# Annual Impact Report



# Age Scotland is the national charity for older people.

We work to improve the lives of everyone over the age of 50.

# **Our vision**

Our vision is a Scotland which is the best place in the world to grow older.

## **Our mission**

Our mission is to inspire, involve and empower older people in Scotland, and influence others, so that people can make the most of later life.

# Our three strategic aims

Helping older people to be as well as they can be

Promoting a positive view of ageing and later life

Tackling loneliness and isolation

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## **Our activities**

- | 🧽 Campaigning and influencing 🔳
- Providing information, advice, and friendship
- Supporting and enabling older people's community groups
- Promoting age friendly workplaces and communities
- Delivering health and wellbeing programmes

# Our organisational outcomes

Our organisational outcomes describe the impact we have on the lives of older people in Scotland.

Older people are more able to influence change

Older people have improved health and wellbeing

Older people are more included in society

Older people feel more connected Older people have increased independence

Older people are more secure Older people face fewer inequalities **Annual Impact Report 2021** Introduction

## Introduction

We are proud of what we achieved as a charity in 2021, and despite the ongoing challenge of the Covid-19 pandemic, we were able to grow and develop our support to older people, their families and carers.

The new ways of working for staff, volunteers and member groups, introduced in March 2020, remained in place throughout 2021 as the pandemic continued to restrict activities and adversely impact older people across the country.

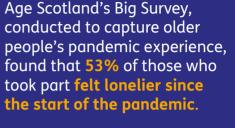
Many of our services, adapted in 2020, expanded this year to allow us to be there for older people in need of information, advice, support and friendship.



Our helpline, a lifeline during the first lockdown, continued to see higher call volume....

200%

isolation and loneliness





The figure was a stark reminder that Age Scotland's work to keep older people connected is more vital than ever.

Although Covid-19 shaped much of our work in 2021, it was also a year of growth in other areas. New information and advice guides focused on inclusion and equality, were published online and in print, Comradeship Circles, bringing older veterans and their families together for a regular phone call, proved popular and Power Quiz, a new health and wellbeing resource to increase physical activity and

# **Big Survey statistics:** Older people in Scotland

We created The Big Survey with research firm Scotinform to capture experiences of older people in Scotland and find out more about the impact Covid-19 has had on their lives. It also explored many other areas of life including health and wellbeing, housing, ageism, the representation of older people, their financial challenges, and looking to the future.

This new and extensive national survey took the temperature of those over the age of 50 and provided a snapshot of what it's like to be an older person living in Scotland today.

3,562 people over the age of 50 completed the inaugural Big Survey - half of them filled it in online and half returned printed copies.



#### **Overview**

of respondents were women

were retired

were in full or part time employment or self-employed



### Covid-19

**15%** of those who took part had been advised to shield during lockdowns

90% of respondents kept in touch with other people by phone

68%

felt that not being able to see friends and family was an issue during lockdown

said they had received offers of help from neiahbours



#### Loneliness

said they felt lonely some of the time

8% said they felt lonely most of the time

53% said the Covid-19 pandemic had made them feel

more lonely



### **Health and Wellbeing**

were less active due to Covid-19 restrictions

95% were aware

of the effects prolonged sitting could have on deteriorated their health in the past five years

34% said their mental health had



## Lifestyle

89%

of those who took part had access to the internet at home

83%

using it since

lockdown

24% of those who had a caring role for someone in use public transport said their family they were more cautious about

## **Energy bills**

said lockdown resulted in higher home

energy bills

to use less

took measures energy as a result of higher bills

26% said they felt financially squeezed by bills including energy and

council tax

While call numbers fell from the record surge in 2020, they remained significantly higher than pre-pandemic levels, with call handlers providing older people with information, advice, support and friendship.

Our helpline team also identified more than half a million pounds in unclaimed benefits for older people, helped by our Check In, Cash Out campaign. 27,237 calls in total

**19,569** ← inbound

**7,668** → outbound



452 benefits checks

carried out

99%

of callers would recommend the helpline

The helpline has been You have been a breath of fresh air you have made my done without it day!

Helpline caller

really supportive. I don't know what I would have

Helpline caller

Thank you for hearing me and for paying attention

Helpline caller



Older people

people have increased

Older people are more included in society

Older people face fewer

# Friendship line

Since its launch in May 2020, the Age Scotland friendship line has become a lifeline for many older people who felt alone and wanted someone to chat to.

In the past year the number of friendship calls more than doubled, as prolonged isolation and loneliness took its toll on older people.

2,763 outbound friendship calls (up 157% from 2020)

666 inbound calls



It's been great to get calls from Age Scotland. I always feel better after getting a call

> **Friendship** line caller

> > Age Scotland is a wonderful organisation where everyone is nice and friendly

> > > Friendship line caller

Our information team continued to produce and distribute free print and digital guides to support older people, their families and carers throughout 2021.

Along with up-to-date information on benefits, housing, care, dementia, veterans' issues and legal and family issues, the team produced a new guide on the Rights of LGBT+ older people in Scotland and Lifebook, a vital tool for gathering information safely in one place. The team also published the popular Age Scotland calendar and delivered 34 new social security workshops to 207 people.

guides produced

guides distributed





upon the government benefits system so I had no knowledge of what might be available now that my age and health requires assistance. Thank you for all your hard work in providing such really useful information

Throughout 45 years of my

working life I had no need to call

**Organisational** outcomes:

have improved health and

Older people are more included in society

Older people are

## g inform

## **Veterans**

Our veterans' team expanded their work with older veterans across Scotland to raise awareness, deliver training and extend the hand of friendship during a second year of challenging pandemic restrictions.

Comradeship Call Circles, bringing together older veterans and their families for a regular phone chat, flourished in 2021.



96
people took part in
Comradeship Call Circles



## Health and wellbeing

Another year of pandemic living has had an adverse impact on the health and wellbeing of many older people.

A new resource, Power Quiz, was launched in 2021 to support older people to be more physically active, while giving their brain a workout at the same time. Covid-19 restrictions have meant fewer opportunities to deliver Power Quiz in person, but feedback from the groups who have taken part has been positive.

Free train the trainer sessions have also been offered online and in person to equip community groups to run fun, active sessions of Power Quiz and Body Boosting Bingo.

238
older people have done
a Body Boosting Bingo
or Power Quiz session



people have been trained to deliver Body Boosting Bingo or Power Quiz

100% of participants said they would recommend the training







Local authority Older People's Champions

**Pensioner poverty** 

**Energy bills** 

**EU Settlement Scheme** 

Changes to fire and smoke alarm rules

Do not attempt resuscitation orders

Human rights of older people

Social care

### Campaign highlights

#### Check in, Cash out:

Increasing older people's awareness of social security entitlements and highlighting scale of pensioner poverty to decision makers

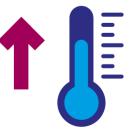


#### **Older People's Champions:**

Working with the Scottish Older People's Assembly to ensure every Scottish local authority appoints a Councillor as Older People's Champion to ensure local decision-making meets the needs of older people

#### Turn up the Heat:

Calling for the Scottish Government to provide a £50 payment to older people in receipt of council tax reduction so they can meet rising energy costs



outcomes:

**Organisational** 

Older people are more able to influence

> Older people are more included in society

> Older people face fewer



# Research and gathering the views of older people

As Scotland's national charity for older people, it's vital that we listen to their views, and understand their concerns and priorities. We worked on a wide range of issues linked to the Covid-19 pandemic and those identified by older people themselves.

**Big Survey:** 3,562 people over 50 told us what it is like to be an older person in Scotland today and about the impact of Covid-19 on their lives

Housing needs of older people: Our focus group research highlighted the need to increase the availability of accessible and adaptable homes

Falls treatment pathways: To inform the Scottish Ambulance Service's falls strategy, we asked older people about how they would like to be treated if they have a fall at home



National Care Service: We surveyed older people about their needs and expectations for a National Care Service and discussed the matter directly with members of the Scottish Ethnic Minority Older People's Forum to inform our response to the Scottish Government's proposals

Mental health: Along with The ALLIANCE, See Me and Vox, we gathered insights about older people's experiences of mental health issues

**Lockdown anniversary:** We marked the anniversary of the first Covid-19 lockdown by publishing three papers looking at loneliness, DNACPR and housing and communities

**Loneliness research:** We commissioned research with Age UK to highlight the scale of loneliness over the festive season

**DNACPR decisions:** We hosted a roundtable discussion with a range of other charities and partners to get a fuller picture of how DNACPR decisions had impacted older and disabled people in Scotland

### **Big Survey**

The Big Survey provided a snapshot of what it is like to be an older person living in Scotland:



24% had a caring role for someone in their family



53% of respondents said the pandemic has made them lonelier



51% don't feel that older people are valued by society



64% reported being less active due to **Covid-19 restrictions** 



87% of respondents said they or someone they know has been the target of a scam



26% felt financially squeezed by their bills

The findings will be used to shape Age Scotland's services and influence decision makers so everyone can love later life.

**Organisational** outcomes:





Older people face fewer

Throughout 2021 we continued to shape and direct policy by amplifying the voices of older people at a local and national level.

Our policy team worked to influence change on many issues including adult social care, tackling poverty, access to cash, human rights and equalities and Covid-19 recovery.

We launched our Scottish Parliament election asks document Action for Older People which had 5 keys areas for change:

- Establish the role of an Older People's Commissioner for Scotland
- Reform social care and establish a National Care Service
- Tackle loneliness and social isolation
- End pensioner poverty
- Build more accessible, affordable, energy efficient homes suitable for older people

The Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill was debated in the Scottish Parliament in early 2021 and became law. We had successfully pushed for the inclusion of a statutory aggravation based on age to ensure further protections for older people.

contributions to parliamentary and government consultations

> Including the National Care Service, Anne's Law, the independent public inquiry into coronavirus

appearances at Scottish parliamentary committees Finance and Public Administration;

Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice

parliamentary debate briefings Including Independent Review of Adult Social Care: Mental Health: Men's Sheds; Tackling Poverty and Building a Fairer Country; Mitigating, Tackling and Responding to the Skills Impact of Brexit; Keeping the Lifeline - A Call to Cancel the Cut to Universal Credit; Covid-19 - preparing for winter and pathways to recovery

# Covid-19 helpline adviser briefings

We supported our helpline advisers by producing and updating a large number of Covid-19 briefing documents to allow them to respond to enquiries about the ever-changing national restrictions.

#### In total we produced:

**Covid-19 update briefings** 

single briefings







Older people are more included in



people are



Age Scotland continued to amplify the voices of Scotland's older people in the media throughout 2021.

We regularly commented on issues affecting older people, while also sourcing and distributing news stories promoting older people's achievements, the work of our member groups and working proactively with journalists to challenge negative stereotypes about ageing in the media.

In what was another challenging year for older people, we were regularly interviewed by broadcast media channels and programmes including BBC Radio Scotland, BBC Reporting Scotland, STV News, and regional radio stations. Our work and commentary were also featured extensively in national, regional and local print media across Scotland.



#### We highlighted issues including:

- The continuing impact of Covid-19 on older people and creating a post lockdown plan
- Commentary surrounding vaccine rollout and take-up
- Calls for investigation into Scotland's handling of the pandemic
- Ongoing concerns over the use of DNACPR orders
- Rising bills, cost of living and the importance of tackling pensioner poverty
- Supporting older workers and promoting agefriendly workplaces as the furlough scheme ended and beyond
- Maintaining access to cash and banking services on Scotland's high streets
- Efforts of volunteers and fundraisers across Scotland
- Support needed during periods of extreme weather

#### Some kev highlights in our media activity were:

- STV coverage on Age Scotland's Big Survey findings regarding older people feeling valued for their contribution to society
- Sunday Post piece on launch of new LGBTQ+ veterans' auide
- **⇒** BBC Radio Scotland and Reporting Scotland features on functional decline in older people and the impact of Covid-19 on mental health
- National press story and STV News piece featuring former children's TV presenter Glen Michael, speaking openly about his own experiences of loneliness and isolation and encouraging others to call the Age Scotland friendship line

- Festive campaigns across national media encouraging people to reach out and highlighting the important role of older people's groups at Christmas
- Nationwide plea to tackle loneliness and look out for older neighbours in communities following the discovery of an older woman's body which lay undiscovered for years



Older people are more included in society

**Organisational** outcomes:

Older people are more able

to influence

Older people face fewer

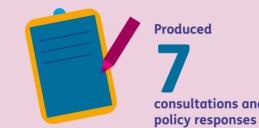
## **About Dementia**

Age Scotland's forum for people living with dementia, their families and unpaid carers continued working to bring about change and improvement in policy and practice.

The team held online and in person sub forum meetings, policy engagement events, a Carers' Question Time event and met with Kevin Stewart, the Scottish Government minister for mental wellbeing and social care.



sub forum meetings



**Produced** consultations and



**Published** 

reports and publications



Age Scotland has provided me with a number of excellent opportunities, which have given me, as a person living with dementia, a feeling of self-worth, has helped restore my confidence and has allowed me to feel as if I am contributing to society

**About Dementia member living** with dementia, response to LCT **Legacy news August 2021** 

I've felt listened to. You can have a good discussion, have an argument even. They are okay with me having a bit of passion

**Evaluation interview** with About Dementia member living with dementia, **April 2021** 

## **National conference**

Plans for an in-person national conference, with the theme of resilience and recovery, had to be cancelled because of Covid-19. The event was quickly switched to online where attendees heard from Professor Jason Leitch, Scotland's national clinical director, about the health impact of Covid-19, and were invited to take part in virtual workshops.

Instead of an awards ceremony, which didn't feel appropriate in light of the pandemic, the conference opened with a series of moving films documenting the experiences and challenges faced by six Age Scotland member groups throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and their hopes for a brighter future.



Professor Jason Leitch, Scotland's national clinical director spoke at our national conference

**158** delegates took part online



As always Age Scotland delivers a thought provoking and inspiring conference

**Conference attendee** 

There are so many older people making huge differences in their communities. We need to shout about this and

Conference attendee

challenge the perception that

older people are a drain on resources

Great platform for discussion on the current and emerging issues affecting older peoples' quality of life

**Conference attendee** 

# Community development

Once again in-person gatherings were severely curtailed in 2021, with most community events held online and regular contact maintained by phone, email or post with information and newsletters. A highlight of the year was a new summer partnership with Edinburgh Zoo which gave complementary tickets to older people's groups from Edinburgh and the Lothians. Dozens of older people enjoyed the opportunity to see the animals in a safe and social environment.

The 2021 grants programme for resilience and recovery offered valuable support for struggling community groups in a challenging year but still a few long-standing groups were forced to close during 2021. To keep spirits up during the winter lockdown, a series of fun activity packs were distributed to older people, including Burns in a Bag and Spring Fling.

in-person meetings with groups



older people and their carers visited Edinburgh Zoo



It was great to see everyone enjoying themselves as a social event, after the last year

> **Age Scotland** member

The animals were great, lots to see and do, refreshments available, lots of choice

> Age Scotland member

Age Scotland member

A good way to start people's slow move out of lockdown and isolation

> Age Scotland member

Thank you for sending us these wonderful and thoughtful bags. It certainly brought some sunshine to a dreich January

> **Age Scotland** member

the book has made me laugh out loud

What a lovely gift,

Older people are more included in

## Men's Sheds

Despite the challenging circumstances, three new Men's Sheds were established across Scotland in 2021. Shedders continued to adopt innovative ways to stay in touch and support their local communities.

The year saw a mixture of in-person and online shed gatherings.

In June a new film and website was launched. to tell the story of Scotland's men's sheds and highlight the impact they have on people and their communities.





**Organisational** outcomes:

> Older people feel more

Older people have improved health and wellbeing /

Older people are more included in society

Age Scotland's dementia training programme grew in 2021 with the introduction of three new topics to raise awareness and support people living with dementia.

Trainings continued to be delivered online and included vital input from people with lived experience.

The team also hosted the first national dementia learning event in November which included 21 workshops and was attended by 120 people.





1,815 people were trained



training sessions were delivered



new topics were added to the trainings

Being given opportunities and a voice is priceless and I can't thank Age Scotland enough for that Gerald King,

Fife STAND group

I learned good valuable ideas for making the home more suitable. It was really useful to hear from participants who themselves were living with dementia

> Participant, inclusion training

> > I am at the start of having to call in outside help and knowing where and how to go about it is essential for me

> > > Participant, Carers rights training

Older people feel more

> people are more secure

people have increased

Older people are more included in society

Virtual workshops have proved popular with clients. Alongside a focus on pre-retirement planning, Age Scotland now offers workshops on unconscious bias and age inclusion for managers.

Workshop numbers have now returned to pre-pandemic levels.







91 workshops held

3,698
people took part – a rise of
180%
from 2020

454
people participated in Planning
for your Future workshops



Older people are more secure

Older people face fewer inequalities

Older people are more included in society

# Volunteering with Age Scotland

We are incredibly proud and grateful for the amazing contribution our volunteers made in 2021. Their work has a considerable impact on the lives of older people. With the expansion of our friendship line, we have developed more opportunities for volunteering this year.

While 2021 was predominantly still home-based working for the charity, there were nevertheless opportunities for in-person activities and we were delighted to build on our corporate relationships and have the support of volunteers from Sky Cares.

Volunteering opportunities include:

Working in our Broxburn shop

Supporting our friendship line calls to older people

Facilitating workshops

Helping to raise funds

Organising fundraising events



Walking Football volunteers
November 2021

## Retail

This year has been a busy one for our shop in Broxburn, starting with an unprecedented number of stock donations arriving in those first few months.

We are immensely grateful to our team of volunteers and staff whose dedication and hard work has been essential to the continued success of the shop. They have firmly established the shop at the heart of the community in the West Lothian town.



Annual Impact Report 2021 Raising Funds

# **Raising funds**

Despite facing fundraising challenges as we emerged from various lockdowns, we continued to receive wonderful support from caring individuals, companies, trusts and the Scottish Government.

'There's no vaccination for loneliness' was the theme of our campaign in the Spring, reminding everyone how vital our helpline was for isolated older people. With the lockdowns behind us, we focussed on activitybased fundraisers with our Spring into Action campaign in May and a successful Walking Football tournament in November.

Once again, we have been touched by the generosity and commitment of people across the nation who donated, ran, cycled and even 'held their wheesht' towards raising funds for Age Scotland this year. We simply could not do it without you.



**Shaun Payne** asked for donations instead of gifts for his birthday and raised

£500

Age Scotland are working tirelessly on combating loneliness. I see this a real need and something we should all focus on in this current climate. Giving up my birthday seems like no hassle at all.

- Shaun Pavne



Walking Football Scotland raised

£4,000

Having carried out some voluntary work for Care and Repair, I became acutely aware of how difficult it is to be on your own in later life. Age Scotland is at the forefront of tackling loneliness in later life. Our Walking Football club brings together older people, men in particular and gives them support in their fitness, camaraderie, social support and mental health, while being fun to participate in. By hosting our Walking Football Charity event it seemed a great way of highlighting the benefits of the sport while supporting a charity that fitted with our demographic. Carry on the good work!



- Alan McDonald from Walking Football

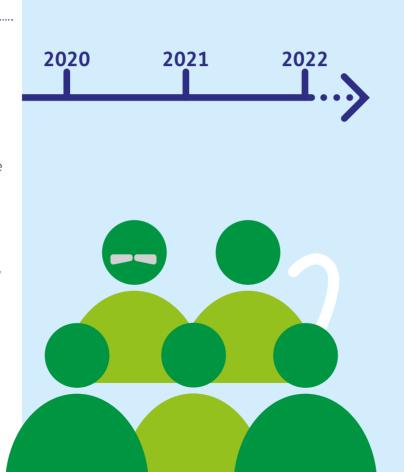


# Looking ahead

We remain committed to ensuring that Scotland becomes the best place in the world to grow older. But we can't do that alone. It is only with the support of our teams, volunteers, members, supporters, funders and partners that we can continue to tackle the challenges and inequalities that our older people face. Together we can make a difference.

Covid-19 has had a devastating impact on older people in Scotland and while there are signs that we are nearing the end of the pandemic, we know that the impact on older people's health and wellbeing is far from over and will be felt for years to come.

We have been able to support thousands of people in later life but there are many more who still desperately need our help. We are more determined than ever to be there for those older people most in need.



#### During 2022 and beyond we will:

Campaign and influence others to ensure the needs of older people are increasingly met

Support and enable

older people's

community groups

to recover from the

impact of Covid-19

Raise the profile of our free confidential national helpline and grow our information and advice services Expand our friendship line to tackle increasing levels of loneliness and isolation

Continue our work with communities and workplaces to make them more agefriendly

Continue to support people living with dementia and their carers

Champion diversity and inclusion in all that we do Develop the concept of older people's sports and social clubs across Scotland by working

in partnership

Embrace technology

integrit

Everything we do will be underpinned by our values:

empowering

inclusive

inspiring

Growing older is the future we all face, let's work together and make it a better one.

integrity

## **Our trustees**

We are supported in our work by dedicated trustees. We are very lucky to be able to draw on their advice and expertise and we thank them for their commitment to the charity and older people across Scotland.

## Our charity board:

Prof. Brendan McCormack

Graham Reece

**Pennie Taylor** 

Kenneth Nicholson

Prof. Marion McMurdo

Interim Chair

**Alison Harrington** 

**Robert Hare** 

Treasurer

Faith Jayne Prof. Lesley Sawers

Kate Smith

The charity is also supported by our Finance and Risk Committee, Members Services Committee and the Age Scotland Enterprises Board.

# Our grateful thanks to the members of these committees for their hard work.



## How to get involved



#### **Volunteer**

From volunteering on our friendship line to helping out in our shop, there are lots of ways to get involved.

www.age.scot/volunteer



#### **Fundraise**

Help raise vital funds to support our work. Participants can take part in all kinds of challenges such as our Big Wheesht, the Edinburgh Marathon, knitting small hats for the Big Knit and much more.

ww.age.scot/fundraise



# Sign up to our newsletter

Our regular newsletters by email contain details of our campaigns, services and how you can support our work.
Sign up today at ww.age.scot/roundup



#### Make a donation

No matter how small or large, donations make a massive difference. You can call us or donate on our website at www.age.scot/donate



# Leave a gift in your Will

Please leave a gift in your Will to Age Scotland. Find out about setting up a free Will at www.age.scot/FreeWills



@AgeScotland



/agescotland



@age\_scotland



/AgeScotland

# Follow us on social media

Our social media channels are a great way to keep up to date with our work and issues that affect older people.



## **Contact us**



#### Call us

Helpline: 0800 12 44 222

Friendship line: 0800 12 44 222

Headquarters: 0330 323 2400



#### Look us up

Website:

www.agescotland.org.uk



#### Email us

info@agescotland.org.uk



#### Write to us

Age Scotland, Causewayside House, 160 Causewayside, Edinburgh, EH9 1PR Let's make
Scotland the
best place in
the world to
grow older.



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