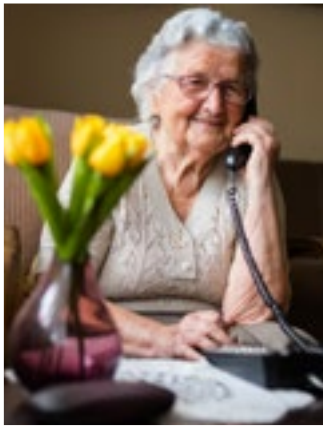


# 2024 **Impact** Report



Here at Age UK Gloucestershire we ensure our **REACH** values are lived each day:

**Relationships** – Social connections are powerful. We help people and organisations make meaningful connections.

**Every minute matters** – We value other people’s time and share our own.

**Age-friendly** – We celebrate older people and encourage Gloucestershire to be responsive and positive about ageing.

**Curiosity** – We seek to understand everyone’s unique experiences and investigate new ways of working.

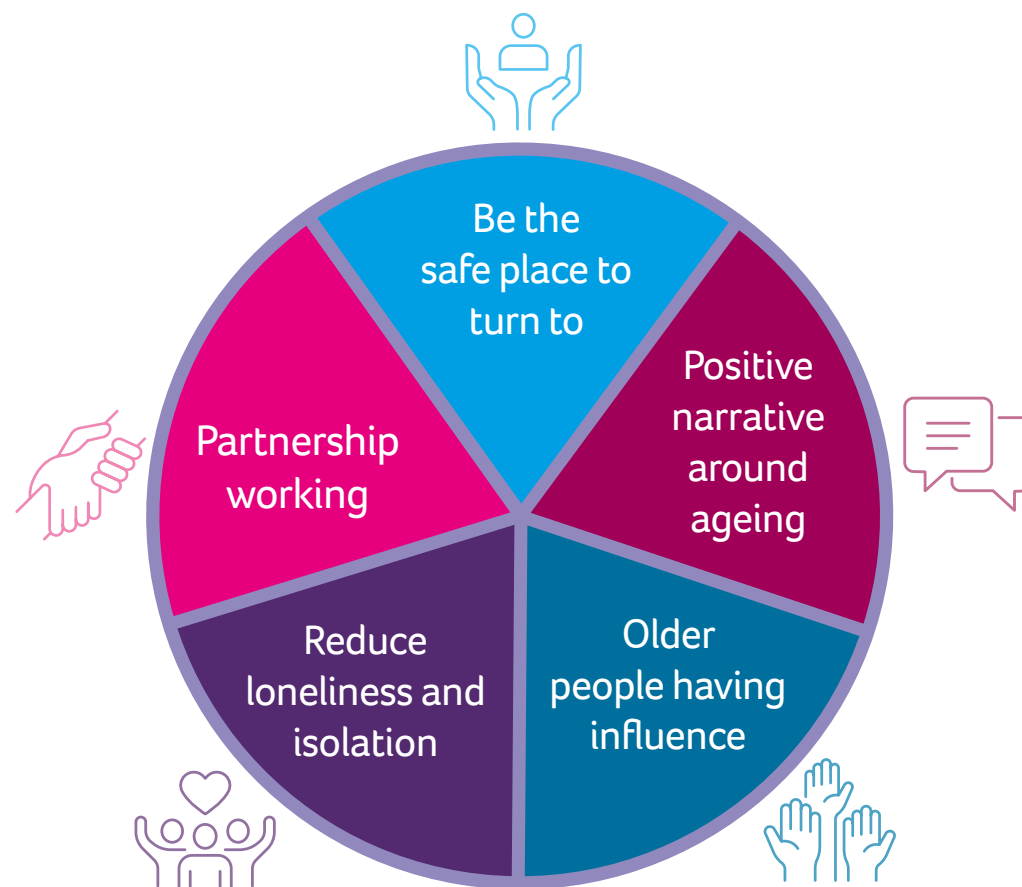
**Hopeful** – We want the best outcomes for everyone. We encourage positivity, purpose and action.

## Introduction

Our 2024 Impact Report showcases how we are striving to achieve our vision in making **Gloucestershire the best place in which to grow older** and supports our Annual Report.

## Our Strategic Priorities

Age UK Gloucestershire’s Strategy focuses on achieving our vision through five strategic priorities



## Strategic aim:

# Be a safe place to turn to



Be the safe place for people to contact if they don't know where to turn, where they can receive informed, patient and accessible help to move forward. We will also encourage forward-planning about later life for all.

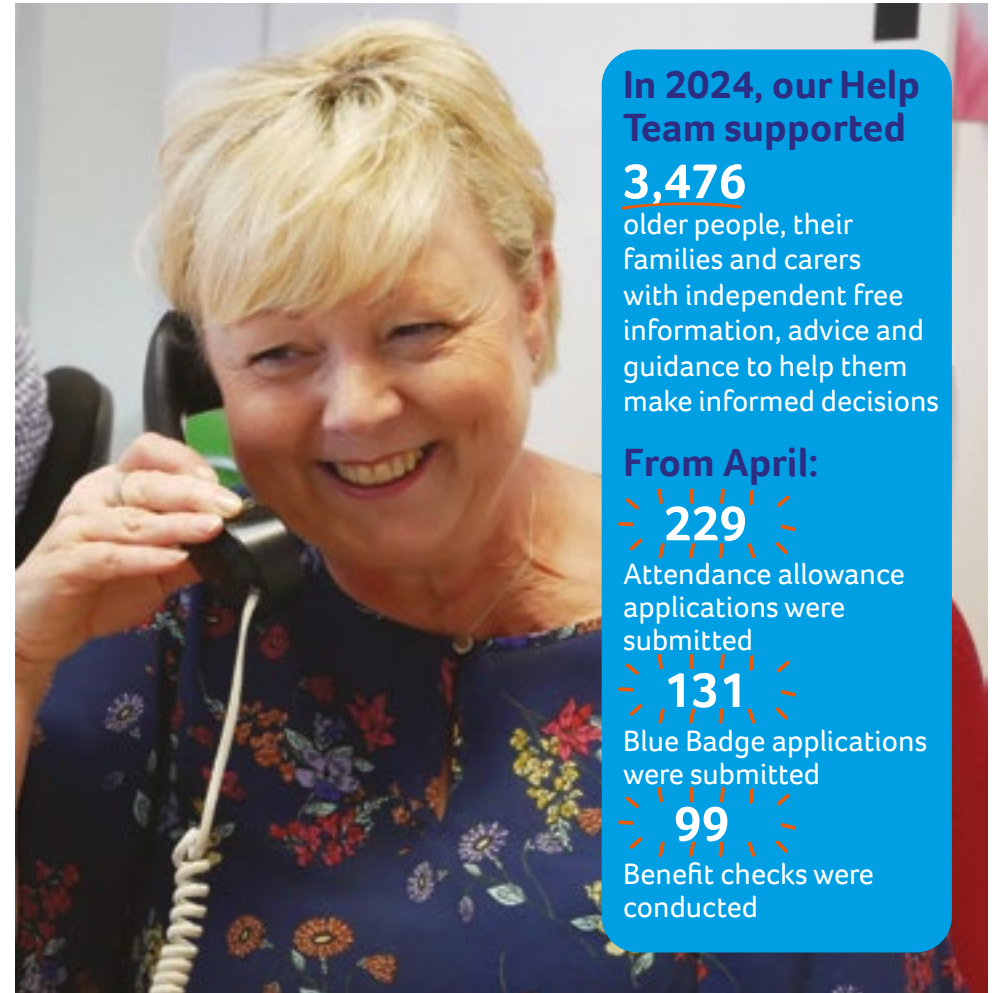
## Our Help Team

As our flagship service, the approach taken by the Help Team is to provide support for older people where and when they need it. As a first point of call, we offer a vast range of impartial information, advice and guidance aimed at supporting older people, their families and carers to make informed choices for all aspects of later life.

Our team are highly skilled in ensuring older people are able to access the benefits they are entitled by conducting benefits checks and assisting with the completion of complex application forms for Attendance Allowance and Blue Badges. They also onward signpost to specialist organisations so our beneficiaries can access the support they need.

Support is offered over the telephone, online and face to face through our outreach work, all supported by our skilled team of volunteers.

We onward signpost to over 300 VCSE and specialist organisations covering



In 2024, our Help Team supported

**3,476**

older people, their families and carers with independent free information, advice and guidance to help them make informed decisions

From April:

**229**

Attendance allowance applications were submitted

**131**

Blue Badge applications were submitted

**99**

Benefit checks were conducted

Here is some of the feedback from those we supported:

**98%** said the support they had received was suitable for their situation

**99%** agreed the Help Team were professional, friendly and helpful

**98%** felt their enquiries were dealt with promptly and efficiently

**98%** were happy with the service they received

**97%** had been made to feel valued

In just 6 months we enabled older people to access

£400,000

in Attendance Allowance

Almost 400

older people received financial household support to help ease the strain of the cost-of-living.

|| My grateful thanks for steering me through the hurdles to enable me to have a Blue Badge. ||

|| I would not have known where to start to apply for a Blue Badge without your help and support. ||

|| Professional help and advice with volunteers completing difficult forms for me, asking appropriate questions in a kind manner making me feel valued. Thank you for your time and patience. ||

|| It is good to know there is an organisation that is reliable and supportive. ||

|| The gentleman who visited my home was so helpful getting a Blue Badge for parking, it has transformed my life! The lady from your office kept in touch, she was not only helpful but also so kind. ||

## Warmth, security and peace of mind...

In April our Help Team received a telephone message from Mary enquiring about any financial support available to replace a broken double-glazed window. The window couldn't be closed and was hanging dangerously over a street. Mary was concerned that it could fall and potentially injure a passerby.

Our Help Team Advisor Donna contacted Mary, and during the conversation it became clear that her challenges extended far beyond the broken window. Mary was living with complex health issues, including a respiratory condition, and had limited mobility. Her biggest worry was that the broken window would make it difficult to keep her home warm during the winter months. Relying solely on her state pension, she was concerned about the increased heating costs caused by the draft, and feared she wouldn't be able to afford to heat her home properly.

Recognising the urgency of the situation, Donna acted swiftly, immediately applying for various grants, and arranging for the window to be repaired quickly.

Thanks to this support, Mary is delighted and relieved that her home is now secure and draft-free. Mary later sent us a heartfelt thank-you card, expressing her sincere thanks.

This is just one example of how our Help Team supports older people overcome risks to their health and security through our partnerships so she can now remain safe, secure and independent in her own home.



|| I am very grateful to Age UK Gloucestershire. It has made a massive difference to the warmth in my property as well as giving me peace of mind that the window is now safe and won't fall onto the street below. ||

## Delivering warmth

**82%**  
agreed that  
I often feel cold at  
home during winter

**87%**  
agreed that  
I worry about the cost  
of heating my home

**86%**  
agreed that  
I sometimes avoid  
putting the heating  
on due to the cost

**89%**  
agreed that  
Living in a cold home  
makes my health  
worse



It's hard to believe that older people in our county live in cold homes, but they do. Fuel poverty is affecting more and more residents. We are often able to identify those suffering from fuel poverty through our Help Team, and we aim to support vulnerable older people to ensure they are comfortable, and health risks associated with living in a cold environment are reduced.

Thanks to funding from National Grid's Community Matters Fund, in early 2024 we were able to deliver **100 warm packs** to vulnerable older people identified through our Help Team Service. The Warm Packs were intended for those who were experiencing or at risk of Fuel Poverty and/or at risk from poorer health outcomes associated with living in a cold home.



### Warm Pack contained:

- a heated throw
- draft excluder to sit at the bottom of the door
- paper room thermometer
- a flask
- pair of socks
- a radiator key
- a jar of hot chocolate
- Grapevine magazine to keep in touch



**95%**  
felt warmer through  
the winter with our  
Warm Packs

Initiatives like this help older people remain independent at home for longer, reducing the health risks of living in colder homes, **therefore reducing the risk of hospital admission, alleviating the strain on our NHS.**

|| I used the heated throw all the time – it was a very welcome gift. My central heating was not used a great deal this winter due to expense and having to save for a new boiler. I have various health issues so keeping warm is important. It was also a wonderful boost to morale. ||

|| The heated throw – cosy and economical, draft excluder – we already had one but useful, the hot chocolate and biscuits were very welcome! This pack is such a lovely thought and very much appreciated. Thank you so much. ||



## Delivering Christmas joy



Thanks to shoppers at Dunelm we were able to distribute over 60 gift bags packed with useful items including warm throws, towels, slippers and other festive treats, delivering joy to the most vulnerable older people in our community.

Thank you Dunelm Gloucester!



Throughout the year we have also received wonderful donations of hand-knitted blankets from our incredible supporters. We have distributed them to older people needing extra warmth through our Help Team outreach visits.

Thank you to our knitting community!

## Strategic aim:

# Positive narrative around ageing



Drive a new narrative about ageing to encourage people to see it as an important part of the life course.

We tackle everyday ageism through our carefully crafted and extensive communications programme, engaging with key audiences throughout Gloucestershire including our beneficiaries, their families and carers, our partners, supporters and donors.

## Printed publications

### Grapevine magazine

Written by the community for the community, in 2024 we released editions 10 and 11 in summer and wintertime. Engaging with our team of editorial volunteers, the aim of Grapevine is to share a positive view of later life. Our flagship publication creates an opportunity for older people to share stories, engage with interesting activities, enjoy puzzles and get tips on how to better navigate later life.



Grapevine was received by **17,000** recipients throughout Gloucestershire

Reaching a total of 17,000 older people throughout Gloucestershire including our 3,000 dedicated supporters, Grapevine offered the new opportunity for partners to advertise products and services in the publication, generating a source of income, also supported by generous donations from its recipients.



Grapevine editorial team

To assist with distributing Grapevine throughout the county beyond our supporters, we engaged with a team of patch-based volunteers who deliver to some of the most rural community outlets **to help older people overcome social isolation and loneliness.**

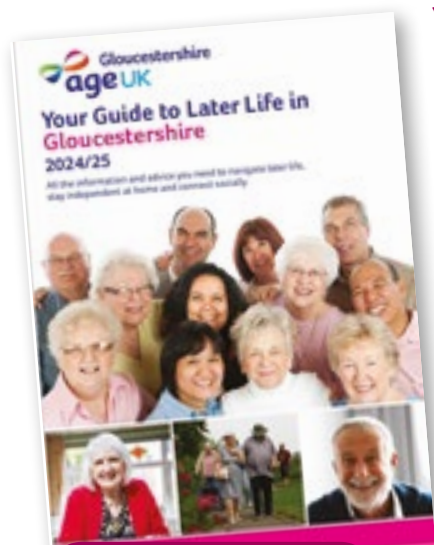
|| I so look forward to the Grapevine landing on my doorstep. I love the recipes, and the word search keeps me busy! ||

|| When my Mum was very ill you really helped. She now gets her Grapevine magazine which she loves to read and would like to send you a regular donation. ||

### Your guide to later life

In March 2024, 16,000 copies of our key publication Your Guide To Later Life in Gloucestershire were distributed far and wide to older people across Gloucestershire **to encourage people to think ahead about their later life wishes, make plans in advance and give them details of the support available.**

Maximising our reach, we partnered with Sure Media for production and distribution to ensure copies reached high footfall organisations including hospitals, GP surgeries, libraries, community hubs, Citizens Advice Bureau, social prescribers and adult social carers as well as our new supporters.



16,000

distributed in Gloucestershire

## Digital communications

We understand that 75% of older people are connected digitally. With this knowledge, a key part of our communications plan was to increase our digital engagement **so more people could access our advice and support in a digital format.**

### Our website

Earlier in the year, we revamped our website content aiming to engage with our beneficiaries, their families and carers, as well as supporters, donors, partners and funders. Through our communications plan we sourced and published 2-3 blogs per month offering tips to older people, their families and carers on how to navigate later life, **so they may remain independent for longer**, as well as how to support and become involved with Age UK Gloucestershire.

### Our supporter eNewsletter

Our regular eNewsletter was distributed each month offering information and advice to **keep socially connected and independent**, as well as ways to become involved with our charity with volunteering opportunities and fundraising initiatives.

25,000  
website users

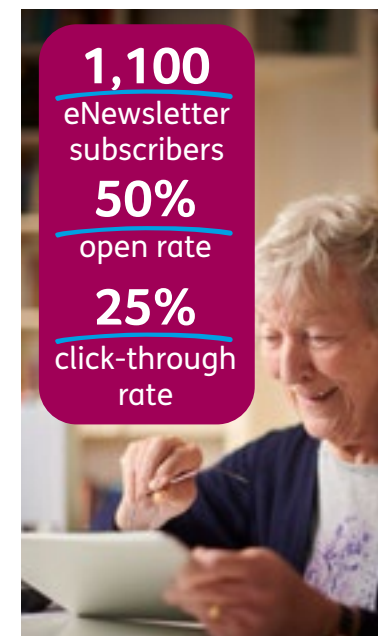
93%  
engagement  
rate



1,100  
eNewsletter  
subscribers

50%  
open rate

25%  
click-through  
rate





Facebook posts reached  
**145,000**

Instagram posts reached  
**3,000**

LinkedIn posts reached  
**12,500**

|| Many thanks for your help and very useful, regular communications over the course of the past year. ||

|| Thank you for your seasonal good wishes. I return your good wishes to each one of you who make a difference to the lives of us in our twilight years. ||

### Our social media

Our audience predominantly chooses to engage with us via Facebook so that's where we concentrate most of our efforts, testing and learning different approaches for maximum reach and engagement to raise awareness on the support we offer to older people in Gloucestershire.

Our Autumn Winter Fuel Payment campaign aimed to raise awareness amongst the 1 in 3 older people who were not claiming their benefit entitlements. Engaging with media outlets, this campaign raised awareness amongst more than 75,000 Gloucestershire based people to ensure they checked their or their loved ones' benefit eligibility **to receive the Winter Fuel Payment.**

### Strategic aim:

## Older people having influence



Champion age-friendly communities across Gloucestershire to influence the way places are physically set-up.

### Elevating the voice of older people

Partnering with Gloucestershire Older Persons' Association we created a new collective "The Voice of Older People" who share their experiences with us to help inform the needs of our community.



In Autumn, the group highlighted their forthcoming winter concerns as being:

Cost of living and fuel poverty

Health and mobility

Social isolation and loneliness

These insights help us inform ourselves and our partners **to ensure older people's needs and concerns are met in Gloucestershire.** We are extremely keen to further our work in this area and welcome enquiries for insight.





## Collaborating with other organisations



Jan Lawry

In November, we strengthened our partnership network by hosting a breakfast event. Bringing together over 40 representatives, we shared a joint vision of how to age well in Gloucestershire, forming a coalition.

The event gave the opportunity to meet our new Chair of Trustees, Jan Lawry and our new Ambassador Baroness Fritchie DBE.



Baroness Fritchie DBE

A round table discussion ignited the conversation around how we can work together to best meet the needs of older people in our county.

Strategic aim:

## Reduce social isolation and loneliness



Establish and support a range of opportunities at community level for people to gain purpose and build social networks.

### Our social groups

In 2024 we offered 13 Age Friendly Community Social Groups throughout Gloucestershire in collaboration with local organisations, each providing the opportunity for people to connect with each other **reducing loneliness and isolation**. Each group ran in its own unique way based on how the participants wanted to engage, offering a welcoming place to connect with others. Some groups offered gentle walking activities, others free refreshments and vital information, advice and guidance. digital support was provided by



of participants reduced their feeling of loneliness



### Impact of attending our Social Groups:

**31%** had learnt new IT skills

**44%** accessed other support

**48%** found talks and activities engaging

**55%** had made new friends

**66%** had further built confidence

**89%** recommended to others

**90%** of people felt more connected with others

**92%** enjoyed being part of the group



volunteers at most groups. On occasions free craft activities were provided by local organisations, and life experience talks were given by participants themselves. One group was specifically created to support those without children.

|| Thank you for creating this group. It has become so popular, and it is clearly what we needed in Tewkesbury. We have made friends with people who turned out to be our neighbours. Today we are staying for lunch together after the group. ||



## Our social group partners

We'd like to acknowledge our partners who provided a warm and welcoming space to our participants:

### Gloucester:

Gloucester Museum  
Coffee Shop  
Brockworth  
Community Centre  
Gloucester Library  
Tank  
Guilt trip  
Churchdown Library  
Quedgeley Library  
Lord High Constable

### Tewkesbury

Ye Old Black Bear  
Marina Court  
Northway Community  
Hub

### Cheltenham

Holiday Inn Express

### Wotton-under-Edge

The Keepers



## Strategic aim:

# Partnership working



Partner with local systems so they work in a more individual and strengths-based way with older people. We will provide casework to support people through times of transition or vulnerability.

**1,400+**

telephone support calls were made to clients who had recently been discharged from hospital

**670+**

clients were referred into the service with 75% seen within 5 working days

**230+**

clients received onward signposting to over 700 specialist organisations

**50%**

of clients received a home visit.

## Our Out of Hospital Service

Commissioned and funded by the Gloucestershire's NHS Integrated Care Board, this support is part of the wider local integrated systems, supporting hospital discharge teams to reduce the risk of re-admission.

Our specially trained team of Community Support Coordinators resettle recently discharged older people in their homes. The team initially contact a recently discharged client by phone to check on their wellbeing status. Home visits are then made over a 4-week period when required. If the client requires assistance after this period, one of our volunteers visited them for a further 4 weeks.

Over this period the team work together with the client using a personalised care approach to make onward referrals into other organisations and agencies, ensuring they receive the support they wish to receive to remain independent at home. The team also offers information, advice and guidance to connect them back into their community and refer to our Help Team for benefit checks to ensure the client receives the benefits they are entitled to including Blue Badges and Attendance Allowance.



**95%**

of our clients feel much more confident about remaining independent at home following the support of our Out of Hospital Team

## Regaining confidence back at home



“I had no idea if I would cope when I returned home but you helped me access everything I needed and the feeling of confidence it gave me was wonderful. Thank you.”

“It was really nice to have a friendly and helpful person to speak to when I first came out of hospital.”

George who had recently had a stay in hospital following a fall at home, was referred to our Out of Hospital Team post his discharge. Our Community Support Co-ordinator visited him back in his home and heard just how overwhelmed he had become. For the last four years he had been the main carer for his wife who had dementia. She had recently moved into a care home where George visited her every day but she had sadly passed away the previous day, leaving him feeling extremely isolated within his own home. He was struggling to maintain his home himself, was concerned about his financial situation and had little local family support.

Using “what matters to me” conversation techniques as part of our personalised care approach, our Co-ordinator sat with George and listened. He wanted support. Accessing our Personal Health Budget, we were able to arrange for his house to be deep

cleaned within a few days. This allowed him to invite people into his home to help support him with arranging his wife’s funeral. To help him with his financial affairs, he was referred into our Help Team to assist him with accessing benefits such as an Attendance Allowance and Blue Badge.

Once all was in place we asked George how he was doing. He was tearful and full of emotion about how we had lifted a huge weight off him. His application for Attendance Allowance was successful which ensured that his house could be cleaned on an ongoing basis by cleaners. This in turn had helped him become comfortable about inviting his family and friends to his home more regularly so he no longer felt lonely and isolated.

As a result of our support, George has been able to sustain having some longer-term help at home by accessing the benefits he’s entitled to.

## Gloucestershire Royal Hospital information hub

To support our services, we continued to provide a volunteer run Information Hub in Gloucester Royal Hospital’s Atrium. Our seven hub volunteers supported 249 sessions offering information, advice and guidance to out-patients, their families and carers, signposting to advice around how to access benefit entitlements and other relevant support to assist with **remaining independent at home, and reducing the risk of hospital re-admission.**

**97%**

would reuse or recommend our Out of Hospital Service

**95%**

of people felt more confident about staying independent following our support

All our clients felt they were treated with respect and dignity



**535**

volunteering hours at Gloucestershire Royal Info Hub



# The powers of volunteering



## How volunteering changed my life

Angela first offered to volunteer with Age UK Gloucestershire in October 2023. She was feeling isolated at home and losing confidence. She wanted to get out and meet people.

After a busy working life in a customer facing role, and then caring for her husband, she had a lot of experience and wisdom to offer. We matched her with a volunteering opportunity at the Hospital Hub where she would have plenty of opportunity to meet people. Angela was waiting for a planned operation in January which went ahead successfully. We kept in regular contact and Angela was ready to start volunteering when unfortunately, she suffered a broken bone, followed by a period in hospital. Throughout, we maintained regular contact and by July she was ready to give volunteering a go.

Angela has now been volunteering successfully for several months. She is enjoying the opportunity to meet and chat to people. She loves the fact that she is helping others. She is sharing the benefit of her own experiences and signposting clients to Age UK Gloucestershire services. She has made new friends with members of the volunteer team and has participated in training with the colleague team. Angela's determination to overcome the challenges she faced has been truly inspiring!

We work alongside our team of incredible volunteers who provide a broad range of support including Charity Board Governance as Trustees, Social and Walking group support, Digital champion support, helping older people with complex benefit application forms, delivering our publications across the county and helping those who have recently been discharged from hospital to regain their confidence at home.

# Thank you to our incredibly loyal supporters, donor partners and funders in supporting our work for the older people of Gloucestershire:



Disclaimer: Individuals' names and images in this document have been changed to protect their privacy.

## We need your help

To enable us to support the older people of Gloucestershire, we rely on the financial support of funders and supporters. If you would like to help improve the lives of older people in our community, please get involved.



- ✓ Choose us to provide expert commissioned services, contracts and deliver grant funded projects, ensuring the best personalised care and service is given to the older people of Gloucestershire
- ✓ Become a supporter & brand ambassador by subscribing to receive our monthly enews, encourage bi-annual publications signups and follow, like and share our Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn posts
- ✓ Support us through donations, by fundraising for us or becoming one of our advertising partners reaching older people in Gloucestershire
- ✓ Leave a lasting legacy with a gift in your Will to Age UK Gloucestershire to help ensure we're here to help older people live their best later life in the future.

### Get involved

You can help us support older people in Gloucestershire live their best later life!

Visit: [ageuk.org.uk/gloucestershire](https://ageuk.org.uk/gloucestershire)

Contact us at:

[supporters@ageukgloucestershire.org.uk](mailto:supporters@ageukgloucestershire.org.uk)



*giftaid it*

Our vision is for Gloucestershire to be the **best** county in which to grow older





## Together let's make Gloucestershire the **best** place in which to grow older

Age UK Gloucestershire (a trading style of Age Concern Gloucestershire)  
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