



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**21.11.2024:** For Immediate Release

### **Age UK Gloucestershire Brings Together Key Voices To Discuss How To Best Meet The Needs Of Local Older People**

**Community briefing updates on current need, encourages collaboration  
and introduces new CEO, Chair of Trustees and Ambassador**

On Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> November the new Chief Executive of Age UK Gloucestershire, Alan Inman-Ward, held a Breakfast Briefing event at the GL3 Community Hub in Gloucester. The event was an opportunity to bring key Age UK Gloucestershire stakeholders, partners and supporters together from across the county to meet the new CEO – who took up post in June this year - as well as the new Chair of Trustees, Jan Lawry and Charity Ambassador, Baroness Fritchie DBE who were both also in attendance.

The event included a roundtable discussion on how - by working together - the group could best serve the growing needs of older people in Gloucestershire. The roundtable provided an important opportunity for attendees to share ideas and information from their networks, as well as thoughts on how they could collaborate to improve outcomes.

Age UK Gloucestershire gave an update on their current impact which included how the charity's Help Team had supported older people in Gloucestershire to access over £400,000 in Attendance Allowance benefits, as well as access other benefits entitlements, such as Blue Badges.

Age UK Gloucestershire also advised that the need for support continues to grow, in line with the ageing population growth. Gloucestershire's older people currently make up 1/5th of the county's population, which is higher than national average. The number of older people in the county is forecast to grow significantly; by more than 50% by 2043.

The event was attended by 40 people including representatives from the NHS's Integrated Care Board (ICB), Gloucestershire County Council and Cheltenham Borough Council. Local businesses were also in attendance, including the Holiday Inn Cheltenham and Dunelm Gloucester. Charities such as SSAFA The Armed

Forces Charity, Severn Wye Energy Agency and Active Gloucestershire also joined the gathering alongside several Age UK Gloucestershire trustees, fundraisers, staff and longstanding volunteers.

Chief Executive Alan Inman-Ward said;

“At Age UK Gloucestershire we know people enjoy life more when there are opportunities to feel connected, reduce isolation, and have a sense of belonging within their community. I believe the same applies for the health and wellbeing of organisations across Gloucestershire; when we get together to talk, share and learn, we can create positive opportunities that improve things for all of us.

Our recently published 2023-24 Annual Report highlights the positive impact of the established partnerships and collaborations we already have with many of the organisations that joined our meeting. We couldn't create this impact alone, we are so grateful to our partners, and we want to be doing this with more people.

“Now more than ever, the challenges being faced by older people, and the organisations dedicated to working with them, are immense. As a local charity we are wholly reliant on donations and grants to fund our work, so we can meet the growing needs of the county. It's critical that we work collaboratively to improve the outcomes for the older people of today and reduce the inequalities for the older people of tomorrow. I'd encourage anyone considering supporting us to visit our website at [ageuk.org.uk/gloucestershire/get-involved](https://ageuk.org.uk/gloucestershire/get-involved) to see how they can work with us”.

### **Support from the local community**

David Whipp, who attended the event and is celebrating his 11th year of volunteering for Age UK Gloucestershire this month, said;

“I've been volunteering for Age UK Gloucestershire as a digital support volunteer for the last 11 years. In the early years I generally helped older clients learn how to use their laptop or desktop computer. These days it's mostly helping them with mobile phones, tablets and iPads. It's particularly rewarding when I can help get someone connected to video calls, as a world of other connections opens-up to them, with their family and friends from all over the world!

"Attending this event is important to me as I spend a lot of time in older people's homes and at weekly social groups as a digital volunteer. It's great to be able to share the sorts of challenges they are facing with everyone here today.

Right now, there is an increasing worry about online scams; they are so sophisticated that it's becoming increasingly difficult to spot the fake communications from the real. It can cause older people to fear and avoid technology, which is a terrible shame, as they miss out on all the benefits of it! It's an area that us volunteers at Age UK Gloucestershire are giving more support on”.

Di Billingham, Head of Voluntary and Community Partnerships at Gloucestershire County Council attended the event and said;

“The Age UK Gloucestershire breakfast meeting was proof of the energy, commitment and positivity across sectors to work together to listen to and work with older people to make the county the best place to grow old. Older people give so

much and are an asset that we need to recognise and value. I'm excited to work alongside Age UK Gloucestershire and other partners."

### **New Chair of Trustees**

Speaking about the appointment of the new Chair of Trustees, Alan Inman-Ward added:

"Our outgoing Chair, Patricia Le Rolland has been a passionate part of Age UK Gloucestershire for 12 years in various roles and has been instrumental in shaping our charity into a sustainable, highly regarded and influential organisation. I would like to extend my most sincere thanks for her dedication and commitment over these years.

"Our new Chair of Trustees, Jan Lawry, has spent her entire career in the health and social care sector working across the NHS, private practice, and hospice support. Her in-depth experience and knowledge of the challenges facing older people will undoubtedly inform our future work and strengthen our understanding of how best to help".

There are many ways to get involved and support Age UK Gloucestershire, from donations to volunteering; visit <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/gloucestershire/get-involved/> to find out more.

### **ENDS**

#### **Notes to editors:**

Photo: [Left – Right] Alan Inman-Ward (CEO), Baroness Rennie Fritchie (Ambassador), Jan Lawry (Chair of Trustees), David Whipp (Volunteer).  
Photo 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)

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