

# 2020-2021 Impact Report



**Positivity, community and support for  
older people in Westminster**

**6,247** client contacts

**22,000** hours of support delivered by volunteers

**35,400+** calls made by our volunteers to our Telephone Befriending clients

**520** Christmas hampers delivered and Christmas calls made in Dec 2020

**3,380** older people helped by our I&A team to obtain £773,273 in welfare benefits and discretionary grants

**11,000** unique users accessing our website

**240** telephone befriending matches made

**1,754** clients attended 221 activities delivered online and face-to-face

**1,200** food parcels delivered to 120 vulnerable clients

**1,600** client contacts supporting digital inclusion

**542** volunteers supporting delivery of our services, i.e. befriending, food parcel deliveries, shopping service, digital inclusion support and more

**1,709** calls dealt with by our reception team

# Foreword by Chair of Trustees, Fiona Healy-Connolly



Since 1947, our mission has been to improve the lives of older people in Westminster and help them make the most of their later years. We are rooted in this thriving community, which continually rises to the many social and economic challenges it faces. Since the Coronavirus pandemic, we have now moved to a more hybrid delivery of services and are continually trying to find new ways to reach those who are more isolated and vulnerable.

Despite the pandemic having evolved, people are still looking out for each other and many are volunteering to support the community. We have had local businesses step up to share monetary support, as well as offer digital inclusion sessions at a time when many older people were feeling isolated and lonely.

Thank you to all our staff, volunteers and supporters. Also, thanks for the tremendous generosity of people who donated funds or given their support in other ways. You have made us even stronger and we aim to continue delivering high quality service and support, and with your help, we can face the future with confidence.

## Support our work through:

- volunteering
- making a donation
- fundraising as an individual or team
- leaving a legacy
- helping with our campaigns or events
- sharing our news on social media

Whatever you do, your help will be much appreciated.

# Benefits and grants

# 3,380

clients obtained £773,273 in welfare benefits & discretionary grants with support of the I&A team.



**“I didn’t know I was entitled to anything until Age UK Westminster intervened. It was a relief to get help.”**

-Mrs T, client

Age UK Westminster is one of the leading partners in the Westminster Advice Services Partnership and a leading advice provider for older people in Westminster. Our Information & Advice team has played an invaluable and central role in Westminster for over 70 years. This year we were able to extend the support offered by achieving funding from City Bridge Trust to provide ongoing support, advice and advocacy for those experiencing significant life changes such as bereavement, changes in health, and changes in income.

## CASE STUDY

Mr. I was given assistance in getting him the benefits that he had no idea he was entitled to. He doesn’t have to borrow money from his friends anymore. He states that the financial stability has given him a new sense of independence and direction in his life.

**Between Oct 2020 - Sept 2021, the I&A team responded to:**

**\*64 home visits \*58 complex needs requests**

**\*1,617 total enquiries**

**\*The reception triage team also dealt with 1,709 enquiries.**





# 232

1:1 sessions  
delivered, providing  
support to 58  
unique clients with  
a complex need

In July 2021, we launched our Complex Needs Support Service. This service provides Information, Advice, Advocacy & Support to older people and their carers in Westminster on, and around, a range of complex issues. This service is another avenue that we offer people who need that a little bit of extra time and intervention. Its aim is to unpick what the clients need and help them to be aware of what they can access in their local community. So far, we have advocated on our residents' behalf with organisations and professionals, with them being the decision maker. We have also made referrals to other services and organisations if they were better placed to meet a client's needs.

## CASE STUDY

Mr. RL is recently widowed and an ex-RAF pilot. We spoke about his money issues. He was still going through the grieving process. I contacted the necessary agencies and together, we set up direct debits for bills, so he didn't have to worry. I put him in touch with SSAFA, the armed forces charity, and they provided telephone counselling. Also, [veteransinthecommunity.org.uk](http://veteransinthecommunity.org.uk) put him in touch with other older ex armed forces for walks, outings and groups in his local community.

## OUTCOME

Mr. RL is in a much better place. The counselling service helped a great deal, he smiles a lot more and says that his wife would be telling him off for not living life. He is not ready for a whole social life just yet, but he goes to his local for a pint and plays darts. Small steps, but its progress.

# Befriending

We match people with a local volunteer who commits to visiting lonely older people weekly. During these visits, befrienders provided much-needed social interaction and emotional support. Due to the pandemic, face-to-face befriending was adapted and we moved some to telephone befriending but have now moved to a hybrid of telephone and in-person when possible.

Loneliness and isolation has long been an issue and our Befriending Service continues to play a vital role in matching volunteers to isolated residents to reduce the negative impact of loneliness.

Alongside Befriending is our vibrant Activities offer, which seeks to encourage participation in group activities. Many of these have been run online in collaboration with our digital inclusion activities, but from July, we were delighted to offer a variety of in-person events.

476 successful matches made

35,400 befriending calls



**"I've been seeing J since Christmas 2018 and it's made such a big difference. I really look forward to J's visit, it's a real booster for me and has really helped with my confidence."**

-Befriending client





# Volunteers

Age UK Westminster depends massively on its dedicated volunteers in every aspect of its work. The continuing pandemic has demonstrated the importance of their involvement and their support has proved invaluable.

We needed extra help with food deliveries, digital inclusion sessions and finding ways to support those who were still isolating.

Volunteers who choose to volunteer do so for a variety of reasons. But one thing that all our volunteers have in common is that they are motivated by the positive impact their contribution makes. We certainly wouldn't be able to achieve as much without them.

542

volunteers,  
including 45  
aged over 60+

22,000

volunteer hours



**"It's given me as much as it's given her. We have a lot of fun and she shows me a different perspective on life."**

-A befriender to a 92-year old client

# Emergency food

1,200 deliveries



Due to the pandemic, we continued to deliver 1200 weekly emergency food parcels to 120 of our more vulnerable clients. The parcel was well stocked with a variety of non-perishable food items, plus fresh eggs, bread, long-life milk and fresh fruit and vegetables. The parcels were designed for preparation of four or five meals. The emergency food service has been a lifeline for many of our clients. The service provides not only the security of knowing that food is available but a friendly face and some much-needed human contact.



**"I was absolutely delighted with the parcel today from Age UK. The food is very useable and of high quality and included a few treats too.**

**It was delivered to my door by two charming helpers who also offered contact and assistance should I need it.**

**Many thanks to Age UK for caring."**

**-Local Resident**



# Digital inclusion

Covid-19 brought new challenges and highlighted to most of us that we are reliant on digital technology. But many older people often suffer from “digital exclusion” due to unfamiliarity with technology, fear of getting it wrong or cultural differences. Often, they don’t have the social networks that might help them overcome these barriers.

To bridge this ‘digital divide’ and social isolation, we developed a comprehensive programme of digital 1:1 sessions and iTea Parties. These sessions are designed to help older clients increase their capabilities.

We had volunteers from local and national businesses, alongside our staff, giving their time to help make older people more computer literate and confident in their skills.

**“I have started my journey using Word and email. I am very excited to carry on learning so that I can write emails to my friends and family.”**

**-Local Resident, MC**

**"The kindness and patience of the volunteers was most valued. Keep running them! The more often the better."**

**-Local Resident and iTea party client**

# 1,600

client contacts supporting digital inclusion



# Christmas hampers



Our Christmas Project is a yearly project to make Christmas Day a special and enjoyable time for elderly residents, who may be suffering from loneliness and isolation. We have been delivering to older Westminster residents for over 10 years. We received support from 93 volunteers, 9 of whom were local councillors and an MP, and 43 corporate volunteers who supported us with packing and delivery of the hampers and friendly calls. Corporate companies included Crown Estate, Howard de Walden Estate, Benefacto, Clifford Chance, Estee Lauder, Neighbourly, GIC, Oliver Wyman, Pubmatic, Oaktree Capital Management, Parkhouse and Marston Group.

This incredible offer of support helped us to deliver a hamper and make a friendly call to 520 isolated older people on the three days running up to Christmas, and spread festive cheer.

**520** Christmas hampers

**"With these phone calls and the hamper, I could not have asked for a nicer Christmas."**

-Maria, Local Resident

**"I had a brilliant time volunteering for Age UK Westminster, it was so great to have the chance to talk to people who were isolated at Christmas and to hopefully spread some cheer."**

-Volunteer





# Staying active

We are passionate about creating as many opportunities as possible for our clients to socialise with other residents.

Since Covid-19 appeared, we have created a range of online alternatives to our traditional programmes, including a poetry group, virtual tours and talks, exercise programmes, and one-off special events.

When restrictions were lifted, we hosted Covid-safe activities, including a visit to London Zoo, coffee mornings, film screenings, museum trips and trips around London.

We have also led events with partners, such as the Royal Albert Hall and with local corporates.

Our programme of online and in-person activities are tremendously popular, and have provided much-needed social stimulation for our clients with different needs.

**"I had a truly lovely and relaxing day at the Zoo. All your colleagues were well prepared, supportive and kind in the way they fulfilled arrangements. We were very lucky with the weather, which was a great bonus. Thank you everyone involved with making the arrangements, you did a great job."**

-Local client who attended the London Zoo trip

**"Yesterday's Silver Sunday event was wonderful, thank you so much for all the hard work you put into everything."**

-Local resident

**1,754**  
attendees



# Inclusion



The population of Westminster is extremely diverse, and we provide much support to Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups. This is of particular importance with issues related to the poor health of older people in BAME communities and the relatively high proportion of older people living alone. But our achievements extend far beyond the provision of advice, support and guidance. Our strength is based on inclusive voluntary relationships and the trust they generate. This gives us the ability to reach groups of older people most likely to experience poverty, deprivation or poor health.



**"I was struggling to clean my home and to take care of my personal care. Age UK Westminster's adviser assisted me to apply for Attendance Allowance. I am now able to pay for a carer who comes in twice a week. I have gained my independence and self-esteem. I am now in control of my own care."**

-Mrs M, client



# Looking ahead



In 2022, we want to:

- Continue to strengthen partnerships with organisations and communities in the local community.
- Build collaborative partnerships.
- Develop joint funding applications.
- Build on the growing relationships with local CCG's, Local Authorities and Council to meet gaps and support delivery of services.
- We have already secured funding to provide Lasting Power of Attorney support and we are working towards securing further funding to provide Practical Support and Personal Care.
- Continue with a combined service of online, phone and in-person activities.
- Following the success of securing funding to deliver Dementia Befriending & Dementia cafes commencing Mar/Apr 2022, we will continue to develop the support and services available through securement of further funding to provide dementia advice and guidance for clients, family and carers.
- Continue to grow and develop what we offer our older residents.

# Get involved



Visit our website:

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/westminster/>

Or contact us on:

020 3004 5610 / [enquiries@ageukwestminster.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ageukwestminster.org.uk)



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