once or twice a week for the last six weeks, she has **helped me get moving in lots of different ways**. I am 91 years old and because of you, my son and a couple of good friends I've decided to stay around a bit longer! ”

**Letter sent to the Wakefield Express**





# 10 Connecting people

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Over the forthcoming years health and social care provision will be faced with unprecedented demands. In a climate of financial restraint and declining public health, the needs of an ageing population and rising expectations for sophisticated medical care will mean that the system will be severely tested.

If people are not to be let down a new approach is needed. NHS England's Five Year Forward View and the Care Act (published in 2014) talk of a radical shift to person-centred care and investment in preventative services, giving individuals choice and control about the care that they receive, and encouraging us all to address our lifestyles. The Third Sector is seen as a key provider within this developing arena.

In Wakefield District we have translated the principles of integration into some key programs that sit at the heart of a radically revised approach.

The **Care Home Vanguard** is working across the District to ensure that residents in **Supported Living Schemes** feel part of local communities and are able to **engage fully** in the things that they want to do.



**Age UK Wakefield District** is working with teams of health, social care and VCS professionals to deliver the **Connecting Care** program from **three multi-disciplinary team Hubs across the District**

“Here at St George’s, community life is definitely being enriched by being involved with the local Care Home Settings . . .”  
**Manager of St George’s Anchor Site**



“For residents this new way of working means rapid access and seamless care – because we are all based together. In the past it could have been a week to organise a referral and now it can be done the same day.”

**Carol Spray, MY Therapy**

“Joining things together is an absolutely brilliant idea.”



# 11 for the Engaging Future

We are proud to be taking a lead on developing different ways of recording important conversations with older people in our District and helping individuals to achieve their personal goals and help shape the future.

At Age UK we have recognised that helping an individual be themselves is vital. Making choices and exercising control over our environments, activities and circumstances gives us autonomy and enables us to retain our dignity.

## **The Advisory Forum**

The Advisory Forum meets regularly and acts as a sounding board for Age UK Wakefield District initiatives. This helps us develop the organisation's services and activities in an informed way, as well as giving insight and guidance to statutory providers and community group development.



## LEAF (Life Essentials Framework Assessment)

The LEAF assessment tool was developed to help us gather information about a person's life and understand their current need. During the process individuals are encouraged to rate their quality of life in seven key areas, enabling particular needs to be identified and a self-directed support plan to be drawn up. A second visit reviews responses and checks that needs are being met. Looking at the changes in responses we are able to record the difference our services are making to people's lives.

[www.leafoutcomes.com](http://www.leafoutcomes.com)



## PULL UP A CHAIR ...

### ... and listen to me

Our engagement tool gives insight into the lives of older people in a variety of care and community settings through recorded conversations and video diaries. With client consent film clips are used to capture individual perspectives and personal expression giving powerful insights to those administering care, providing supportive environments and making decisions.



# 12 Altering perspectives

Many conditions can affect us in later life. At Age UK Wakefield District we are pleased to be taking a lead with partners to reduce the impact caused to people who are living with Frailty and Dementia. As we work with the individuals affected by these conditions and with the professionals working alongside them, we are able to change the way we respond, care and offer support for a significant number of older people, thus improving the quality of life for individuals.

## **Promoting fitness to avoid frailty**

As we live longer more of us are living with long term conditions including Frailty. This is now recognised as a condition that reduces our resilience, making us susceptible to a decline in functionality. When vulnerable through exposure to illness or sudden unexpected life changes Age UK Wakefield District, along with other Health and Social Care professionals, recognise the importance of identifying Frailty early and adopting lifestyle changes that can stave off the onset and development of the condition, enabling us to experience healthier older age.

To see the *Frailty Fulcrum* for a 'Simple guide to understanding Frailty' please visit [www.england.nhs.uk/2016/01/dawn-moody/](http://www.england.nhs.uk/2016/01/dawn-moody/)





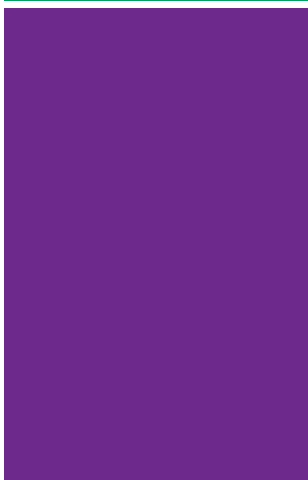
Photo courtesy of Age Action Alliance.

### **Devoting attention to embrace Dementia**

At Age UK Wakefield District we recognise the impact that Dementia can have on a person and their family and how it makes a difference to meet understanding, caring volunteers and staff teams in helpful environments. We have taken considerable steps to ensure that our activities and services are Dementia friendly. Our dedicated Dementia specialists work closely with other related charities.

See the Age UK and NHS Practical Guide to Healthy Ageing for good advice and ways to avoid or reduce the impact of Frailty.

This can be found online at [www.england.nhs.uk](http://www.england.nhs.uk) and is also widely available across the District.



## Taking time to bring about change

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Nationally over 24,000 campaigners a year help Age UK argue for better care . . .

We want to see a world where everyone in later life feels comfortable, safe and secure at home and so every year we also work with others to campaign for local and national changes to benefit the lives of older people.

As well as leading on Innovative work in Care Homes and working with others to change the way we approach long term conditions, locally we have worked with partners to develop **Snowbell and Winter Warmth programmes** supporting older people to live well in severe weather conditions in their own homes.

Every winter **one older person dies every seven minutes** because of the **cold**. Age UK has calculated that the cost to the NHS in England is **£1.36 billion every year**.

*The cost of cold 2012 Age UK.*

Without these partners we would not be



## Taking time to say *thank you!*

Age UK Wakefield District would not be able to do the things it does without the support, collegiality and partnership of many organisations and individuals.

We want to thank everyone who has helped us get this far and who will help us make sure that we are **Fit for 2020**.

Special thanks go to our customers, donors, funders, stakeholders, partners, campaigners and supporters for their valued contributions as well as to our volunteers, staff and Trustees.

Over the past five years a team of more than **95 knitters** have knitted **71,500 tiny bobble hats** for **smoothie bottles** sold through leading retail outlets, enabling us to share in **The Big Knit** national campaign with Innocent and raise an amazing **£17,762 for the Charity**.



able to deliver our activities . . .



## How you can offer support . . .



### Through donations...

Donations of clothing, books, bric-a-brac etc are always needed for our charity shops.



### Through volunteering...

Giving just a few hours of your time each week can make a big difference to the life of an older person.



### Through giving...

Financial donations or regular giving help to sustain our local services.



### Through fundraising...

Why not organise an event or activity to raise funds for us?



### Through campaigning...

Join the Advisory Forum or look online to add your voice to those looking for change.

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