



## **AGE UK BEDFORDSHIRE AT A GLANCE**

Age Concern Bedfordshire has been established since the 1980's in one form or another. Its main aim has always been to provide Services and Support for the Over 50's who reside in Bedfordshire.

In 2009 Age Concern and Help the Aged amalgamated to form Age UK. Age UK, the national body is based in London. Age UK Bedfordshire and all of the other regional Age UK's are independent Brand Partners of the national body. It is important to be aware that we are totally independent charity, with its own Board of Trustees, its Chief Executive Officer and its own policies and procedures.

We provide both chargeable and non-chargeable services through Bedfordshire and Luton. This includes chargeable home help, gardening, carers respite and handyperson services. These services provide the vast amount of our income. Our non-chargeable services include information and advice, both from our office in Bedford and in client's own home, when necessary, assistance with completion of complex benefit and blue badge applications, reconsiderations and appeals. We bring in each year well over one million pounds in benefit payments for older people. We also provide a telephone friendship service, home visits to help people in crisis and with the support of both Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire Councils we make up and distribute over 580 hot boxes and energy saving packs.

As the largest older peoples charity in Bedfordshire we provide these services in order to help older people live a fulfilling and enjoyable later life.

The staff team is comprised of a Chief Executive with over 22 years' experience, a Deputy Chief Executive with over 19 years' experience, and a team of qualified managers supported by staff and volunteers.

## **Services we offer include the following:**

### **Information and Advice**

Free confidential advice on topics such as Benefits, Housing, Care Homes and much more. Over the last 12 months we have had 20,000 client calls through our office.

### **Community Support Service**

Free in depth practical and holistic service providing for the more acute cases. Most referrals come from health professionals and we help more than 1,000 people per year

### **Home Help**

Over 100 workers providing practical assistance around the home, for instance dusting, vacuuming, bathroom and kitchen cleaning, shopping and companionship.

### **Accompanied Shopping**

Our workers will accompany an older person on any outing (except GP and hospital appointments due to time constraints) in order that they can buy presents, do their shopping or just visit the museum or garden centre.

### **Carers Respite Service**

This service allows the carer sometime for themselves, in the knowledge that a trusted person will remain with their loved one, reading to them or playing games or simply having a chat over a cup of tea.

### **Gardening**

Over 25 workers provide regular garden maintenance to around 300 people across Bedfordshire. These workers mow, trim, trim and keep gardens neat and tidy.

### **Handyperson**

Our skilled people provide general DIY work to older people such as curtain and shelf fixing, small electrical and plumbing work and small decorating jobs

**Volunteering**

We rely on our volunteers to assist us to run some of our services and we provide training, reimbursement and a friendly and warm atmosphere to maintain and expand skills

**Social Media**

We make use, as much as possible to create awareness of the Organisation. Our aim is to eventually have a staff member whose main role will be to expand our presence on social media and to create an up to date, inviting and informative website. Our current website is good, but not as good as we would like it to be.

**In Addition**

We represent the views of older people to various boards facilitated by local councils, Healthwatch organisations across our area of benefit and the BLMK Integrated Care Systems. We work closely with the Fire and Police Services as well as being a signatory of the Bedfordshire Safeguarding Compact.

We hope this has given you a small insight of the work we do to make the lives of older people better.