

**AGE UK LANCASHIRE**  
**FYLDE INFORMATION AND ADVICE SERVICE**  
**ANNUAL REPORT APRIL 2014– MARCH 2015**

## INTRODUCTION

Established in 1941, Age UK Lancashire has over 50 years' experience of working with and for the older people of Lancashire and their carers. The organisation has a strong track record of delivering a broad range of quality, outcomes-focused services based on evidence of need in the local area, across the whole county. Our services are co-designed and co-produced with and for local older people, based on their needs, aspirations and requirements and are delivered by our locally recruited staff and volunteers who are grounded in the communities that they serve.

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
- Coping Alone - bereavement support project
- End of Life support for terminally ill people and their families
- Discharge Aftercare – practical support for people discharged from hospital
- Community Links – befriending scheme
- Rural Outreach social groups
- Falls Assessment service for those identified as being at risk of falling
- Fit For the Future – supporting older people to remain healthy and well.
- Home Help service

## 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.

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We aim to support all enquiries as far as possible and actively refer to 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
- Health and Social Care
- Help at home
- Bereavement
- Housing
- Consumer Rights
- Loneliness and Isolation
- Health Issues
- Other Money Matters
- Local Services
- Social Activities

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 9.00 – 5.00pm with a telephone and email service operating Monday – Friday 9 – 5pm 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 Unit, Social Services, Stroke Association, Alzheimer's Association, Parkinson's Society and Lytham Hospital Dementia services.

### Eligibility criteria

People aged 50+ and their carers living in the Fylde Borough area.

### PROFILE OF SERVICE USERS

<b>Total number of contacts</b>	<b>1,304</b>
<b>Total number of issues presented</b>	<b>821</b>

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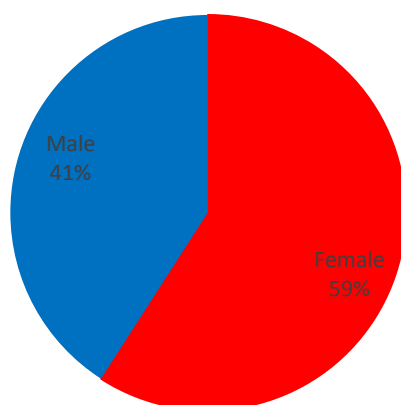
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Age Group	%
Under 65	6
65-74	19
75-84	39
85-94	28
Over 95	5
Not known	3

Topic of enquiry	No.
Benefits	377
Social care	47
Consumer	25
Education	10
Family & personal	55
Finding help at home	49
Health	64
Housing	65
Legal	53
Residential care	29
Transport	47

Gender



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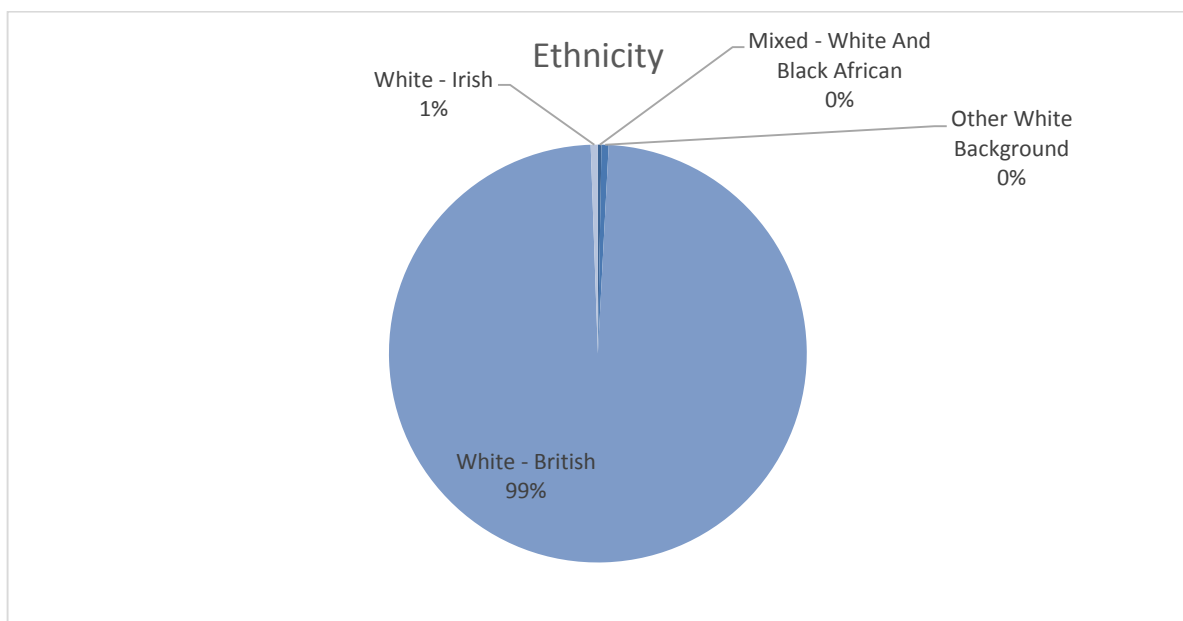
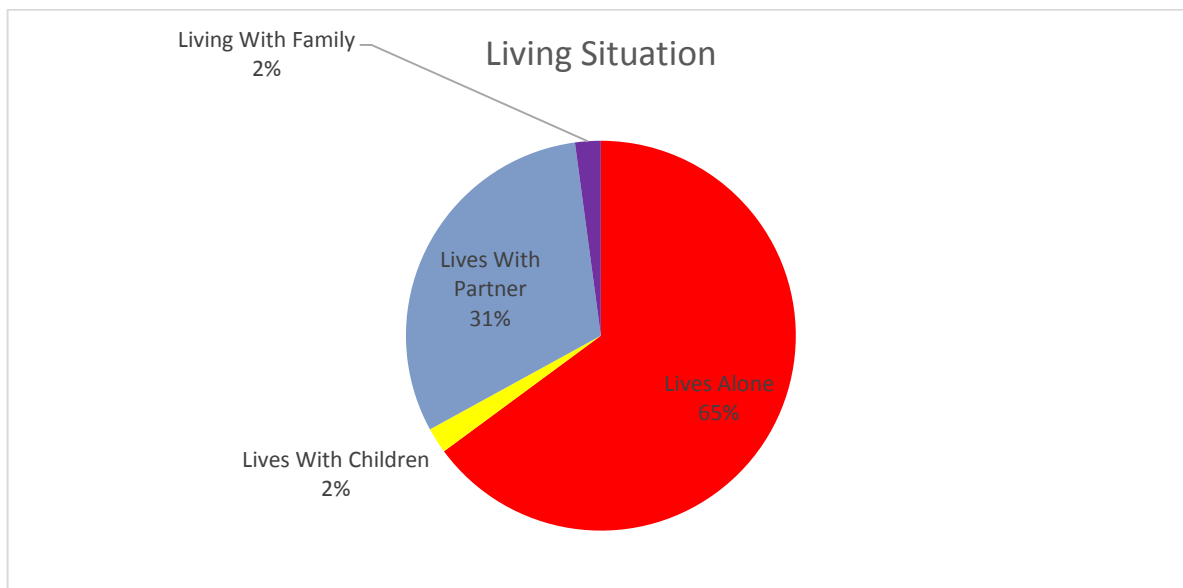
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**319** people attended the Information and advice surgeries and we provided **134** home visits throughout the Fylde area.

**The service provided by Age UK Lancashire has led to an increase in older peoples' incomes of over £310,092 per annum via 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.*
- 2 I&A Volunteers  
*Supporting the information and advice officer to undertake home visits and complete welfare benefit claim forms, particularly attendance allowance.*
- 6 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 training plan for both staff and volunteers; mandatory training includes Safeguarding, Dementia awareness and General Health and Safety Awareness.

The Information and Advice officer has attended training courses on:

- AA/DLA form filling
- Benefit calculator
- The Care Act
- Pension Credit
- Safeguarding Adults
- Personal Independence Payment

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

## PROMOTION AND ENGAGEMENT

During 2014-15 Age UK Lancashire has developed a dedicated community engagement and promotions teams. We 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. Community Radio, such as Radio Lancashire, is an excellent way to reach older people and to help connect them with their local community.

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

- Fylde over 55s forum
- Stroke Association support group
- MS Society support group
- Andsell and Fairhaven WI
- Sheltered housing residents at Oxford Court
- Just Good friends group

Some of the most vulnerable members of the community don't access services easily and often don't become known to us until they are in a crisis. Our Personal Advisor in Fylde undertakes holistic assessments with older people and supports them to access local services, relieving social isolation and loneliness. Referrals from the Personal Advisor into our Information and Advice Service to help maximise the income of an individual is essential to help that individual feel that they can afford to take part in community activities and maintain their independence at home.

## CAMPAIGNS

Age UK Lancashire has supported the following national campaigns:

- Let's talk money
- Care in Crisis
- Winter Health
- Warm Homes
- General Election

## DEVELOPMENT PLANS for 2015-16

- To employ a full time I&A Support Worker in Fylde, with which we will accompany with a re-launch of the office and a renewed promotion of the service across the borough
- 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.
- Continue to seek funding to expand our service provision in Fylde, particularly in the areas of information and advice and Engagement – both essential services that are difficult to find sustainable funding for.
- 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 A

Client A, aged 79, was referred to Information & Advice by her daughter who was concerned about her deteriorating health. At the time the client was dealing with the death of her husband & was seeing a Mental Health Nurse for counselling.

This client was struggling to cope physically due to health problems & financially. The client had one daughter living in the local area but no care package in place.

On discussion it became apparent that the client was not in receipt of any disability benefits when she quite clearly would be eligible for Attendance Allowance. She had terrible arthritis in her spine, knees & hands & was prone to falls. Client A was also hard of hearing. I ordered an Attendance Allowance form from DWP & helped her to complete the form which she said she would have been unable to do alone. I then completed a blue badge application form for her as she was struggling to get out & about due to her mobility problems, etc.

I was concerned about the clients' safety in the home, especially in the bathroom. I referred the client to Social Services & arranged for an OT assessment to get some aids & adaptations in place to help make things easier.

The client was also dealing with losing her husband. I referred her to our internal Coping Alone bereavement service. I thought this may also relieve the pressure on the clients' daughter as she would begin to socialise & attend social groups.

### Results for the client:

The client was successful with her claim for Attendance Allowance and was awarded the Higher rate of £81.30 per week. She was also successful in obtaining a blue badge which allows her to get out & about a lot more. With the extra money she now has help coming into the home several times a week which has had a positive impact on her daughters' life as the pressures on her have been reduced.

The client has said that her quality of life has improved. She now attends an Age UK social group once a week that she really enjoys & benefits from too.

### Client's feedback:

The client has said that she felt we were the only people who were really interested & wanted to help her at a difficult time. She also stated that she felt she would not have been able to complete all of the benefit forms on her own as they are so complicated. She has expressed how grateful she is for the help we have given her & the difference it has made to her income which has taken away a lot of her worries.

<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 ✓</b>	<b>Identified Outcome/Value</b>	<b>Please ✓</b>
1. Improved health and emotional well-being	<b>x</b>	2. Improved quality of life	<b>x</b>
3. Making a positive contribution	<b>x</b>	4. Choice and control	
5. Freedom from discrimination		6. Economic well-being	<b>x</b>
7. Personal dignity			

## CASE STUDY 2: CLIENT B

Client B, aged 80, referred herself to Information & Advice originally in February 2015 having previously used a different Age UK service. At the time the client was struggling with very poor health & mobility. She lived alone & had no family support, she didn't know where to turn. She knew that she needed help around the home but was extremely concerned that she could not afford to pay for it in her current financial position.

On discussion it became apparent that the client was not in receipt of any disability benefits when she quite clearly would be eligible for Attendance Allowance. She had spinal problems and had two discs removed. This had resulted in her not being able to lift her head. I ordered an Attendance Allowance form from DWP & helped her to complete the form which she said she would have been unable to do alone. Client was also referred to the Age UK Lancashire home help service to get her some assistance around the home with cleaning, shopping etc.

### Results for the client:

The client was successful with her claim for Attendance Allowance and was awarded the Higher rate of £81.30 per week. With the extra money she now has help coming into the home several times a week which has had a positive impact on quality of life.

### Client's feedback:

The client thanked me for all of my help. She has stated that she doesn't know what she would of done without the help of Age UK Lancashire.

<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 ✓</b>	<b>Identified Outcome/Value</b>	<b>Please ✓</b>
Improved health and emotional well-being	<b>x</b>	Improved quality of life	<b>x</b>
Making a positive contribution	<b>x</b>	Choice and control	
Freedom from discrimination		Economic well-being	<b>x</b>
8. Personal dignity			

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