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Local charity Age UK Oxfordshire celebrates success of scams prevention and support programme for Oxfordshire's older people.

Local, independent charity, Age UK Oxfordshire, has been part of a national scams prevention and support programme designed to empower older people in a fraud epidemic. The programme, supported by Lloyds Banking Group and led by Age UK nationally, has provided Age UK Oxfordshire with funding enabling the charity to support over 370 older people on a 1-to-1 basis, and educate over 3300 older people at scams awareness talks.

As well as causing substantial financial loss, scams and fraud have a severe impact on self-confidence, trust and wellbeing. The support from Age UK Oxfordshire has enabled people like Mrs Simons* to rebuild confidence and feel safer. Mrs Simons, 87 was contacted on the telephone by someone she believed to be from her bank. She was a victim of a complex banking scam which led to her losing £7500. She was referred by a local PCSO to the charity's Scams Advisor, who was able to help her feel more confident about recognising scams, as well as setting her up with a more secure telephone system.

Another couple's address had been fraudulently used by someone in China to register a business. They were understandably very worried and upset about the potential repercussions of this, and the charity's Scams Advisor was able to work together with them to contact Action Fraud, HMRC and Companies House. Of the scams support they said: "Thank you for your support and help through a very stressful time. We do appreciate all that you have done for us."

Of the participants of the programme surveyed, over 99% said they feel more aware of how they could be scammed, and 99.4% feel more confident about how to reduce the chance of being scammed.

Paul Ringer, CEO of Age UK Oxfordshire said; "With scams amounting to around 40% of all crime in England and Wales, it's great news that funding for the programme has been extended for an additional two years. While the initial two-year programme has achieved its goals and exceeded them and made significant strides in the fight against scams and fraud, there is continued work needed to create a safer environment for older people."

Age UK Oxfordshire's Scam Advisors are available to provide 1-to-1 support for people who have been affected by scams and can provide scams awareness talks at groups. To find out more please contact the charity by emailing scamsupport@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or calling 0345 450 1276.

*Name changed to protect privacy

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Editor's notes

About Age UK Oxfordshire

Age UK Oxfordshire is an independent local charity dedicated to enabling older people in Oxfordshire to maintain their independence and live life to the full.

We provide free local information, advice, and a wide range of support services as well as campaigning on the issues that matter to people in later life. We work with our national partner, Age UK, and other local Age UKs in England. Our work focuses on four key areas: money matters, health and wellbeing, home and care and social connections and enjoyment.

You can find further information on all our services and volunteering opportunities by telephoning 0345 450 1276 or by visiting our website: www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire

Age UK Oxfordshire is a charitable company limited by guarantee (registered charity number 1091529 and company number 4328143). For all media enquiries please contact Emma Duckett on 07799 051682 or email media@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk.