

Annual Review 2023-2024

A Local Charity Supporting Local People



We launched our new service

Steps to Success!

We secured funding from NHS Charities Together and introduced our 'Steps to Success' service. With development support from Wigan Council, we collaborated with Groundwork to deliver this project, engaging individuals in community activities and interests. This programme aims to help people make new connections and enhance community bonds. We closely assist participants through a six-week programme to combat social isolation and loneliness.



Our Friends and Family Test

98.9% of people responding said they would recommend our services to their families and friends.

Chair's Report

I would like to thank all our funders, staff, volunteers, partners, and Board of Trustees who supported us to deliver services and contributed to the ongoing success of Age UK Wigan Borough.



April 2023 saw the publication of our new 2023-2026 Strategic Plan, drafted with input from our staff, volunteers and customers, drawing on direct feedback to inform our future direction. Our new strategy will guide us for the next three years as a live document, which we will review each year and identify our priorities through our annual business plan.

Everyone in the Age UK Wigan Borough team will continue to empower, strive for excellence, and innovate to provide first class services to support older people right across our Borough.

We continue to be in a sound financial position and are well placed to be able to respond to, and meet, the changing needs of local older adults. In tandem with ongoing service reviews, we have engaged in new and innovative projects, in partnership and collaboration with our local health and care partners, and the wider voluntary sector, to facilitate more personalised support, improving health and wellbeing outcomes and doing our bit to reduce the health inequalities experienced by many in the Borough.

Our Board of Trustees was also proactive in recognising the cost-of-living crisis which saw high energy bills and high inflation impacting our staff, volunteers and customers. We embarked upon a period of meaningful workforce and service development, with the implementation of a new training, opportunities for internal progress and enlisting the expertise of others to deliver training. We have prioritised staff wellbeing and support, investing in a programme of health benefits for staff, which includes an Employee Assistance Programme, a whole host of savings and cash back on medical treatments.

Teamwork was a key strength that carried us through the pressures of increased demand for services throughout the year. Our accredited Information and Advice, effectively meet customers' needs and got the right financial support in place to improve life outcomes. We successfully passed our Charity Quality Standard external assessment, cementing our approach to continuous improvement and dedication to the provision of quality services for our customers.

Whilst we have outlined Age UK Wigan Borough's trajectory, we know that the environment we operate in continues to be volatile and unpredictable, so we will continue to be agile and proactive in our approach to best place ourselves to respond to both positive opportunities and negative external variables that come our way.

Robert Armstrong - Chair of Trustees

Our Mission Statement

We improve the quality of life for local people aged 50 and over. We provide services to ensure people have the information they need to live their lives as they choose, can live safely in their own homes and combat loneliness and isolation. We make sure the voices of local people are heard and can influence improvement to local services.



During 2023-24 we supported nearly 5000 people and their households aged 50 plus. This was an increase of 13% on the previous year.

What We Do

Support at Home

Our Support at Home services have continued growing to provide valuable help to older people in their homes. We have three full-time Handypersons who assist with small jobs, providing a high-quality and competitively priced service, and allowing people to live comfortably and safely in their homes.



“Always reassuring to know there is someone there to help you.”
Feedback from a Handyperson Client

Our Home Help team support people with everyday tasks to help them remain independent, provide companionship and reduce isolation across Wigan Borough. We have now expanded to a team to more than 30 Home Helpers.

“She does exactly what mum wants her to do. She’s very friendly, helpful and chatty.”
Feedback from a Home Help Customer’s daughter.



Between April 2023 and April 2024, our Support at Home Service provided:



18,318

hours by our Home Help service to help with shopping, cleaning, and social support.



2,707

repairs and alterations to improve people’s living conditions through our Handyperson service.

Information and Advice

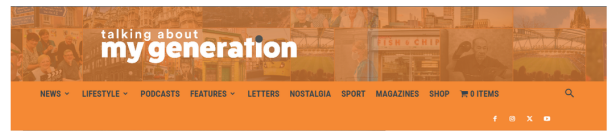
Benefits

During 2023-24 we helped **1692** people to gain an additional **£2,824,229** in unclaimed benefits.



This was a 31% increase from the previous year.

We successfully highlighted our milestone of securing over £2.8 million in unclaimed benefits by sharing the news with local media. This increased awareness about benefit entitlements and showcased the significant impact our information and advice service has on the community.



AGE UK WIGAN BOROUGH HITS NEW HIGH HELPING PEOPLE CLAIM MORE THAN £2.8M IN BENEFITS

24/04/2024

By Archie Day

"Without your help I would have not bothered trying to fill in the form for it was daunting for someone who hadn't claimed before."

Feedback from an Information and Advice Client.



Bright Days Activities

We provide a weekly programme with of engaging activities across Wigan Borough. Our goal is to combat isolation, enhance well-being, and strengthen the Borough's community.

Between April 2023 and April 2024:

164 new participants joined our activities



our number of volunteers increased



4

new activities were introduced



we had a steady rise in attendance numbers, averaging between **750** and **800** per month by March 2024.



"Reduced my anxiety by being able to feel valued in participating in activities."

Feedback from an activity attendee

Our Silver Choir is our most popular group, drawing in 40-50 members each week. They are led by our choirmaster from the Wigan Music Service and sing a range of musical styles. Throughout the past year, the choir has held concerts and performances within our local community.

Ensuring the voices of people aged 50 and over are heard!

Our 'Have Your Say' group empowers individuals aged 50 and over in the Borough to share their opinions, ensuring their voices are valued and contribute to enhancing services. The group has expanded to 51 participants who actively engage in various surveys and consultations, influencing local, regional, and national services.

Our Impact during 2023/24

The statistics below are based on our clients who provided us with feedback

Support at Home

73.3%

of our customers felt it was easier to manage around the home due to our Home Help Service.

73.3%

of our customers felt safer at home due to our Handyperson Service.

99% would rate our Support at Home Service as excellent or very good.

Information and Advice

76% of our Information and Advice clients would not know where to go if our service was not available.



How our clients spent their benefit entitlement:

- **50%** said they spent at least some of it on additional heating.
- **59%** said they spent at least some of it on practical help in the home.
- **45%** said they spent at least some of it on food.
- **43%** said they spent at least some of it on household repairs / decoration.
- **18%** said they spent at least some of it on household equipment.

(Information taken from 274 questionnaires returned by people getting support through our I&A service. Figures add up to more than 100% as some people spent their money on more than one item)

100% would rate our Information and Advice Service as excellent or very good.

Bright Days Activities

44.8%

reported they are less lonely

51.7%

reported they are more positive

100% would rate our Bright Days Activities Service as excellent or very good.

Working in Partnership

During 2023/24 we have:

- Collaborated with Public Health and Adult Social Care to secure NHS charity support for the 'Steps to Success' service.
- Accepted an invitation to join the Care Consortium Steering Group, enhancing multi-agency collaboration within Wigan Borough's voluntary, health, and social care sectors.
- Our CEO became a member of the Voluntary, Charitable, Faith & Social Enterprise leadership team, representing the voluntary sector across the Borough.

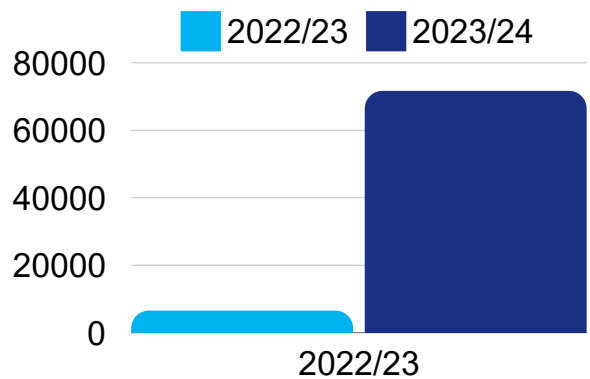


Sustainability

We have increased our unrestricted income and donations over the past year. Through a combination of community engagement and strategic partnerships, we have effectively raised awareness of the charity's funding needs.

Our team have taken part in local fundraising events such as the Wigan 10K, Standish Christmas Markets, and a Sponsored Walk. Our sponsored walk will be an annual opportunity for our supporters to get involved.

Donation and Legacy comparison



We promoted legacy giving and power of attorneys by hosting an event for residents with a local solicitor.

Additionally, we developed closer working links with Age Co whereby we receive commission for successful referrals.



Events

Throughout 2023-24, we celebrated various events, including the Coronation of King Charles III, International Day of Older Persons, and Carers Week.

We hosted promotional stalls at various events such as the Wigan Rotary and the WWL Foundation's Continuous Improvement Conference.

We also collaborated with Wigan Council's Welfare Team and Citizens Advice Wigan Borough to support local people during the cost of living crisis by highlighting free benefit check services.



Financial Matters

We continued to be in a sound financial position in the year ending 31 March 2024. Our total income of £917,766 represents an increase of £245,125 (26.7%) against the previous financial year's position. Of the £917,766 income, £339,872 (37%) came from trading activities as shown in the chart below.

Where our Income Came from in 2023- 2024:

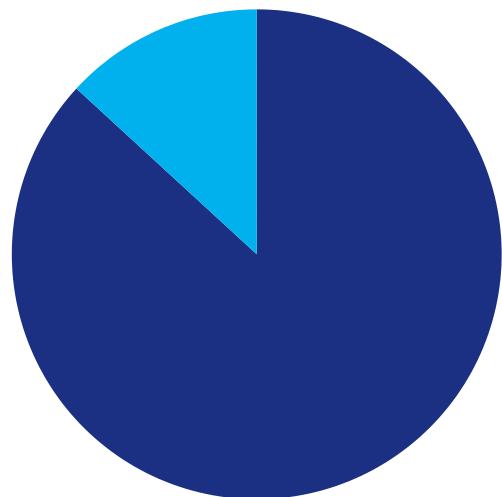


Donations and Legacies	£71,675
Local Authority Contracts	£173,288
Service Level Contracts	£89,050
Grants	£176,442
Trading activities	£339,872
Investment income	£32,529
Other	£34,910

Total Income **£917,766**

How our money was spent in 2023 - 2024:

Charitable Activities	£761,200
Governance costs	£115,450
Total expenditure	<u>£876,650</u>



£265,492 brought into Wigan Borough from external funding sources

Donations

In 2023-24, we were grateful to the following individuals who donated £50 or more to our organisation:

A Betts	Mr and Mrs Hatton	Mr Cumming	Mrs Muskett
D Henderson	Mr and Mrs Hatton-Fahey	Mr Edwards	Mrs White
D Peter	Mr and Mrs Hawkins	Mr Farrimond	Mr Fazackerley
E Barrow	Mr and Mrs Hemmings	Mr Gerard	B Ashcroft
J A Mc Fayden	Mr Holland	Mr McIntyre	N J Lee
J Winstanley	Mr and Mrs Nowls	Mr Molyneux	R Armstrong
Miss Rowe	Mr and Mrs O'Neill	Mr Platt	
M Rowe	Mr and Mrs Shaw	Mr Senior	
Mr and Mrs Boffy	Mr and Mrs Smith	Mr Stubbs	
Mr and Mrs Fox	Mr and Mrs Turner	Mr Westheab	
Mr and Mrs Geering	Mr and Mrs Tyrer	Mrs Brown	
Mr and Mrs Hamilton	Mr and Mrs Willetts	Mrs Cadman	
Mr and Mrs Hampson	Mr Blundell	Mrs Lee	

We are extremely grateful that Mrs S Haigh left a legacy in her will to our charity.

We are grateful for support from the following organisations:

- Age UK
- Citizens Advice Wigan Borough
- Headley Trust
- Home Instead
- National Lottery Fund RC North West Region
- NHS Charities Together
- Skipton Building Society
- Sky Community Fund
- The Eric Wright Charitable Trust
- The Rothesay Foundation
- The Utley Foundation
- Wigan Council



Staff and Volunteers

In 2023-24, we had an average of 52 staff members. We focussed on staff development by providing training for our staff from external organisations. Additionally, we prioritised staff welfare and support by investing in the health benefit programme Medicash which features an Employee Assistance Programme and extensive savings and cashback options for medical treatments.

We saw an increase to 34 volunteers, up by 12 from the previous year. Some of our volunteers this year participated in fundraising and promotional events to let residents know about our services. During Volunteers' Week, we expressed our gratitude by presenting our volunteers with goodie bags containing a charm that said 'You're an essential part of our team'.



I am proud when I tell others I work for Age UK Wigan Borough
Staff Feedback



I would recommend Age UK Wigan Borough as a great place to work
Staff Feedback



The following served as trustees during the period 2023-2024:

Robert Armstrong (Chair), Richard Williams (Vice Chair), Matthew Hothersall (Chair of Finance, Audit and Risk Committee), Đula Alićehajić-Bečić (Trustee), Bernadette Ashcroft (Trustee), Neil Turner (Trustee from November 2023), Lady Joy Smith (Trustee until November 2023), Bryan Shepherd (Trustee until March 2024).

Feedback and Photos



“

“Thank you so much I am so grateful for the help you have given me. Its made me feel more confident in myself. I feel this money will help me so much. Thank you.”

Feedback from a Information and Advice Client

”



“

“It gives me peace of mind, I feel like I have nothing to worry about. Louise is good company.”

Feedback from a Home Help Client

”



“

“I feel safer with the new gate fitted as the old one was open to everyone. The work was carried out cheerfully and competently.”

Feedback from a Handyperson Client

”

“

“It gets you out and about meeting new people.”

Feedback from a Bright Days Activity Client

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Our Future

Key Priorities 2024-25:



We will use our status as an anchor organisation to influence services across Wigan Borough for people 50 and over, support individuals and groups of residents to influence a wide variety of local services and plans.



We will identify income streams to support our existing service in a difficult funding environment, ensuring we remain efficient and offer value for money.



We will continue to seek opportunities to enhance and deliver new services to meet local needs and demands, supporting our strategic aims and service gaps.



We will aim to continually improve the quality of our services, supporting staff and volunteers through change and transformation. We will work towards obtaining further quality standards including Handyperson and the Enquiries service.



We will improve our approach to data collection and management to demonstrate the impact our services make to local residents.

Get Involved

Fundraise for us

Donate to us

Volunteer for us

Leave a Legacy

We rely on support to help people aged 50 and over across Wigan Borough. Any support, no matter how little, is greatly appreciated. If you would like to get involved please contact us.

Contact us - 01942 615880

www.ageukwiganborough.org.uk

