

# Quarterly Impact Report

Q1 April - June 2024

# A few words from our CEO...

I am delighted to present my first foreword as CEO of Age UK Bolton during a pivotal time for our organisation. We are in an exciting and significant period of change management. While we have much to celebrate in terms of impact and community engagement, we are also navigating the ever-changing landscape of the challenges older people, and charities, face. As demand for our services continues to rise, we continue to walk the complexity and capacity tightropes. Addressing these issues will require strategic focus and collaboration.

This Quarterly Impact Report introduces a new approach to reporting, designed to give our board a comprehensive yet focused view of our activities and their impact. Our aim is to offer you a clear understanding of where we're making a difference, while also highlighting the areas where we need to strengthen, adapt, or innovate. Your feedback is essential as we refine this report, ensuring it meets the board's needs and fosters informed decision-making.

Alongside these operational challenges, we remain committed to enhancing our role within Bolton, Greater Manchester, and nationally. Our vision for the future includes building on our partnerships, improving service delivery, and securing new funding streams to ensure long-term sustainability. It is also the aspiration that going forward, this report will provide valuable insight and intel to our stakeholders on both a Bolton and Greater Manchester footprint.

I would also like to extend a warm welcome to our newly co-opted trustees and the staff members who have joined us in the past quarter. Your contributions will be crucial as we work together to meet these challenges head-on.

I encourage you to engage actively with this report as we strive to make an even greater impact in the months ahead. Together, we will continue to strengthen Age UK Bolton and ensure it is a trusted and fit for purpose organisation serving the older people of Bolton, now and into the future.

Kindest regards,



Lauren McKechnie  
CEO

# Volunteering

## Recognising 25 years of voluntary service

In June, our Volunteer Coordinator and CEO visited the brilliant 'Wright Place' lunch club in Harwood. This is a volunteer run club regularly provides a safe, warm and welcoming space (and delicious food!) for up to 30 older people. They serve approximately 200 meals each quarter. We were delighted to attend with the special mission of presenting Ann Pike with her 25 Years of Voluntary Service Award! Congratulations Ann and thank you for all that you do!

## Big Summer Thank You

Our One Big Summer Thank You is our annual celebration during Volunteers Week. It went down particularly well and was attended by 38 volunteers - we thanked and celebrated them with an afternoon tea and entertainment from the Age UK Bolton Resident Guitar Group who treated us to a collection of 1960s and 1970s classics.

**190**  
active volunteers

**11**  
new volunteers



# Information & Advice

**767**

contacts

**47**

new energy clients

**169**

new clients overall

**65**

telephone appointments

**36**

office appointments

**43**

home visits

The majority of our appointment are for benefit checks and applying for Attendance Allowance. Total financial gains for clients this quarter: £556,668.75.

This is a remarkable sum of money being brought in to individuals and Bolton's economy! The total financial gains continues to increase each quarter.

The waiting times for benefit decisions have decreased but we continue to deal with problems with the DWP Pension Credit office. We are still dealing with decisions that are incorrectly made and the wrong advice given to claimants.

We are currently oversubscribed and do not have enough appointments to meet demand. We often have to pause referrals for a few days to cap the waiting list. Current waiting time from initial contact to an appointment is on average over 6 weeks. Other local benefits advice agencies continue to struggle to deal with the increased demand for services.

## Case Study: Energy Project Support for Ms M

During a home visit, we confirmed the correct meter readings and that Ms M had existing debt from before the switch. She accepted the bill and, with our help, a 24-month payment plan of £15 per month was agreed with Ovo Energy. Ms M opted for a standing order instead of direct debit.

In addition, we provided energy-saving advice, such as washing clothes at 30°C and draught-proofing doors. Her well-insulated home was already in good condition, further helping her save energy. Ms M was informed she could switch tariffs without penalties if better options arose.

Follow-up ensured the payment plan was in place, and Ms M is now better equipped to manage her finances, having saved £213 annually and 563 kWh in energy use. Most importantly, her mental health has significantly improved through this support.

**£555,  
668.75**

total financial  
gains

# Home from Hospital

We've seen an unprecedented number of complex clients referred to the service, increasing the coordinators' time spent per client case, especially in the area of working with healthcare professionals to ensure timely and safe discharge.

Our service provides complete needs assessments and progressed support to help our clients manage and maintain as much independence as possible at home, short and long-term, to prevent readmission and avoidable admission to the hospital. This increase in above-average client complexities is reflected in our figures, where the support contacts are higher than usual across all service provisions.

The service has continued to deliver outstanding support, while also seeing an increase of 48 D&A clients supported this quarter. We have strategically focused on ensuring all our team coordinators are scheduled to provide a presence in the hospital seven days a week, protecting our 48-hour response time, security of full weekend cover, and smooth client transition from hospital to home.

This resulted in over 4472 supported contacts (across the core discharge & aftercare and admission avoidance provision)

**516**

Discharge & Aftercare clients receiving care

**563**

Admissions Avoidance clients receiving care

**4472**

supported contacts

**8.5%**

Bolton 65+ average 30-day readmission rate (March 2023)

**2.06%**

Age UK Bolton average 30-day readmission rate (March 2023)

“When my husband was discharged from the hospital, I felt abandoned and lost. Age UK (Bolton) were the only people who helped me. They have been outstanding and phenomenal. They have made suggestions. Have you considered this? Have you considered that and our coordinator told us to contact them and when I needed to? That is great.”

# Case Study: Supporting a Client Through Complex Challenges

A 53-year-old client, living alone with multiple health issues—including anxiety, depression, diabetes, and limited mobility—was referred to Age UK Bolton by the Admissions Avoidance Team. Housebound and managing significant debt, the client was emotionally overwhelmed and struggling with basic daily tasks, compounded by the care of seven cats.

Upon conducting a home assessment, Age UK Bolton identified key areas for immediate intervention, including financial instability, a non-functional Careline unit, and inadequate support for personal care and shopping.

Key Interventions taken by Home from Hospital:

- **Debt Management:** Assisted in setting up manageable payment plans with creditors and arranged direct debits for essential bills.
- **Careline Unit:** Facilitated same-day replacement of the client's Careline unit, ensuring access to emergency services.
- **Personal Care:** Referred the client to the Enhanced Intermediate Tier (EIT) team, securing daily care and cleaning support.
- **Food Support:** Arranged for food parcels through Urban Outreach until the client's finances stabilised.
- **Medical Support:** Coordinated with the GP for diabetes care, resulting in district nurse visits and a referral to a diabetes clinic.
- **Cat Management:** Collaborated with a local sanctuary to rehome some of the cats and arranged neutering services.
- As a result of Age UK Bolton's comprehensive support, the client now has a stable care plan, a higher degree of financial security, and improved well-being.

**100%**

of our clients said they would recommend our service to friends and family

# Nutrition & Hydration Programme

Bolton's Nutrition and Hydration Programme focuses on delivering a community intervention for identifying and addressing malnutrition and dehydration in the 65+ population.

A key objective is to build a community of staff and volunteers who are able to use the Paperweight Armband© (PWA) as a non-clinical intervention to identify risk, and offer simple advice, so that individuals can adopt a self-care approach to improving and managing their weight and health and well-being, taking a food first approach. The programme also aims to raise awareness of preventable malnutrition and dehydration across the health and social care workforce, with individuals, their families and carers.

9

Hearty Meal  
Bags  
distributed

128

people reached via  
awareness raising activities

6

Neighbourhood Team  
Leads trained

**9 Hearty Meal Bags have been distributed at the point of hospital discharge.**

AGE	GENDER	MUST SCORE	DAYS IN HOSPITAL	COMMENTS
83	Female	1	7	
101	Female	1	26	
82	Female	1	3	
68	Male	1	15	
81	Female	1	7	
86	Male	1	7	
87	Male	1	0	Crisis at home
88	Male	1	4	
69	Female	1	0	Crisis at home



# Strength & Balance

## Case Study: Pat's Journey to Regaining Strength and Confidence

Pat, a 65-year-old retiree, once enjoyed an active lifestyle but began experiencing balance issues two years ago. Although she hadn't fallen, the fear of falling severely impacted her confidence, leading to anxiety and social isolation. Her GP referred her to the Balance and Activity Clinic, but with a 48-week waiting list, Pat sought help from Age UK Bolton's Strength and Balance Service in November 2023.

She began attending weekly sessions aimed at improving strength, balance, and mobility. These classes not only addressed her physical needs but also provided social interaction, easing her isolation. Pat also joined a Backward Chaining class at Nuffield Health, which focuses on building confidence and skills to safely move and get up in the event of a fall. When her Balance Clinic appointment was cancelled in June 2024, Pat was grateful for Age UK Bolton's continued support. Her confidence and physical health have steadily improved, and she now feels more independent and prepared for the future.

**33**

classes per week

**21**

community venues

**341**

instructor-led sessions

**679**

older adults attending sessions

**3918**

total attendances

“ We would both like to thank Laura, Steve and Niall for making these sessions really fun but, more importantly, so helpful in demonstrating the reasons why we need to keep mobile and maintain strength as we age. These classes are vital to every community as they also give people the chance to meet others and form friendships. Best of all, they are full of laughter. ”

### Key Outcomes:

- Increased physical strength and confidence.
- Reduced social isolation.
- Ongoing fall-prevention training.

"I really don't know what I would do without Age UK Bolton's classes. I know I would have deteriorated even further if I hadn't attended these sessions," Pat said.



# Ageing Well

Our 7 lunch groups and coffee morning volunteers reported an increase on their attendance figures, up by 15, which we were pleased to hear. These were the highest attendances reported since the pandemic, although we were sorry to hear that the number of individuals benefiting had dropped overall, mainly due to ill health and death of some participants.

A second lunch club also explained that they had had to reduce their weekly group to fortnightly, due to the church they use being directly affected by the energy crisis. This is something we have been hearing about more and more from church and community venues, which we feel has the potential to negatively impact on our classes in the colder months. Our Ageing Well Manager had a pleasant visit to Hulton Lane lunch group and spent some time hearing about how wonderful, tasty and good value the weekly lunches there are, and how much the group means to its members.

Our Ageing Well team was invited to give views and opinions in relation to the Farnworth Towns Consultation and encouraged volunteers and clients to participate, also submitting a funding proposal which we hope will bring in much-needed funding to update the Ageing Well Centre and its car park. We are not due to here decisions our outcomes until Autumn 24, though have our fingers crossed!

**111**

events and classes

**1442**

individuals attending

**8708**

total attendances



“

I drive in each week, it is really good value, and I enjoy coming. I get to see friends and we have a laugh, some people have been coming here for years. They do a good job for us!

”

## Ageing in Place Pathfinder - Little Lever

Our two coordinators are now visible and trusted figures in Little Lever, which ensures an important presence; they even have two outdoor art installations named after them in Crompton Court!

The groups of residents that attend activities are very stable and this allows us to tap into them as a reliant and consistent number of local residents in terms of civic issues. Residents' opinions on local matters in focus groups are so difficult to collect as people become tired of being surveyed. Our relationships have encouraged them to see these opportunities in a positive light, such as a GMCA survey about traffic lights, where we were able to collect some quality information for the GMCA at short notice. Participants said they would not have contributed online via questionnaires and our local intelligence made all the difference to this important survey, which we hope will show some results down the line!

11

different activities delivered to Little Lever residents

842

total attendances

### It's Club Day

Sitting at home on my chair, I really didn't care  
About getting out and about, it didn't make me want to shout.  
A different life I have, enclosed, getting about in my night clothes,  
Friends always phone me. The problems I don't see,  
This is usually me:  
I wake up in the morning, When I've finished yawning,  
I'm going to get out, So 'Yes!' I'm going to shout,  
I'm going to the club, I'll be listening to the hub,  
I'll hear all the stories, and hear what they have to tell,  
It's like someone has rung a bell. It's really very good,  
I was asked to join the club, it's like I know everyone,  
I look forward to the day, hear what people say.  
As I walk through the door, they pull up a chair,  
So we can all share, the biscuits and tea,  
For us all to see. From the lovely people,  
Who have set us free. No more being alone,  
Sitting on my chair at home, So' Thanks for today!  
I'm on my way.



*Poem by a client in Little Lever*

# Social Prescribing

The upcoming year's targets have been set. We have met with our Neighbourhood lead, Kay, to discuss the ways in which we can support each other with our roles and how we can work together to help improve the Rumworth neighbourhood. In addition, Rumworth also has a Community Alliance team, whom we have met with to discuss what they can provide to help the people of Rumworth.

This may be done through a local event or drop-ins at the surgery.

The main reasons for referrals were:

- Help with addressing social isolation and loneliness
- Support addressing long term conditions management

## Case Study: Supporting Independence and Mobility for a Client

121

total referrals

44

Age UK Bolton services referred to

Our Social Prescribing Link Worker (SPLW) received a referral from a GP regarding a client experiencing a decline in mobility. The client, who had not been able to leave his home independently for over two years, was relying on furniture and a walking stick to move around his house. He had recently experienced a fall, sustaining a head injury, though no hospitalisation was required. Living alone, the client had support from family and friends who visited regularly.

During the initial conversation, the client revealed that he spent most of his time in the kitchen, where the smaller space made it easier to move around. He mentioned that an additional handrail on the stairs and a shower seat, previously fitted in his home, had been helpful in managing his mobility challenges.

Recognising the impact of his recent fall, the SPLW referred the client to the local community therapy team for physiotherapy and occupational therapy input. Additionally, it was suggested that the client consider using a rollator to help him regain some independence and venture out to local shops.

Six weeks later, a follow-up call confirmed that the community therapy team had provided the client with a wheeled walker, and he was receiving physiotherapy. The client was enthusiastic about the support, stating, "They have been absolutely brilliant, and I am now more determined about getting out. I feel so much more confident. Thank you."

This intervention has not only improved the client's mobility but also enhanced his confidence and determination to regain independence, significantly improving his quality of life.

# Our priorities for Q2

## 1

### Addressing Service Demand and Capacity

With growing demand for services, particularly with long waiting lists (e.g., Strength & Balance classes) and increasing client complexities (such those engaging with Information and Advice Services), there is a need to review our service capacity. Strategic focus will be on:

- Carry out a SWOT analysis to understand current delivery models
- Engage with local partners to identify opportunities for greater collaboration to support demand on a local footprint

## 2

### Volunteer Capacity and Engagement

As we rely heavily on volunteers, ensuring sufficient capacity and avoiding burnout is a priority. Strategic actions include:

- Reviewing volunteer support, training, and supervision.
- Recruiting a Volunteering Team Leader to strengthen volunteer management and engagement.

## 3

### Financial Stability and Diversification of Income

As Age UK Bolton expands its services and client base, financial sustainability remains a key challenge. To maintain and enhance service delivery, we must:

- Begin to explore options to diversify funding sources, including grants, corporate partnerships, and community fundraising.
- Ensure that core services (like Information & Advice, Energy Project) continue to generate financial outcomes for clients, bolstering our value proposition to funders.

## 4

### Strategic partnerships and System-Wide Influence

To maintain our position as a leading charity within Bolton and the wider Greater Manchester area, we must strategically influence local and national discussions on ageing, healthcare, and welfare. This involves:

- Engaging with key stakeholders to address system-wide challenges such as pension benefits, winter fuel allowance, and discharge processes.
- Positioning ourselves as thought leaders by contributing to public policy, especially in supporting older adults in post-hospital care and ageing in place.

## 5

### Enhancing Staff Wellbeing and Professional Support

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- Positioning ourselves as thought leaders by contributing to public policy, especially in supporting older adults in post-hospital care and ageing in place.

