

**AGE UK LANCASHIRE  
FYLDE INFORMATION AND ADVICE SERVICE  
ANNUAL REPORT APRIL 2015– MARCH 2016**

**INTRODUCTION**

Established in 1941, Age UK Lancashire has been celebrating its 75th anniversary this year of working with and for the older people of Lancashire and their carers.

We have a vision for Lancashire where those in later life can make positive contributions to the communities they live in, make informed choices and retain their independence and wellbeing. We will achieve this by:

- positively engaging with people in later life, their families and carers;
- providing high quality responsive services to meet their needs;
- campaigning and awareness raising around the issues and challenges faced in later life and by:
- loving later life and encouraging others to love and value those in later life too.

Our three year aims are to:

- 1) Engage more people in later life in our services, with relevant, sustainable, integrated and inclusive provision available across the diversity of Lancashire communities.
- 2) Offer high quality, innovative and responsive services, an organisation with a culture of continuous improvement.
- 3) Develop and retain highly skilled and resilient leadership and management, ensuring that we develop and sustain the capability and capacity to enable us to operate effectively and efficiently across the County

Age UK Lancashire (AUKL) is the leading organisation in the county providing support & services to enable vulnerable people and their carers to live independently in the way they choose. We promote & facilitate social inclusion and improve health and wellbeing through a variety of delivery models. These include group and peer activities befriending and mentoring and one-to-one tailored and person-centred support. Services vary across areas according to local need.

In Fylde Borough we have the following services:

- Information & Advice including case work
- Personal Advisor Service – providing holistic assessments to older people
- Discharge Aftercare – practical support for people discharged from hospital
- Community Links – befriending scheme
- Rural Outreach social groups and lunch clubs
- Exercise groups – including walking football, gentle exercise and walking groups
- Home Help service

**Age UK Lancashire**  
61-63 St Thomas's Rd  
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## Information & Advice Service

Information and Advice is Age UK's flagship service and we are proud to be delivering this service to older people across Fylde borough.

Age UK Lancashire provides a comprehensive Information & Advice service to older people and their carers throughout the Fylde area. This is a free, one-to-one service supporting, informing and advising older people and their carers, often at the most vulnerable times in their life. Our services include: signposting and referral to other agencies, providing information and advice, form filling and casework. There is high need for the home visiting element of our service, particularly to support older people who are housebound to claim their welfare benefit entitlements and we endeavour to assist with this wherever possible using both staff and trained volunteers.

We support all enquiries that are within our area of expertise and actively refer to other specialist advice services where appropriate such as Citizen's Advice Bureau for debt advice and Welfare Rights for benefit appeals. We work in close partnership with other advice agencies to ensure that we are providing cohesive, seamless, high quality services for older people across the borough. We are active members of the Advice Network steering group that co-ordinates I&A activity across Fylde, Wyre and Blackpool.

Our most common enquiries are focused on:

- Welfare Benefits
- Consumer
- Health and managing long term conditions
- Housing
- Legal issues
- Community care
- Loneliness and Isolation
- Travel and leisure
- Money Matters
- Local Services
- Residential care

The service can be accessed by calling in to the Age UK Lancashire office in St George's Rd, St Annes, telephone, email, letter, referral from other community services or via one of Age UK Lancashire's outreach services. Home visits are provided for people unable to access the office, complex cases and lengthy form-filling. The office is open Monday to Friday 9.30am – 3.30pm with a telephone and email service operating Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm (via our 0300 303 1234 number) with an out of hours answerphone facility.

The service works in partnership with a number of local key partners, including the Department for Work and Pensions, Police, Welfare Rights, Citizens Advice Bureau, Disability Information, Advice Link, Community Mental Health Team, CCG, New Fylde Housing, Fylde CAB, Care & Repair, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, Hospital Discharge Team, Trinity Hospice, Rosemere Cancer

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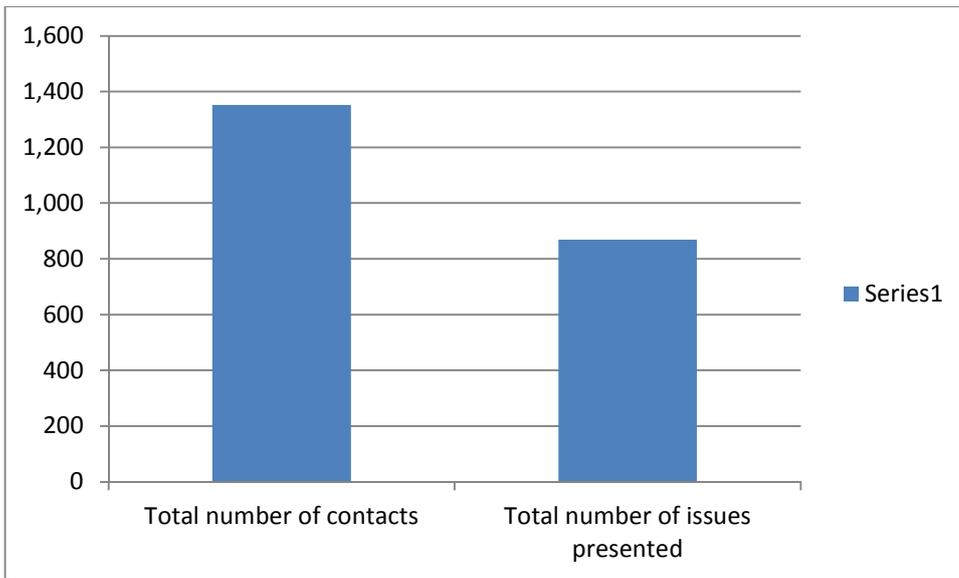
Unit, Social Services, Stroke Association, Alzheimer’s Association, Parkinson’s Society and Lytham Hospital Dementia services.

**Eligibility criteria**

People aged 65+ and their carers living in the Fylde Borough area.

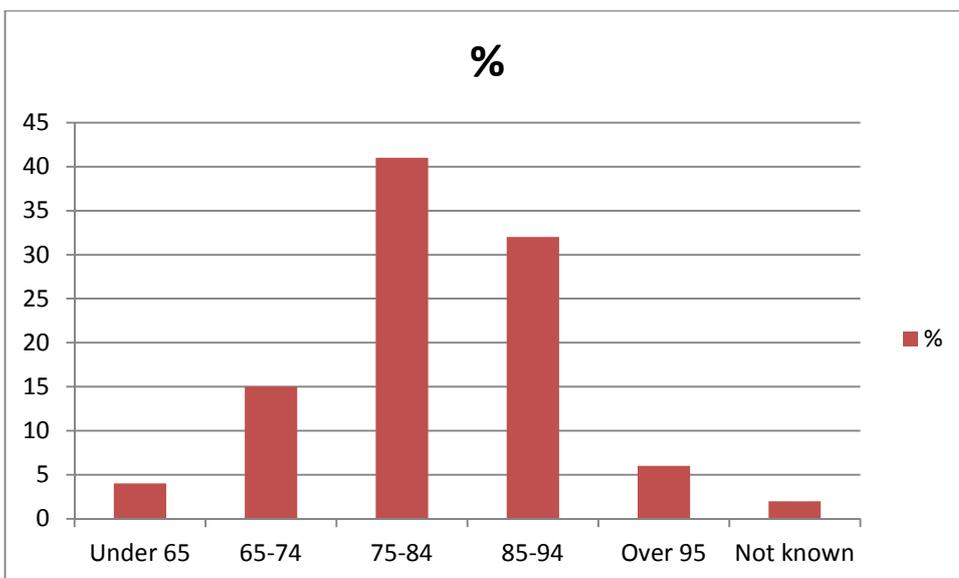
**PROFILE OF SERVICE USERS**

**Total number of contacts and issues presented:**



|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| <b>Total number of contacts</b>         | <b>1,341</b> |
| <b>Total number of issues presented</b> | <b>869</b>   |

**Age Group:**

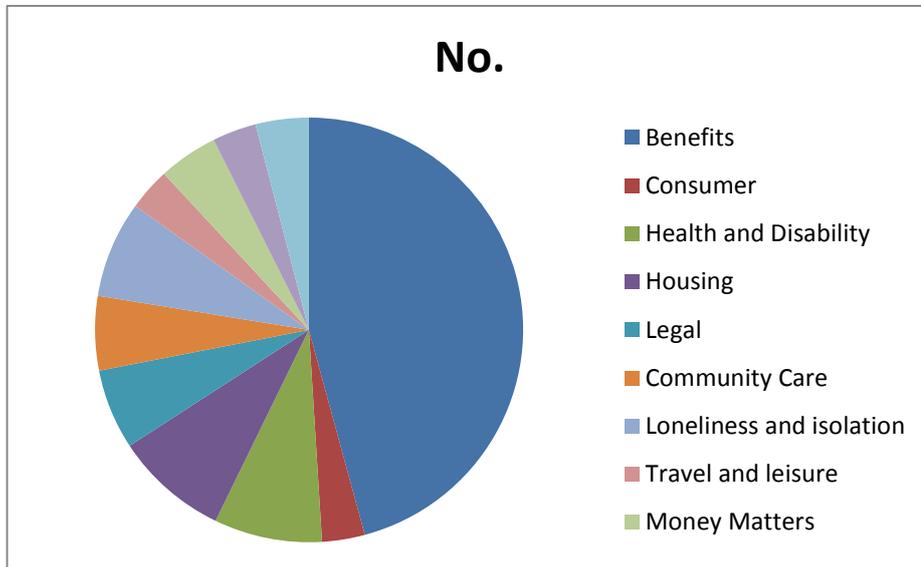


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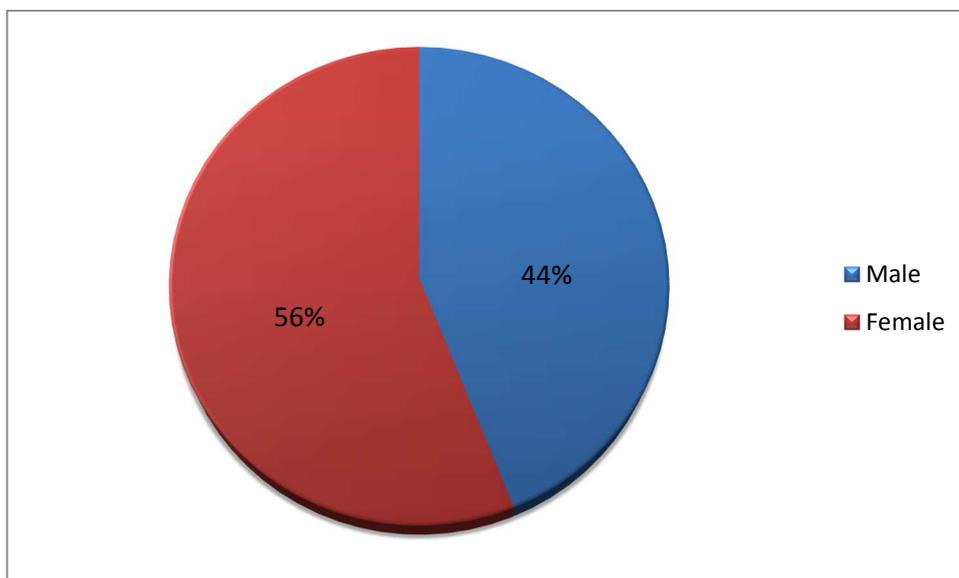


## Topic of enquiry:



| Topic                 | No. |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Benefits              | 398 |
| Consumer              | 28  |
| Health and Disability | 71  |
| Housing               | 75  |
| Legal                 | 53  |
| Community Care        | 49  |
| Loneliness            | 64  |
| Travel & leisure      | 28  |
| Money Matters         | 39  |
| Local Services        | 29  |
| Residential Care      | 35  |

## Gender:



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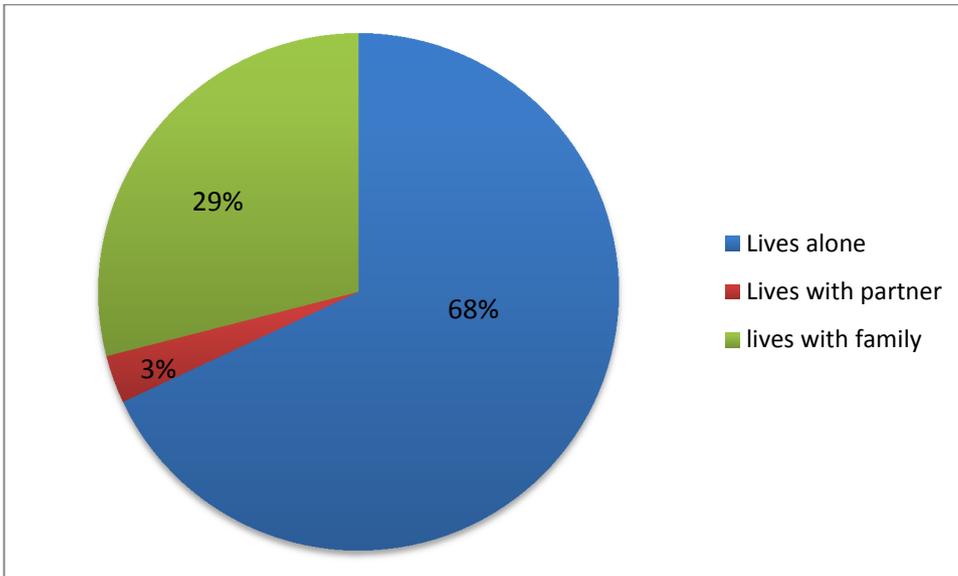


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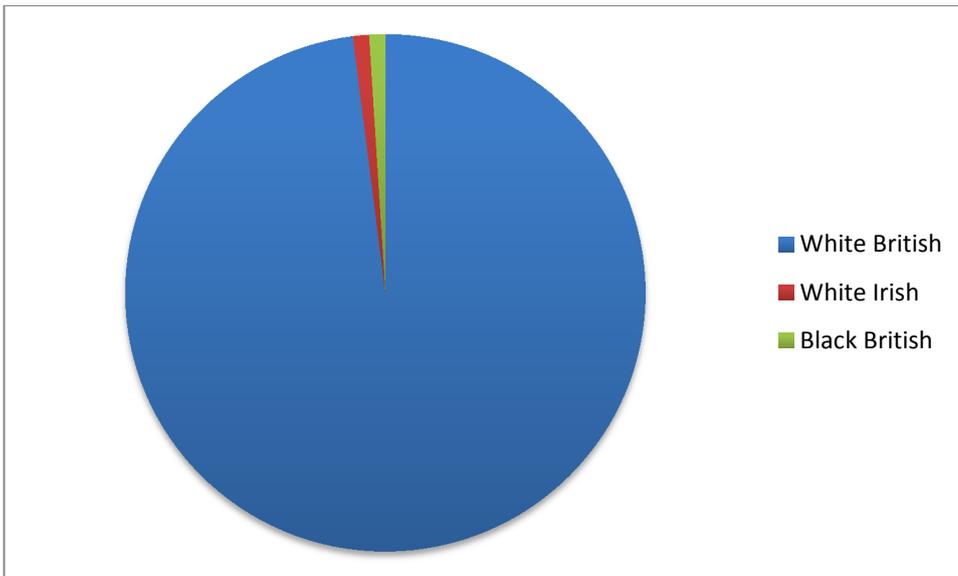
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## Living situation:



## Ethnicity:



**320** people attended Information and advice surgeries

**115** home visits were provided throughout the Fylde area

**The service provided by Age UK Lancashire has led to an increase in older peoples' incomes of over £305,000 per annum in successful benefit applications.**

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## STAFFING/VOLUNTEERS

The team consists of:

- 1 Part Time Information & Advice Officer - *providing office appointments and home visits for those clients who are unable to come to us [information and advice is available outside the core hours by ringing Age UK Lancashire's 0300 303 1234 number]*
- 3 I&A Volunteers - *supporting the information and advice officer to undertake home visits and complete welfare benefit claim forms, particularly attendance allowance.*
- 5 Volunteer Meeters and Greeters - *these volunteers cover most of the office opening hours and deal with callers coming in to the office by signposting, providing information or active referral appropriate to the client's enquiry.*

## STAFF/VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Age UK Lancashire has a comprehensive mandatory training plan for both staff and volunteers. This year we have invested in a high quality online training resource via ME Learning which is meaning that many more staff and volunteers can access up-to-date training and can undertake courses at their convenience.

The Information and Advice officer has attended training courses on:

- Older people's benefits
- Safeguarding Adults and children
- Housing options for older people
- Mental Capacity Act
- Information Governance
- Basic Life Support
- The Care Act

Regular meetings are held with all the volunteers to update them and provide general support.

## QUALITY

Quality is a high priority for the organisation and we strive to continually improve our service provision. We have recently achieved the bronze Investors in People Award, alongside maintaining our ISO quality standards and the Age UK organisational standard. We are currently working towards achieving the Age UK Information and Advice standard (IAQP) and are implementing the procedures and systems necessary to achieve this early in the New Year.

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## PROMOTION AND ENGAGEMENT

Our promotions and engagement work has gone from strength to strength during 2015-16. We continue to use our charitable funds to support community groups of older people, actively promote our services to older people through a variety of media, social media and events. In the current economic climate we increasingly work to help older people's groups to self sustain by helping them to access independent funds, giving advice on governance arrangements and helping to find practical solutions to sustainability (such as finding volunteers, affordable venues, etc).

Some of the Fylde groups that we have supported over the last year include:

- Warton Friendship group
- Fylde walking football
- Fylde older peoples forum
- FAB group
- Just good friends
- St Anne's Soroptimists
- Andsell WI
- Drive Methodist Church

## CAMPAIGNS

Age UK Lancashire has supported the following national campaigns:

- Dying Matters
- Winter Warmth and Winter Health
- Attendance Allowance
- No one should have no one at Christmas

## DEVELOPMENT PLANS for 2016-17

- Successfully applied for funding from Eon and Prudential, through Age UK nationally, to deliver welfare benefit checks for older people and to start to develop an information and advice telephone service for older people in Lancashire (this funding will commence Jan 2017)
- Recruit, train, maintain and manage more I&A and Meet and Greet volunteers to support the service and manage the high demand for home visits to complete welfare benefits claim forms.
- To continue to be actively involved in the Advice Network steering group for Fylde, Wyre and Blackpool
- To continue to develop our range of wrap around services to support the older population in Fylde, based on demand and need.

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## CASE STUDY 1: CLIENT P

Mr P is 77 and lives with his wife in a static home in Fylde borough. He came in to our St Anne's office for assistance with a Carer's Allowance application as he was a full time carer for his wife. Mr P was supporting his wife with all aspects of personal care and even needed to carry her from her bed to the bathroom at times, because her mobility was so limited.

During our welfare benefits assessment it transpired that both the client and his wife were receiving Attendance Allowance and Pension Credit. The Information and Advice Worker informed Mr P that he would lose his Senior Disability premium if he applied for Carers Allowance as they were overlapping benefits. It transpired that Mr P and his wife had never been awarded the Senior Disability premium, which they were both entitled to, as they were on the higher rate of Attendance Allowance. The Information & Advice Worker asked permission to contact DWP, who confirmed this omission.

A claim for Senior Disability premium was immediately submitted for both Mr and Mrs P and DWP confirmed that they would receive back pay for the last two years (the length of time that they had been receiving Attendance Allowance). Two weeks later Mr and Mrs P received a cheque from DWP for over £10,000 in backpay. The client was delighted, but was very concerned about the large amounts and didn't want to cash the cheque in case DWP had made a mistake. He asked us to confirm this for him with DWP, which we did. Apart from the back pay, Mr P's Pension Credit payments had also risen by over £100 per week, which has had a huge impact on the quality of life for himself and his wife.

Mr P recommended Age UK Lancashire to all the other residents where he lives as he thinks we are 'marvellous' and that the service we provided to him and his wife was 'life-changing'.

| <b>Outcomes/Values Achieved for Client</b>                                      |                     |                                 |                     |
|---|---------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| Identify which of the following outcomes have been achieved for/by this client. |                     |                                 |                     |
| <b>Identified Outcome/Value</b>   | <b>Please<br/>✓</b> | <b>Identified Outcome/Value</b> | <b>Please<br/>✓</b> |
| 1. Improved health and emotional well-being                                     | <b>x</b>            | 2. Improved quality of life     | <b>x</b>            |
| 3. Making a positive contribution   |                     | 4. Choice and control           | <b>x</b>            |
| 5. Freedom from discrimination  |                     | 6. Economic well-being          | <b>x</b>            |
| 7. Personal dignity   |                     |                                 |                     |

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