



# **5-year** strategic plan

**2025-2030**



# Contents



Foreword by the Chair	3	What matters?	9
Welcome from the CEO	3	Our plan	12
About us	4	Our values	14
How we developed our strategy	5	Our priorities	15
The state of ageing in England	6	Our goals	16
5 years of progress, partnership and impact	8	What success will look like	18



## Foreword by the Chair, Ali

I'm delighted to share our strategic plan with you, which outlines our roadmap to 2030. I joined the Board of Age UK West Sussex, Brighton & Hove in 2024, alongside some other new faces. It was a great time to start as we had the opportunity to feed into the detailed research that has gone into this strategy, discuss our priorities and review how they were selected.

From the beginning, it was clear to me that the charity's focus was shaped primarily by older people themselves. Much of our work on this was about listening to them. We're clear that what they want and need remains firmly at the core of everything we do.

We are fortunate to have passionate, enthusiastic staff, volunteers and partners, who all work incredibly hard to make this plan a reality. They translate these ideas into action, like a listening ear, practical support and someone to turn to.

I'm excited about the impact we'll make together in the years ahead.

**Ali Mohammed**, Chair

## Welcome from the CEO, Helen

As CEO, I'm looking forward to guiding Age UK West Sussex, Brighton & Hove as we implement this strategy and aim to support more older people than ever before. You'll see our work focuses around four key pillars - helping people to be healthy, independent, informed and connected, so they can thrive in later life.

'Let's change how we age' is our new strapline, developed by and shared with our national partner Age UK. Change can be challenging, but it isn't something we're afraid of here, it's something we're driving.

Too many older people remain lonely or isolated in our communities, some spending days with no one to talk to. Others live in poverty, trying to make meagre pensions stretch as prices rise. Ill health, some of which is preventable, limits and shortens lives and ageism is rife, as if somehow our value decreases as we age.

We're fighting to change all of this, and we hope you'll join us. Thank you for your invaluable support.

**Helen Rice**, CEO



# About **us**

Age UK West Sussex, Brighton & Hove is an independent local charity working in the community providing a wide range of activities, information, advice and support to people as they age, as well as their families, friends and carers.

Age UK West Sussex, Age UK Brighton & Hove and Age UK Horsham District merged in 2020 and are now known collectively as Age UK West Sussex, Brighton & Hove. The merger allowed us to share expertise, resources and local knowledge, ensuring services are sustainable and able to support increased demand.

Just as the last 5-year strategy was being launched in March 2020, the Coronavirus Pandemic hit. The last five years also saw economic down-turns, all having a dramatic effect on the lives of those we were supporting, and on us as an organisation. Our strategy held fast, our resilience was strong, and the learning carries us forward confidently into the next chapter.

## **About our strategy**

Our strategic plan sets out a framework of priorities and goals over the next five years. It is informed by consultation with our customers, volunteers, staff, trustees, partners, and other stakeholders to ensure the plan reflects their needs and aspirations.

This is supported by an analysis of current activities, assets, resources, performance, demand, local and national policy developments and market trends.

Our strategy will be supported by more detailed operating and service plans. Our goals will be tested to ensure they are viable, affordable and inclusive, that investments are worthwhile, and that anticipated benefits align with our mission, vision, and new VIP values.





# How we developed our strategy

**Our strategy has been developed, informed by and responds to, what our customers, staff and volunteers, and partners have told us is important to them.**

We used data, surveys, consultation events and focus groups with those who use our services. We also involved those who may need care and support in the future or those who may need help now but are not coming to us currently.

***Our strategy sets out our priorities for the next five years, the actions we will take and the resources we will invest in to deliver real benefits for the people of West Sussex, Brighton & Hove. It is a plan outlining how we will empower and enable people in West Sussex, Brighton & Hove to change the way they age.***

We have evaluated the impact of our previous strategy to identify our strengths and areas for development. Our strengths include our ability to take risks and manage them well, and to deliver benefits and efficiencies through improvements and growth.

However, there is a need for us to streamline and prioritise our work more and continue the work we have begun on developing our organisational culture following our mergers in 2020.

“  
**Your plan covers all the things we worry about as we get older.**  
”

We have looked at changes locally, nationally and globally that continue to affect people as they age including the pandemic, cost of living crisis, global unrest and a new Government. We have also looked at the opportunities that lie ahead, notably technological advancements, and how we can best respond to the challenges and uncertainties individuals, communities and organisations face now and are likely to face for the foreseeable future.

We looked at data, research, policies, strategies and initiatives to see what we can learn and what we might align with, including the Age UK 5-year strategy – Let’s change the way we age; Consensus on Healthy Ageing, UK Government (Age UK is a signatory); Ageing Well, the NHS Long Term Plan (2019); Living Longer in Better Health, McKinsey Health Institute (2022); The State of Ageing 23/24, Centre for Better Ageing; noting that both our previous strategy (2020-2025) and this strategy (2025-2030) cover the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021-2030).





# The state of ageing in England

- **Ageing:** The number of those aged 50+ has increased by 7 million in the last 40 years. This pattern of growth is set to continue.
  - **Society:** Our older population is becoming more ethnically diverse. Diversity in sexual orientation and gender identity amongst older people is set to increase. As they age, men are less likely than women to say that they have people to rely on if they need help. Just half of those aged 75 and over have all the digital skills needed to operate online. People aged 50+ are more likely to say they have experienced ageism in the last year if they are disabled, struggling financially or from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds.
  - **Housing:** Almost 5 million (23%) of those aged 50+ live alone. Half of the 3.5 million non-decent homes in England are headed by someone aged 55+. Almost 2 in 5 pension age adults who are renting privately were in relative poverty in 2020/21.
  - **Work:** Almost 1 in 5 women aged 50–64 are unpaid carers. Increases in employment rates were stalled by the pandemic. Sickness is the main reason for 50–64-year-olds being economically inactive. Regular formal volunteering is most common between the ages of 65 and 74.
  - **Health:** Men living in more deprived areas live shorter lives. People living in the least deprived areas spend more of their lives in good health. Bangladeshi and Pakistani women are most likely to experience bad health as they age. Disability rates are higher in deprived areas. The cost-of-living crisis is making people's physical and mental health worse. Over 230,000 carers aged 50+ are in bad health themselves
  - **Financial security:** Almost 1 in 5 pensioners live in relative poverty. Over a quarter of people aged 50+ from Bangladeshi and Pakistani backgrounds in the UK were living in deep poverty in 2021/22. Full state pension only gets pensioners to 80% of the minimum income standard. 1 million people eligible for pension credit are not claiming it. Households with at least one disabled adult are more likely to have no savings.
- These national trends are reflected locally in the support our clients seek and the challenges they face, shaping the services we provide and the way we respond to their needs.**



## West Sussex has a large and growing older population.

The 65 and over population is predicted to grow from 23.2% to 30% between 2022 and 2039. The population of those aged 85 and over – the group most likely to require health and care services – is projected to rise from 31,800 to 51,400 in the same period. Arun is projected to have the largest older population in the county. Horsham is projected to have 40.5% more older people by 2040.

## It is a different picture in Brighton & Hove.

At 1.4%, Brighton & Hove's population increase between 2011 and 2021 was lower than the increase for the South East (7.5%). Brighton & Hove has a much higher proportion of people aged 19–31 years (23%, 63,900 people) compared to only 15% in the South East and 16% in England, and less than a fifth of its total population (19%, 53,800 people) is aged 60 years old or older compared to 26% in the South East and 25% in England.





# 5 years of progress, partnership and impact

*Here is a snapshot of some of the things we achieved between 2020-2025:*

**£20  
million**

We helped older people access over £20m in unclaimed benefits and grants.

We provided help and support to

**41,365**

**older people**

**30  
services**

We delivered over 30 different services to support older people.

- ✓ Delivered **over 30 different services**, including **health & wellbeing support, digital skills training, and specialist dementia care**.
- ✓ Provided help and support to **41,365 older people**.
- ✓ Identified **over £20 million in unclaimed benefits and grants**, helping older people access financial support they were entitled to.
- ✓ Successfully secured a **£320,970 National Lottery grant**.
- ✓ Grew our income from **£3 million to £5.03 million**.
- ✓ Delivered **over 20 statutory and health contracts**, demonstrating our trusted partnerships and ability to provide essential 'social support' to local older people.
- ✓ Completed a **merger with Age UK Horsham**, following our earlier **merger with Age UK Brighton & Hove**, creating a stronger, more connected charity.
- ✓ Managed **eight community buildings**, closing three sites while opening **Kings Weald Community Centre** and a **new Hub in Brighton & Hove**.
- ✓ Provided **affordable, high-quality paid for services**, including **cleaning, gardening, exercise classes, lunches, and dementia respite care**.
- ✓ Welcomed **a new Chair and four new Trustees**.
- ✓ Engaged **220+ volunteers each year**, contributing **170,000 hours each year, or c. 850,000 volunteering hours in 5 years**.
- ✓ Worked closely with **local councils, the NHS, GPs, emergency services, and voluntary organisations** to create better support for older people.
- ✓ Through our **Older People's Network Meetings**, we brought together **over 1,000 professionals** to share knowledge, collaborate, and improve services for older people in our local community.



Our new  
Brighton Hub





# What matters?



**In only 25 years from now, everyone over 50 will have been born in the 21st Century, which has experienced rapid technological, societal, cultural and healthcare advances.**

Just consider how our world and our everyday lives are shaped now by things that didn't even exist 25 years ago - Facebook, iPhones, iPads, Google, Alexa, WhatsApp, Bitcoin or ChatGPT. Our communities and cultural norms have also changed including religious beliefs, family structures, cultural diversity, gender identity, how we watch 'TV', and the way we work.

“

**(It's) nice to know that there are people at AUKWSBH to help us if we need it in the future. Sometimes you don't know where to turn for help.**

”

Healthcare technologies have also dramatically changed, the Fitbit and wearable falls sensors being only two examples.

In the UK, the average life expectancy at birth 50 years ago was around 69 years for men, and 75 years for women. For a child born in 2025, their average life expectancy is predicted to be 88 if born male, and 91 years if born female. It is feasible that our customers now and in the near future could include multiple generations of the same family.

Whilst we must ensure our services are informed by and respond to older generations and what feels familiar and comfortable for them, we must also respond to younger generations who may be more familiar and comfortable with the technological world we inhabit today.

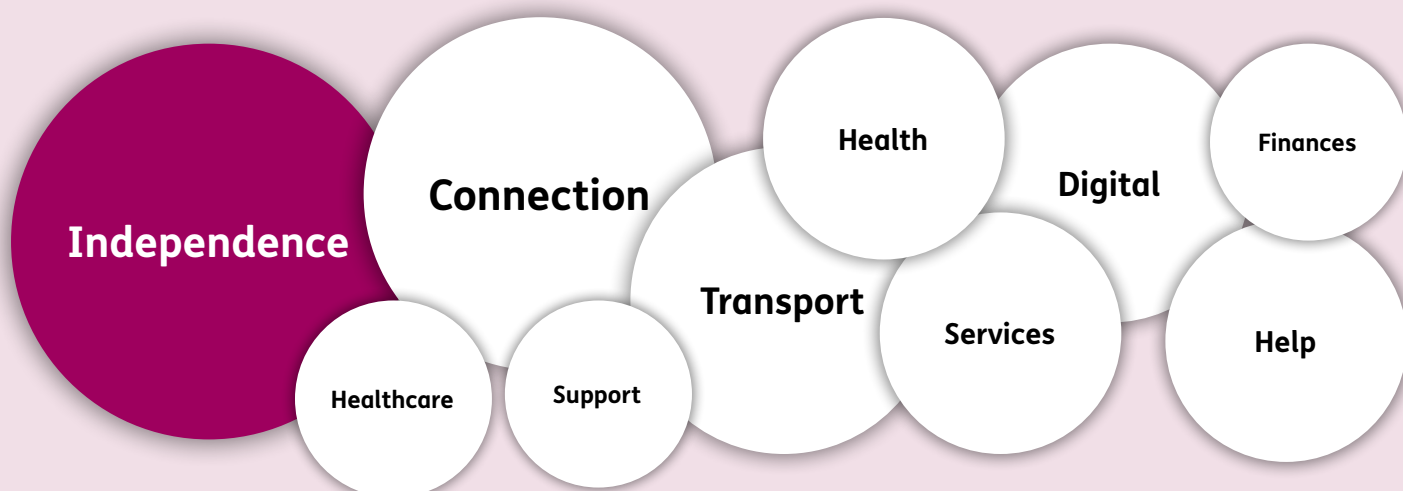
***Regardless of when or where people were born, those we have spoken to in developing this plan have very common needs and aspirations as they grow older.***

# What matters?

*What people value most about Age UK West Sussex, Brighton & Hove (AUKWSBH)*



*What clients' needs, wants, hopes and aspirations are for the future*



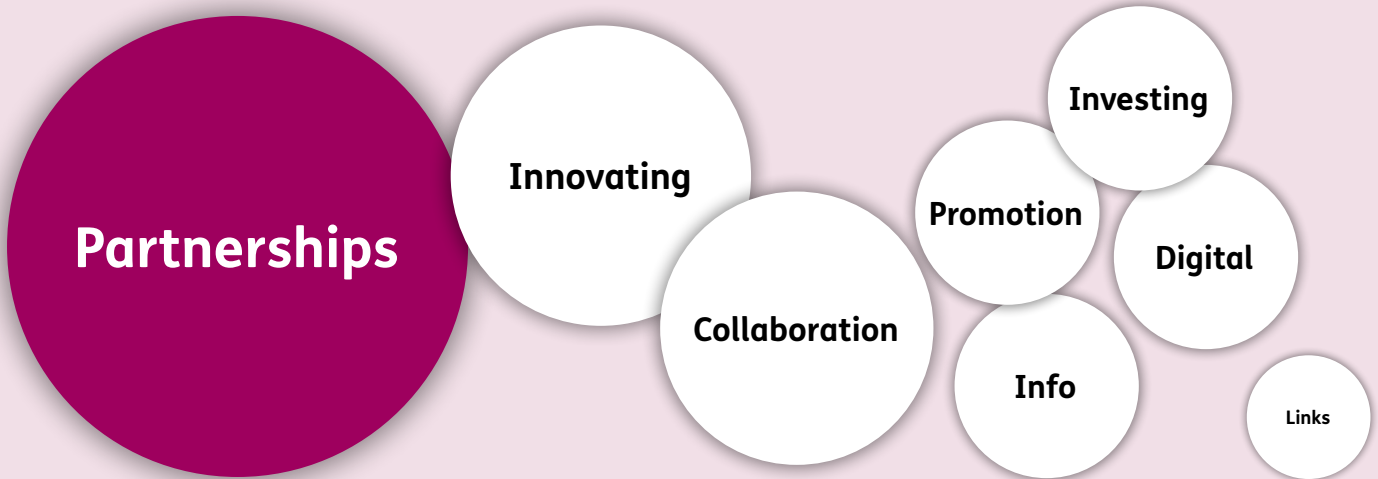
*The greatest challenges facing AUKWSBH and its partners*



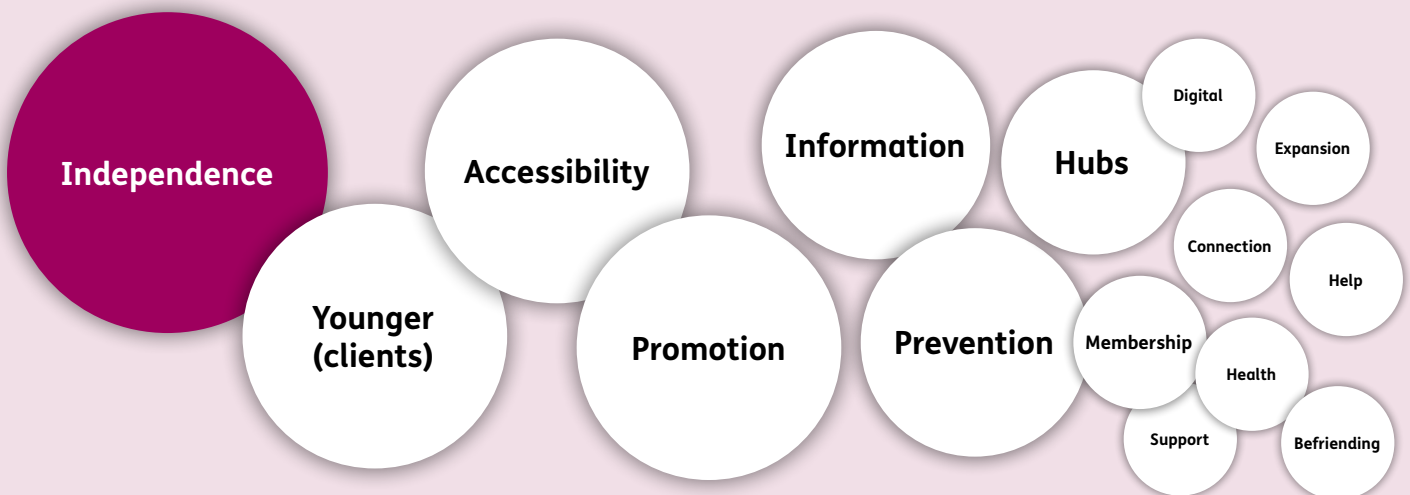


## What we learned from our customers, staff, volunteers and partners

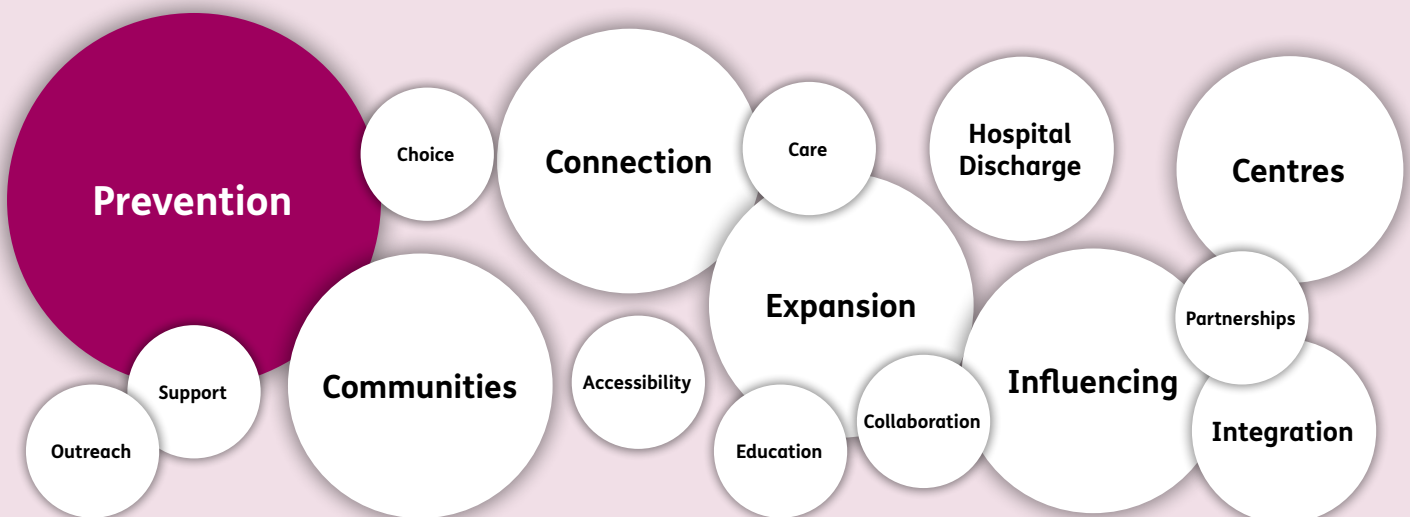
### *The greatest opportunities facing AUKWSBH and its partners*



### *The positive impact AUKWSBH should have on clients*



### *If AUKWSBH and partners could do just one thing, what would it be?*



# Our plan

## Our mission

To be **the ‘go-to’ for expert guidance and support**, helping people as they age, their family, friends and carers.



## Our vision

Through delivering our mission we want to **change how we age.**





## Our enablers

Our  
**customers**

Our access  
**points**

Our  
**people**

Our  
**partnerships**

Our  
**organisation**

Our  
**finances**

## Our impact

Our customers, their family, friends and carers will feel more informed, connected, healthy and independent because of our guidance and support. **We will have:**

Engaged and **valued**  
**customers**

Agile and **accessible**  
**access points**  
for support

**Proud staff,**  
**volunteers and**  
**Trustees** who are an  
asset to AUKWSBH

**Partnerships with**  
**intent** and meaning

A **renowned** and  
transformed  
**organisation**

Sustainable and  
**resilient finances**

# Our values



## Valued

Everyone, regardless of their role or background, deserves to **feel respected and important**. We encourage appreciation and **recognition** for each other and the people we serve.

## Included

We want to ensure **everyone feels heard, welcome and part of the community**. We embrace diversity and create a space where people belong.

## Passionate

Passion is the energy and commitment we bring to everything we do. **We are driven to make a positive and meaningful difference.**





# Our priorities

2025-2030  
5-year strategic plan

People are:  
Informed



Our goals

- ✓ Inform, advise and guide
- ✓ Offer learning opportunities and skills development
- ✓ Raise awareness of our organisation and others

People are:  
Connected



Our goals

- ✓ Offer social, cultural and community activities
- ✓ Promote and enable the use of digital tools
- ✓ Improve and widen access to what we offer

People are:  
Healthy



Our goals

- ✓ Promote health, wellbeing and self-care
- ✓ Personalise support from prevention to crisis
- ✓ Collaborate across agencies to improve outcomes

People are:  
Independent



Our goals

- ✓ Encourage take up of what we offer
- ✓ Offer practical help close to home and at home
- ✓ Build age friendly communities with partners

# Our goals



To empower and enable people to be **informed** as they age, we will:

- ✓ Offer **information, advice and guidance** on a wide range of topics including **health, housing, and finances** so that they know their rights and can make informed choices.

“

It was lovely speaking to you. Thank you so, so much for your kind, caring and patient assistance.

”

- ✓ Deliver a programme of **learning opportunities** to enable them to **develop existing skills** and learn new ones, either for pleasure or to help them into employment or volunteering.
- ✓ Broaden our **communications, engagement and marketing** to ensure we are reaching more people and **raising awareness** of what we can offer, including signposting to other services they may need.



To empower and enable people to be **connected** as they age, we will:



- ✓ Offer a wide range of **social, cultural and community activities**, events and clubs to enable people to meet others, **make friends and reduce any sense of loneliness or isolation**.
- ✓ Promote **‘digital inclusion’** through information and training so that as they age people have the **skills and confidence** to access and use the wide range of services that are increasingly available online or via smartphones, tablets and wearable devices.
- ✓ Make all our **services easier to access** by being available online, by phone and face to face, offering services daytime, evenings and weekends, making our centres **fully accessible**, and going out into places they go to.





To empower and enable people to be **healthy** as they age, we will:

- ✓ Offer a **range of health and wellbeing clubs** and activities to enable people to enjoy good health and wellbeing as they age.

“  
This centre is a lifeline for most people.  
”

- ✓ Work to **prevent ill health** by supporting people on a range of issues including improving living conditions, stopping smoking and encouraging a **healthy lifestyle**.
- ✓ Work to help people **self-manage episodes of ill health** where this is possible and provide personalised support designed around an individual's needs. We will offer crisis support to **prevent people having to go into hospital** or return to hospital after being discharged.
- ✓ **Collaborate and work together** with our health, housing, fire and rescue, and transport partners across West Sussex, Brighton & Hove to ensure that the support and services they need from different organisations is as **seamless as possible**.
- ✓ Continue to **provide a range of support** for people if they are developing or have dementia or are caring for someone living with the condition.



To empower and enable people to be **independent** as they age, we will:

- ✓ Encourage them to take up **all that we have to offer**, what other services can offer, and new technologies as and when needed, to **help people help themselves** wherever possible.
- ✓ Offer **practical help close to home and at home** to enable people to **remain independent** in their own homes for as long as possible.
- ✓ **Collaborate and work together** with our public, private and voluntary sector partners to **build communities** in which services, spaces, transport and buildings are designed and work to **enable us all to feel valued, included, respected and able to age well**.



# What success will look like

## Our customers will be

**Engaged:** We will develop a Customer Charter setting out how our customers and their wider networks can get the most out of what we offer, to have a customer experience that exceeds expectations, and to see us as their 'go to' for guidance and support.

**Valued:** We will listen to, and engage with, our customers and the communities they live in to create and improve our services. We will use data, insight and intelligence to allow us to be adaptable and responsive to changing needs.

## Our access points for support will be

**Agile:** We will reach out and make ourselves available in places and spaces where people need and want us to be and at times that suit them. Our buildings will be flexible, adaptive and thriving multi-use and multi-generational community hubs.

**Accessible:** Our support will be designed around, and respond to, customers' and local communities' needs. We will use our digital platform to connect not only with our customers, but the wider networks people are part of, connect with, and use.

## Our people will be

**Proud:** Our team will feel like VIPs - valued, included and passionate - and reflect our local communities. They will be part of a culture of kindness, trust and support. This will be true in whatever capacity they work for Age UK West Sussex, Brighton & Hove - employees, volunteers or Trustees.

**An asset:** They will always put our customers first and deliver the best service possible. They will be talented, curious and complimented and respected for their great work, both externally and internally whilst always delivering our organisational values.

## Our partnerships will be

**Intentional:** We will be asset based, encouraging partnerships that influence and deliver positive impacts. This will be across sectors, linking our localities with county and city-wide initiatives and up to regional and national levels.

**Meaningful:** We will collaborate with our partners to enhance and expand the way we share information, ideas and practice and to minimise duplication, to innovate and to maximise our collective impact.

“

**Age UK WSBH has changed my life. I don't quite know what I'd do without it!**

”



## Our organisation will be

**Renowned:** We will invest in building our reputation and brand amongst individuals, their friends, families and communities. Our marketing and communications will further build awareness of us as the 'go to' for expert advice and support as people age.

**Transformed:** We will be forward looking, modernising our organisation by making greater and more effective use of digital technologies and AI in relation to our business processes and systems. We will be proactive in thinking ahead about what our customers and communities want and need.

## Our finances will be

**Sustainable:** We will continue to attract income from a variety of sources including grants, contracts and fundraising to ensure we can sustain and build on what we do.

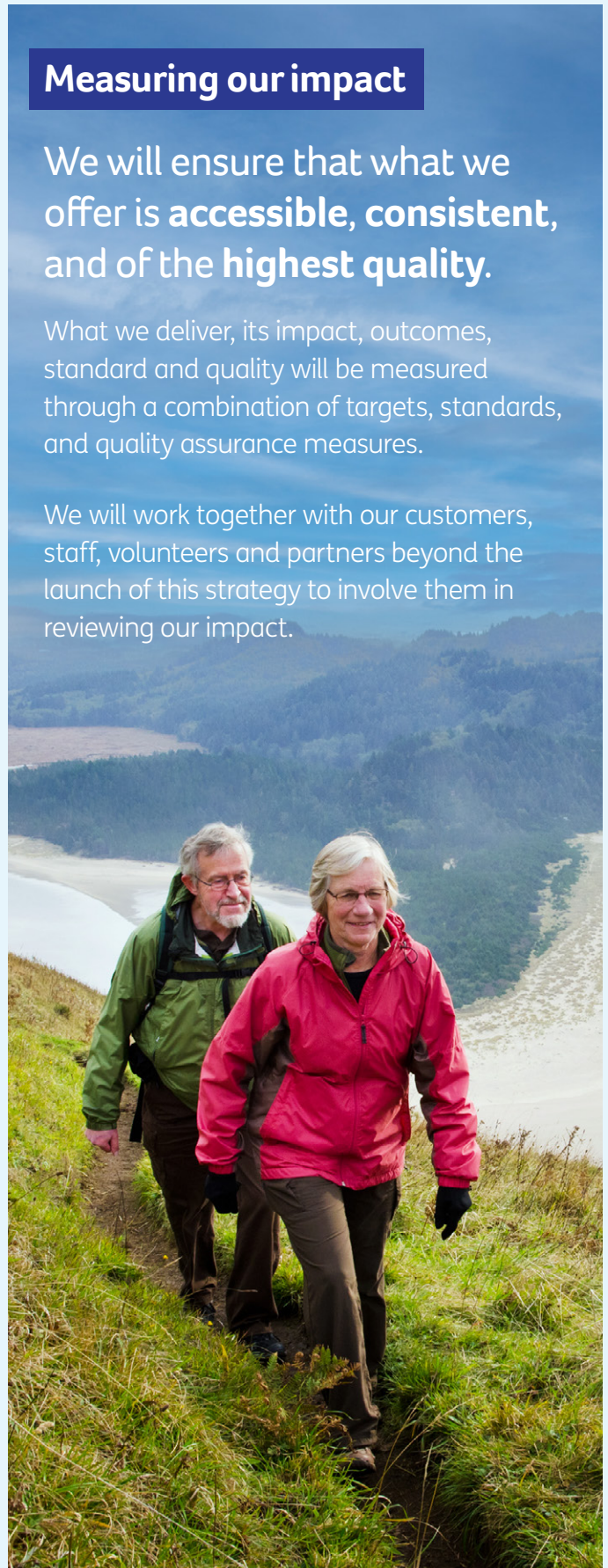
**Resilient:** We will increase our earned and unrestricted income from 35% to 50% to have the flexibility to invest, innovate, develop and expand into new areas, meet unmet or changing needs, and to continue to offer value for money to both our customers and funders.

## Measuring our impact

We will ensure that what we offer is **accessible, consistent, and of the highest quality.**

What we deliver, its impact, outcomes, standard and quality will be measured through a combination of targets, standards, and quality assurance measures.

We will work together with our customers, staff, volunteers and partners beyond the launch of this strategy to involve them in reviewing our impact.



Individuals' names and images have been changed to protect privacy – stock images have been used.

With thanks to all the customers, volunteers, staff and partners who engaged with us and participated in shaping this strategy.

With thanks to Lisa Schrevel – Strategy Consultant.

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