



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**15.10.2024:** For Immediate Release

### **Baroness Fritchie DBE Announced as New Charity Ambassador as Latest Annual Report Released**

**Age UK Gloucestershire's Annual Report 2023/24 outlines a period of positive impact alongside a strategy of refocusing, marking an important turning point for the charity**

Despite an economically challenging year for charities across the UK, Age UK Gloucestershire are proud to have had a positive impact, having helped so many older people and their families at this difficult time.

Highlights of the charity's reported impact across Gloucestershire this year includes:

- Connecting with 6,300 people to offer support to help them transition out of hospital and back to living well in their home setting, following a hospital stay
- Supporting over 3,000 people by providing information, advice and guidance through a specially trained Help Team
- Fostering relationships with 1,175 supporters through e-newsletters and 2,771 supporters through postal communications
- Gifted close to £550,000 from legacies in wills (representing 28% of income)
- Welcoming over 200 older people every month to community events and social groups
- Supporting 36 events with partners across the county, spearheaded by a dedicated volunteer community
- Supporting 535 people with a mix of Attendance Allowance applications, Blue Badge applications and Benefit Checks.

Overall, despite a challenging period, the charity is on track with their 2040 strategic plan. Age UK Gloucestershire will continue to invest from their reserves in 24/25 and beyond to underpin core delivery and support the transition to financial stability through a mature approach to funding.

Speaking on this report, Chief Executive, Alan Inman-Ward, who joined the organisation in June 2024 said;

This report marks an important step forward for the charity, to build on the period of positive impact. I'm excited to have joined Age UK Gloucestershire at such a pivotal time to deliver on our exciting strategy. As outlined in the report, we are building on our strong reputation and strengthening our relationships across the county to enable us to support people in the most effective way, as set out in our 2040 Strategy.

“At the heart of the organisation is the hard work of our teams, past and present. Our people have worked hard to get us where we are today, and we couldn't be prouder of all we've achieved together this year. It has been a challenging year, but we've built a strong foundation for our continued growth.

“As always, we rely on the help of our brilliant supporters, funders and partners who have enabled us to have such a pivotal year. Their continued support will be critical in allowing us to build on the achievements laid out in this report and reach the increasing number of people who we advocate for, enable and support, with the significant projected growth in our ageing population over the next 15 years”.

### Resolving Challenges

It was previously reported in the 2022/23 annual report that the charity had been the victim of fraudulent activity, perpetrated by a former employee.

As an update to this matter, Age UK Gloucestershire are pleased to report they have successfully recovered £470,000. This not only covers the total amount identified as being fraudulently gained, but also includes a contribution towards the legal costs incurred by the charity. This income has been recognised in this report - and importantly - this money can finally be used as originally intended, to help the older people of Gloucestershire. Over the last year the organisation has responded well to

this incident, working promptly to use the learning to add in additional safeguards to protect their income.

### Building Upon Strong Foundations

Age UK Gloucestershire has appointed a new Chief Executive, Alan Inman-Ward, who joined the organisation in June. The organisation has also welcomed a new Charity Ambassador, Baroness Fritchie DBE.

Speaking on this announcement, Chief Executive, Alan Inman-Ward said;

“Rennie has called Gloucestershire her home for many years, and is passionate about our shared aims of helping the people of the county to enjoy the later part of their lives to the fullest. Rennie has had an extraordinary life! She’s always been a bit of a pioneer, and I’m really proud to be welcoming her positive energy to the charity. Her skills and experience will help us to achieve some important aims in the coming months and years.”

Baroness Fritchie DBE said;

“I am keen to play my part in making a positive difference to the lives of people in Gloucestershire and I can think of no better way to do this than working with Age UK Gloucestershire. Their advocacy, influence and services really are a lifeline to many. I’m excited about the future and how we can serve the community together”.

By way of introduction Chief Executive, Alan Inman-Ward recorded a recent chat with Rennie. They talk about her life and this new role, her love for Gloucestershire, and why ‘aging well’ is so important for all communities. You can watch the video of the conversation here: [www.ageuk.org.uk/gloucestershire/about-us/news/articles/2024/ambassador/](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/gloucestershire/about-us/news/articles/2024/ambassador/)

A new Chair of Trustees will also be appointed and announced at the next charity AGM.

You can read the Age UK Gloucestershire Annual Report 2023/24 here:

[www.ageuk.org.uk/gloucestershire/about-us/aboutus/annualaccountsandimpactreports/](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/gloucestershire/about-us/aboutus/annualaccountsandimpactreports/)

You can listen to the conversation between Alan Inman-Ward and Rennie Fritchie

here: [www.ageuk.org.uk/gloucestershire/about-us/news/articles/2024/ambassador/](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/gloucestershire/about-us/news/articles/2024/ambassador/)

## **ENDS**

### **Notes to editors:**

Photo: Baroness Fritchie DBE, Age UK Gloucestershire Charity Ambassador (credit Age UK Gloucestershire)

### **About Age UK Gloucestershire:**

Age UK Gloucestershire's vision is to make Gloucestershire the best place in which to grow older. As a local, independent charity our mission is to help support people navigate later life, to remain independent at home and to connect socially and access activities in the local community.

For more information, visit [www.ageuk.org.uk/gloucestershire](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/gloucestershire)

**Contact:** For media requests (photos / interviews) or further information, please contact:

Allison Parkes-Norris - PR, Age UK Gloucestershire

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

Jane Shute, Head of Fundraising & Communications, Age UK Gloucestershire

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