

AGE UK LANCASHIRE
FYLDE INFORMATION AND ADVICE SERVICE
ANNUAL REPORT APRIL 2017 – MARCH 2018

INTRODUCTION

Established in 1941, Age UK Lancashire has a vision, 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 3 year aims (2015-18) 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-centered support. Services vary across areas according to local need.

During 2017-2018 in Fylde Borough we had the following services:

- Information & Advice including case work
- Discharge Aftercare – practical support for people discharged from hospital
- Dementia Community Links – befriending scheme
- Rural Outreach social groups and lunch clubs
- Exercise groups – including walking football, gentle exercise and walking groups
- Home Help service
- Foot and Nail Care
- Age of Opportunity – supporting people aged 50+ back into employment

Age UK Lancashire

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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 endeavor 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. Our Advice Line service is well – established, where local older people and their carers can ring in directly and receive a call back for telephone advice if they cannot get to the office or the enquiry is more complex.

Our most common enquiries this year are around:

- Welfare Benefits
- Travel and leisure (including Blue Badge applications)
- Other money
- Local services and activities
- Housing options and Residential Care
- Consumer

The service can be accessed by calling in to the Age UK Lancashire office in St George's Rd, St Anne's, telephone, email, letter, referral from other community services or via one of Age UK Lancashire's other 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 – 3.00pm (via our 0300 303 1234 number) with an out of hours answerphone facility which gives the customer the option of ringing the Age UK national Advice Line for support out of hours (open 8am-7pm, 365 days per year).

The service works in partnership with a number of local key partners, including the Department for Work and Pensions, Welfare Rights, Pension Wise, Disability Information, Community Mental Health Team, CCG, New Fylde Housing, Fylde CAB, Care & Repair, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, Hospital Discharge Team, Trinity Hospice, Rose mere Cancer Unit, Social Services, Stroke Association, Alzheimer's Association, Parkinson's Society and Lytham Hospital Dementia services.

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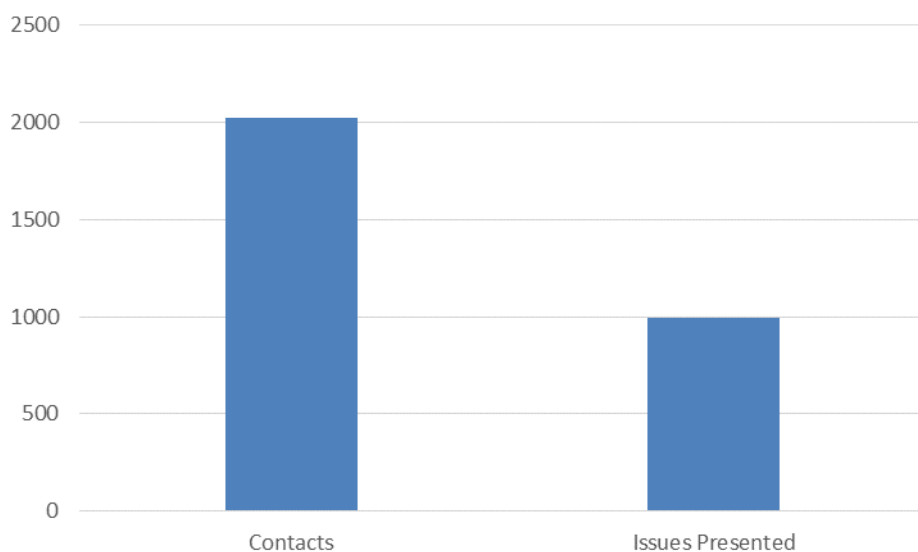


Eligibility criteria

People aged 65+ and their carers living in the Fylde Borough area, but we do endeavor to help younger people if we are able.

PROFILE OF SERVICE USERS

Total number of contacts and issues presented:



Total number of contacts	2,026
Total number of issues presented	994

597 people attended Information and advice surgeries

97 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 £354,000 per annum in successful benefit applications.

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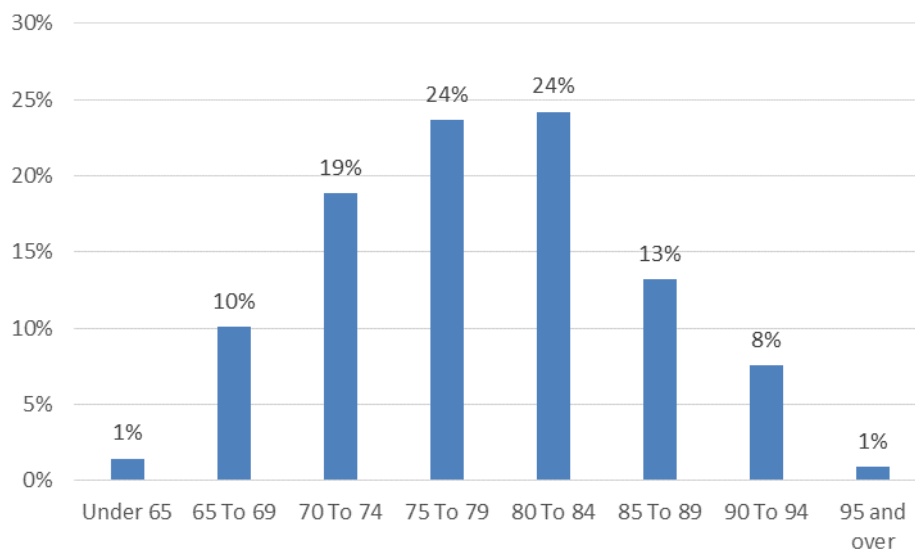
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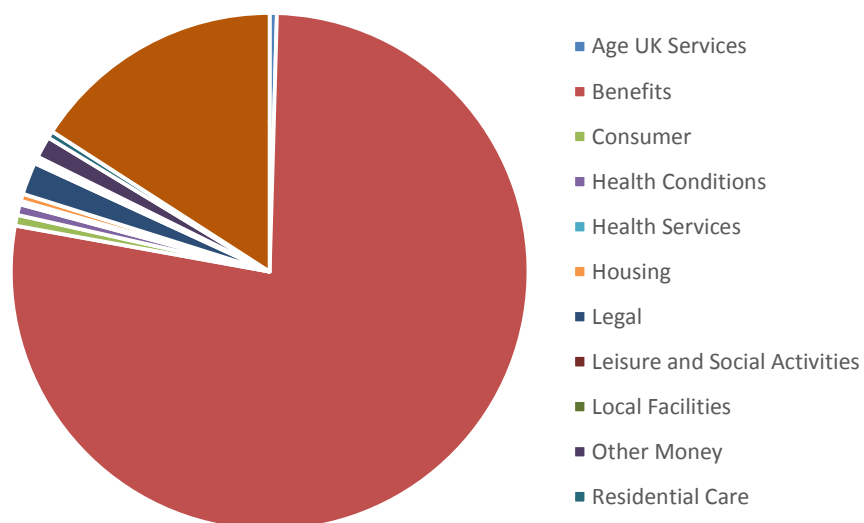
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Age Group:



Topic of enquiry:



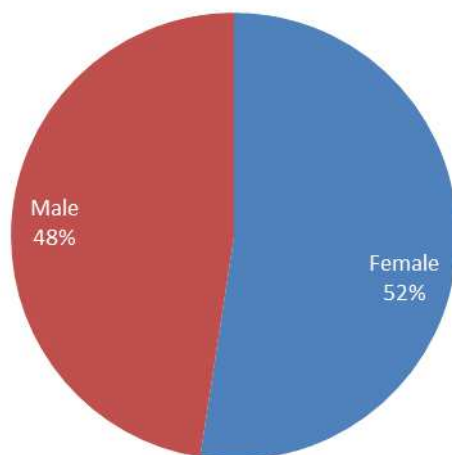
Topic	No. Enquiries
Age UK Services	2
Benefits	346
Consumer	3
Health Conditions	3
Health Services	1
Housing	2
Legal	9
Leisure and Social Activities	1
Local Facilities	1
Other Money	6
Residential Care	2
Travel	71

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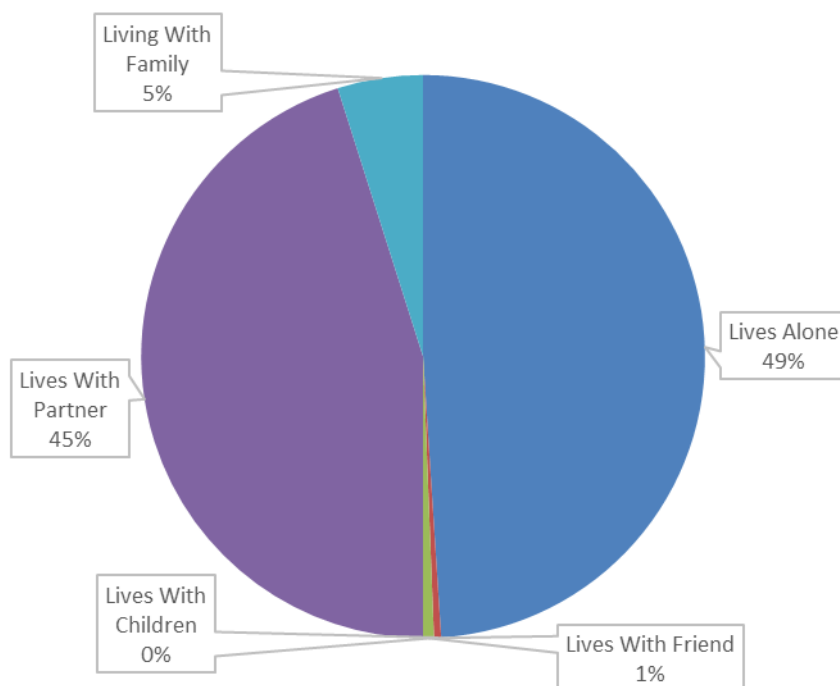
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Gender:



Living situation:



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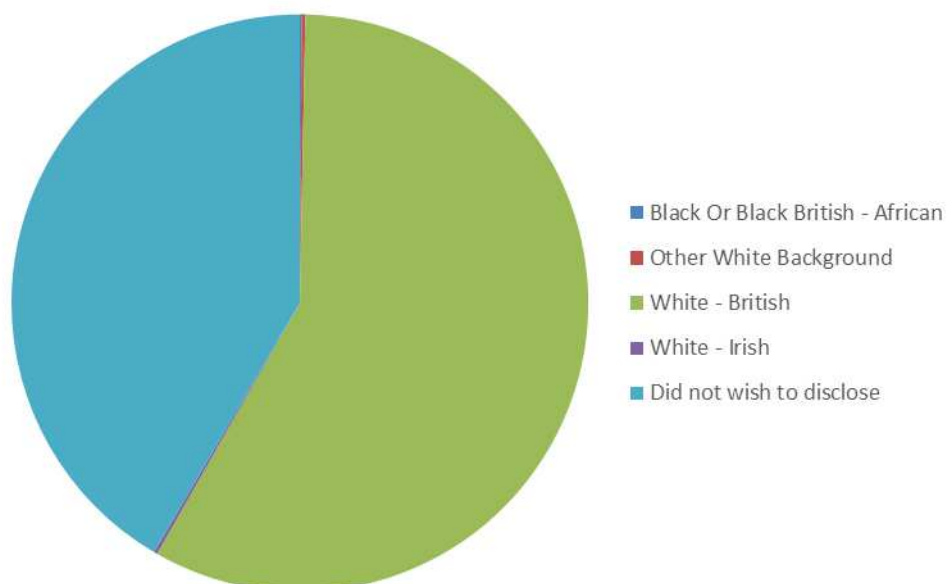
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Ethnicity:



STAFFING/VOLUNTEERS

The team consists of:

- 1 part time Information & Advice Working - 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]
- 1 I&A Volunteer - supporting the Information and Advice officer to undertake home visits and complete welfare benefit claim forms, particularly Attendance Allowance.
- 1 I&A volunteer – supporting older people to complete on line Blue badge applications in the office
- 2 Meet and Greet volunteers - 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.

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STAFF/VOLUNTEER TRAINING

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

Regular meetings are held with all the volunteers to update them and provide general support. This last year we have concentrated on making sure they are familiar with the standards, policies and procedures set by the Information and Advice Quality Standard.

The volunteers have completed ME learning training on:

- Basic Life Support
- Safeguarding Adults level one
- Safeguarding Children level one
- Dementia Awareness
- Information Governance
- Mental Capacity Act

The Information and Advice Worker has undertaken training on:

- Pension Age Welfare benefits
- Social/Community Care
- Charity Log (in house Database)
- Information & Advice Quality Program training meetings
- The Care Act
- GDPR

QUALITY

We have worked very hard this year to achieve the nationally recognized Age UK Information and Advice Quality Programme (IAQP) and the nationally recognised Advice Quality Standard which is a rigorous and robust process to ensure we are delivering a service that meets all their requirements.

We continue to hold the bronze Investors in People Award, ISO 9001 and the Age UK organisational standard.

PROMOTION AND ENGAGEMENT

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

- Social Groups at Kirkham and Warton
- Fylde walking football

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- Fylde older peoples forum
- FAB group
- Just good friends, taking clients and befrienders to their groups
- St Anne's Soroptomists

Staff have attended local events and meetings to explain the service and generate referrals including the Macmillan well-being event and the Fylde dementia hub to provide information on services. We've attended meetings with Macmillan staff, GP practice managers, social workers and district nurses. We've contacted N-vision, Trinity Hospice, Cinnamon Trust, Lancashire well-being service, Salvation Army, Lytham Extensive Care team, and we work closely with the Fylde and Wyre CCG Public Patient Engagement Group to ensure our services are promoted locally.

CAMPAIGNS

Age UK Lancashire has supported the following national campaigns:

- Care In Crisis
- Winter Warmth and Winter Health
- End and Loneliness and Isolation
- Painful Journeys

DEVELOPMENT PLANS for 2018-19

- Will apply for funding from Eon, through Age UK nationally, to deliver welfare benefit checks for older people and to ensure they are getting any energy discounts they may be entitled to through 2018/19.
- 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 seek funding for new services and projects
- We look forward to working under the leadership of a new Chief Executive, Teri Stephenson, who is joining us in late May 2018

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Case study – Mrs. W

We were contacted in October by Mrs. W's son for help completing an AA form. Mrs. W has had cancer, is bed bound and has later stage dementia so would be unable to attend the office or contribute to the form being completed. Her son came into the office and we completed the form. At that time he did not have all financial information to do a benefit check.

In January the son contacted me again as his father's health had deteriorated rapidly since he began caring for his wife. We undertook a home visit as Mr. W. was concerned about leaving his wife to attend an appointment at the office. Whilst there we completed an AA form for him, did a blue badge application, and carried out a benefit check. A care package was already in place for Mrs. W, with some of the carer's time being allocated for Mr. W (making sandwiches etc.). Carers were going in 4 x daily.

The benefit check showed there to be eligibility to £6.36 Pension Credit and £21.68 Council Tax Support per week. However, those figures were based on circumstances at that time and we advised that if awarded AA their eligibility would alter again.

As Mr. W is caring for his wife full-time, despite his own health problems, we suggested he apply for Carers Allowance – although he would only get the underlying entitlement it may increase eligibility to other benefits, and would not affect the SDP included in his wife's Pension Credit.

As the property is in council tax B, we advised him to contact the council about dropping a band as his wife has a hospital bed in the living room.

Outcomes

- Mrs. W awarded higher rate AA (as expected).
- Mr. W awarded lower rate AA (as expected).
- Mr. W awarded CA (underlying entitlement only)
- Pension Credit increased from £9.16 p/w to £153.37 p/w
- Council tax bill reduced to £5.16 for the year, though they will be re-banding the property from April so this should further reduce the bill to zero.
- Blue Badge granted.

Their overall income has increased by £282.96 per week, not including the council tax support (they weren't sure how much CTS they were already in receipt of)

Mr. W will be able to get out more now that he has a blue badge which will increase his independence and they are aware of where to go for Information and Advice in future.

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