

# Age UK York Impact Report 2020

2020 was the year that changed how we operated and saw us adapt to a new situation. At the start of the year, we were busy carrying on with our regular services but that all changed with Covid-19.

This report outlines the difference Age UK York has made to the lives of older people in York. It provides an overview of the many services we offer and the impact they've had.

## Information and Advice

Our Information and Advice Line was very busy. We received calls from over 2300 people asking us for help and advice on a range of matters including applying for benefits, paying for care, help at home with their care needs and advice on respite care.

**"We can't express our gratitude enough to you all - all the family thank you and all at Social Services for acting so promptly with efficiency and compassion...You all do such a, sometimes thankless, but amazing job and of course you can share his story - I still can't believe what an absolutely amazing job you all did in such a short space of time"**



**Over 2300 people rang our Information and Advice Line for help and advice.**

As 2020 developed, we started getting many more calls about support around Covid - 19 and we were able to support with some shopping as well as liaising closely with York Council and their emergency provision.

# Money and Benefits Advice



**We helped older people in York claim over £800,000 worth of benefits and allowances.**

Our Money and Benefits Team continued to offer advice and support to help people claim for a range of benefits and allowances they are entitled to. We received over 500 referrals and ended up supporting 200 people who were able to claim just over £800,000.

## Day Clubs

We started 2020 with 9 Day Clubs which were well attended and very popular, providing entertainment, a meal and a chance to meet other people. From January to March, we'd held 93 Day Club sessions which were enjoyed by 159 clients. However, we had to adapt our services as the lockdown started and we moved to a mixture of Zoom sessions, telephone calls and sending out packs to our clients to help keep them occupied.

During the year, our team have made about 4639 phone calls to 137 clients. They've also supported 31 clients and their families with regular Zoom meetings and have sent out many activity packs.

The calls have made such a difference to our clients. We've supported members and their families who have lost loved ones. We've supported with shopping, getting medication and have provided reassurance to our members during difficult times.

**“It’s something to look forward to after losing my husband and daughter close together. I don’t want to go home some days as I love it here. I have made friends”**



**4639 phone calls and 174 Zoom meetings during 2020**

# Tackling social isolation

**“The calls are important to myself to get the reassurance that someone is there to listen and to break the loneliness”**

Tackling social isolation is one of the core things that Age UK York does and this was really important during the Covid-19 pandemic. Although we couldn't meet indoors, our Befriending Team ensured that our clients received many phone calls and door step visits from volunteers and Age UK York staff to ensure they weren't isolated.



**183 people had a befriender during 2020. They received regular phone calls and door step visits.**

# Supporting people after a hospital stay

Our Home from Hospital Team continued to make an impact driving people home from hospital or to appointments and in supporting them whilst at home. Our staff can help them with shopping, getting prescriptions, liaising with medical staff and in referring them for other help they might need. This helps ensure that they recover well at home and reduces the chances of them returning to hospital.



**Over 1000 people driven home from hospital or to an appointment.**



**250 people supported at home after a hospital visit.**

**" Last phone call and MR wished her well. PH thanked me and told me I made a difference."**

# Supporting carers

We provide a service that enables carers to have a short break from caring responsibilities. This is a paid for service and either a member of staff or an experienced volunteer provides respite care. This service was affected during the pandemic but we were able to support 66 people and provide 1305 hours of respite care.

**1305 hours of respite care was provided during 2020 along with 255 hours of phone support. We were able to support 66 clients and their carers.**

# Supporting people at home

Through the pandemic we continued to offer support to older people in their own homes. Our Bridge The Gap care agency provided an average of 320 hours of care per week and 50 clients were supported during the year. The Feather Duster cleaning service had over 120 clients and provided 3400 hours of cleaning to people.

**"I just wanted to say a huge thank you to you and your team for all your continued hard work and dedication to the customers you serve in York. The Bridge The Gap service goes above and beyond and cares so much about people that you even relish a challenge that others turn down!**

**You and your staffing team have a remarkable tolerance and empathy for people that enables you to work with them in a way that can remove barriers in your quest to improve outcomes."**

During 2020, our Shopping Service was extremely busy ensuring people were able to get shopping, especially during lockdowns. We supported people by going shopping for them or by helping them to get an internet shop. We did 1575 personal shops for people and helped organise 390 internet deliveries.



**1575 personal shops for people**

**390 internet deliveries organised**

## Keep Your Pet

We help run Keep Your Pet in collaboration with the RSPCA, which provides foster care for pets and other pet services whilst their owners have to go into hospital. This is a very popular service and has over 150 pets registered with it. During 2020, 45 dogs were walked per week and 22 dogs were fostered. We also helped take pets to the vets and fed them at home as well.

**“Keep Your Pet looked after Daisy for several weeks when I broke my leg and was temporarily unable to walk. They are an invaluable service; I would have been unable to keep my companion without their help”**

## Volunteers

Volunteers are very important to Age UK York and are at the heart of what we do. During 2020, we received 280 volunteer enquiries with 134 of them being in March and April. Many of these were referred to York Council and the NHS to help them with their volunteer response and we used our current volunteers in their current roles and in new roles.

We developed a Covid Emergency Volunteer list from our current volunteers and they carried out emergency tasks for our clients such as doing a small shop and getting prescriptions. Many of our volunteers also adapted their role to do telephone befriending.

# Case Studies

## Case Study 1

### Service: Advice and Information

#### Summary / Presenting Problems

Mrs W had an operation on her eyes in October and on discharge wanted to get ongoing support. She was very concerned about her finances. She had been widowed in the past couple of years and said she didn't fully understand what income she was receiving. She was also concerned as the gas engineer when servicing her boiler had told her she need to think about replacement in the next couple of years as the boiler was 35 years old. The situation was causing her anxiety.

#### Action Taken

First Call information service provide Mrs W with information about grants for boiler replacement and the names and contact details for the organisations which made grants. A benefits adviser spoke to Mrs W about the potential for Mrs W to claim Attendance Allowance in order to pay for support. Mrs W suggested that the benefits adviser speak to her son for more information about her income, as she thought she still received her husband's pension.

The benefits advisers liaised with Mrs W's son and support Mrs W to claim Attendance Allowance. Mrs W then reflected on the support she required. The First Call information service provided Mrs W with information on cleaners, as she decided this would be the most appropriate support for her.

#### Outcome / Feedback

Mrs W was awarded Attendance Allowance. Following the work with the Benefits Adviser she also understood all her income and was able to set a budget for the support she needed. She also was able to identify what support she required and was provide with information about options. Additionally, Mrs W was provided with information about boiler replacement.

In all the interactions with Mrs W, Age UK York staff ensuring Mrs W was able to make her own decisions and take action herself, as Mrs W had capacity and having a detailed understanding of her affairs and making plans and decisions herself helped her feel in control and less anxious.

# Case Study 2

## Service: Day Clubs

### Summary / Presenting Problems

Mr G was referred to the Day Club service during lockdown. He is a very sociable person who loves making friends and reminiscing. He has a keen interest in politics and local history. He has very poor health and is not very mobile. He was in hospital in October. Although he lives close to his son and daughter-in-law he is lonely and likes to speak to people beyond his family and broaden his horizons.

### Action Taken

Mr G chose to have weekly phone calls rather than access one of the online Day Clubs. Mr G plans to attend an in-person Day Club as soon as they are reopened. A Day Club worker called Mr G after he was discharged from hospital at the start of the period. They checked that he was settled in at home and had all the support he needed. Weekly calls were made to Mr G afterwards by the same member of staff, who got to know Mr G and his interests.

Mr G was sent a monthly activity pack, which he enjoyed doing and gave him lots to talk about in the weekly call. Mr G was also able to share concerns he could not share with his family, including how to shop for presents for them during the current restrictions. He was also able to chat about his anxiety about ongoing health treatments to someone outside the family. The Day Club Worker was also able to encourage Mr G to remain mobile and he reported regularly going out with his walker which kept his spirits up.

### Outcome / Feedback

Several individuals have been referred into Day Clubs during the lockdown. The regular phone calls and activity packs have created a sense of community which will allow a transition to in person Day Clubs to be made when restrictions are lifted. Although Mr G has supportive and caring relatives, the contact was important to him as he was able to raise issues with the Day Club Worker which he felt he couldn't raise with them.



## Case Study 3

### Service: Befriending / Advice and Information

#### Summary / Presenting Problems

Mr C experienced significant loneliness after he was widowed. He has mobility problems caused by severe arthritis which make it hard for him to leave the house. This means he does not have as much social contact as he would like. He was paired with a befriender two years' ago and regular contact has been maintained.

#### Action Taken

Mr C received twice weekly calls from his befriending. This contact has been maintained throughout the pandemic and Mr C also arranged garden visits during the summer when restrictions allowed. During the reporting period Mr C raised difficulties bathing with his befriender. The befriender encouraged Mr C to ring the First Call information line.

The information officer talked through the issue with Mr C. They identified that Mr C's bathroom was not adapted to his mobility needs. Following discussion, Mr C felt he didn't need assistance with bathing, but adaption of his bath. A referral was made to the occupational therapy team to provide Mr C with advice on adaptation and potential funding for this.

#### Outcome / Feedback

Mr C was supported to accessing occupational therapy and now has appropriate adaptations made in his bathroom. Mr C was able to take these steps quickly as the befriender spoke to him regularly and could explore his day-to-day life with him and help him access information about the options open to him at the right time.



# Case Study 4

## Service: Day Clubs

### Summary / Presenting Problems

Mrs A attends Day Clubs. During the lockdown she has been supported by regular calls from Day Club workers. Mrs A raised concerns with the member of staff about her ability to cope at home. In December she also raised a health concern which was causing her a lot of worry and affecting her balance. Mrs A planned not to seek medical help due to the pandemic.

### Action Taken

The Day Club worker had a trusting relationship with Mrs A through working face-to-face with her in Day Clubs over many years. Mrs A was able to confide in the Day Club worker about her health concerns and the Day Club worker was able to encourage her to make a GP appointment. The Day Club worker explained the precautions which the GP would be taking. After taking time to think about the situation Mrs A decided to seek medical help. The Day Club worker was able to refer her for hospital transport.

### Outcome / Feedback

Mrs A was referred to the hospital and accessed an appropriate course of treatment. Without a relationship with a trusted person it is likely she would not have done so.