

# Better at Home

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## Impact Report 2022



# Introduction

Our Better at Home services help us to fulfil our goal to enable older people across Wandsworth to live independently in their homes for as long as they wish to, or are able to. We are delighted to be able to work in partnership with Council and health colleagues to achieve this goal. The range of support that Better at Home can offer clients complements the rest of Age UK Wandsworth's services, allowing our organisation to provide an holistic approach to supporting our clients' physical, emotional and social wellbeing.

Natalie de Silva,  
Chief Executive Officer

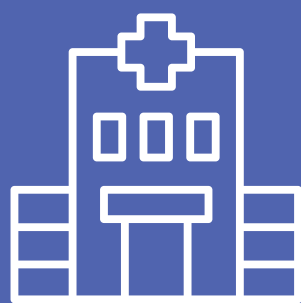
I am very pleased for our team to have the opportunity to showcase the great work we do within the Better at Home Service. I have worked for Age UK Wandsworth for 15 years, liaising with the NHS and Wandsworth Council in a variety of roles, and I have been in the role of Better at Home Lead for 3 years. Better at Home has gradually evolved over the years into 6 different, vibrant, services, and the team is made up of 10 experienced staff who have a good understanding of the needs of older people and deliver services to meet the specific needs of the individual. The team has a range of skills which complement each service; we work as a team collaboratively, supporting each other, and exploring ways with our service users to develop and enhance the Better at Home Service. Our aim is to continue to improve our services and meet the everchanging needs of the Wandsworth community.

Charlotte Allen,  
Better at Home Lead

*Age UK Wandsworth staff have helped me and my service users in so many different situations: the Handyperson service, Hospital Discharge Support, Befriending services and even Online Food Shopping. All of these services are absolutely essential and I don't know how we would manage without this provision in place. Furthermore, the staff are absolutely great and easy to get in contact with. Thank you for everything you do!*

**Occupational Therapist**

# The Better at Home services



## Our history

Throughout Age UK Wandsworth's 60 years of operation, helping older people to stay independent at home for as long as they wish to has always been at the forefront of what we do. In the 1960s, we made regular appeals for visitors for housebound older people, which eventually became the Be-a-Friend service. The Handyperson service followed, and as we grew throughout the 2000s and 2010s we offered various services funded by grants from the NHS, Wandsworth Council and charitable trusts to help people over 60 to socialise and stay healthy and safe in their homes.

In 2011, new funding from the NHS in Wandsworth allowed two new services to be launched, Home from Hospital and Voluntary Services Navigator, as well as funding the existing Handyperson service. This provided the springboard for Better at Home to evolve, culminating in 2019, when the five year 'Better at Home' contract, encompassing the above, Be-a-Friend and the Shopping Service was launched. Soon after, this expanded to a new Befriending Plus service, bringing Better at Home to where it is today - six services, with a dedicated team of ten (mostly part-time) staff working in our office and the community.

# Be-a-Friend

## What we do:

Age UK Wandsworth's Be-a-Friend service has matched thousands of older people with volunteers across the borough since its inception nearly four decades ago. Many people become isolated in later life through no fault of their own, and the service aims to reduce the loneliness that comes with this isolation through creating a new, regular social interaction with a DBS-checked volunteer. Telephone befriending was offered as an alternative to face-to-face visits during the pandemic, and can still be facilitated for those who prefer to speak over the phone. However, most volunteers visit their friend's home each week for a cup of tea and a catch up, with clients reporting significant benefits to their mood, confidence and wellbeing. Be-a-Friend clients also receive birthday and Christmas cards to help alleviate loneliness on these special occasions.



## 2022 in numbers:

142 clients supported on average each month  
50 new volunteers trained  
8,357 volunteer hours (visits and phone calls)  
150+ birthday and Christmas cards sent

I haven't been bought flowers for my birthday since I cannot remember when. It was such a lovely surprise, I felt very emotional!

**Mrs E, Be-a-Friend client**

I have found a really close friend who I have become very fond of. We can talk forever and never run out of things to say.

**F, Be-a-Friend volunteer**

## Case Study:

Mrs G is a 67 year old woman living alone in Wandsworth, who has rheumatoid arthritis as well as some cognitive decline, which affects her mobility and leaves her mostly housebound. A former headteacher, she struggles with the social isolation that being unable to leave her flat brings, and a social prescriber referred her to the Be-a-Friend service. The service coordinator visited her at home, and found her to be very bright and engaging, despite her only social contact being a neighbour who assists her with attending medical appointments.

The coordinator was able to match Mrs G with a local volunteer, and they quickly bonded over their shared loves of nature, the countryside and baking. Having regular and engaging social contact with a kind and dedicated volunteer has helped Mrs G to regain the motivation and confidence needed to do the hobbies that she used to enjoy in her flat, and she feels brighter and more optimistic for the future.

I feel truly cared for, for the first time since I retired. I really look forward to the telephone calls and visits, and I now feel like I can bake again as there is a weekly occasion to prepare for!

**Mrs G, Be-a-Friend client**

## Case Study:

Mrs H is a 78 year old woman, who lives alone with multiple health issues that cause her to be housebound and require carers three times a day. As a former nurse who is used to being on her feet and around people every day, she found being at home lonely and isolating. Furthermore, as someone with a deep-rooted faith, she really missed being able to attend her church in person, and sadly has no living relatives in the UK who could support her to do this.

Mrs H referred herself to the service, after a chance meeting with an Age UK Wandsworth volunteer in her church group. After meeting Mrs H at her home, the service coordinator was able to match her with a local volunteer, T, of the same faith. T visits Mrs H twice a week for Bible study and a game of Scrabble, and reports that Mrs H looks forward to seeing her, and that her mood, and even her mobility, appear to be improving. Together, they have set a goal for Mrs H to walk around the garden with the volunteer's support in time for Spring. Once this is achieved, T will support Mrs H to visit her church in person in 2023.

# Befriending Plus

## What we do:

The Befriending Plus service is an extended version of the Be-a-Friend service, for clients identified by social workers as needing additional support with organisation and "life admin" in their home. It aims to prevent clients from requiring packages of care in the future, by reducing loneliness and increasing independence at home.

After assessment by the service coordinator, the client is matched with a local volunteer who can provide regular companionship as well as help with small tasks at home. These include admin, such as opening and filing post or organising appointments, as well as practical support at home. Volunteers are also encouraged to help the client to access the local community, such as going for short walks together or visiting the shops.

## 2022 in numbers:

1,624 volunteer hours

39 active volunteer pairings

44 total volunteers

I have now been paired with my volunteer for a year and a half. She visits me regularly, and we get on very well. Most importantly, I trust her and she really makes an effort to understand me.

**Mr W, Befriending Plus client**

R is brilliant, she does not hesitate to do the odd shopping when asked. She is much, much younger than me, but sees me as a friend. We can spend an hour on the phone talking about anything and everything – our friends, families and her dog.

**Mrs A, Befriending Plus client**



## Case Study:

Mrs B is a 69 year old woman who lives alone in Battersea, where she has lived all of her life. She is visually impaired, which can often make day-to-day tasks more difficult to complete. Struggling to book appointments, get to the shops or organise her diary made her more likely to miss out on socialising and left her feeling isolated and frustrated. A Deafblind assessor from Wandsworth Borough Council's Sensory Team understood Mrs B's concerns and made a referral to the Befriending Plus service. The service coordinator visited Mrs B to find out more about what she would like from the service, before matching her with a local volunteer, J, who has now been visiting Mrs B every Monday evening since April 2022.

J and Mrs B immediately settled into a good routine for J's visits. J opens Mrs B's letters and other paperwork and reads them aloud, before organising them into files. Sometimes, J will go through Mrs B's wardrobe and describe the colour of each item, to help her organise her clothes. Other times, J will paint Mrs B's nails whilst they chat about the past week. Mrs B would have been alone for Christmas 2022, so J and the service coordinator organised for her to attend the Wandsworth Rotary Club's Christmas Lunch.

Since J started visiting, Mrs B has reported feeling happier and more confident living at home as she knows that she has someone to help her if she needs it. This greatly reduces the need of a care package being put in place for her.

J has helped me so much, she really is great. I don't know what I'd do without her. She helps me with opening my letters, and she even helped me to book special assistance gig tickets so I could go to see some live music.

**Mrs B, Befriending Plus client**

Mrs B has been very positive from our first visit, and I've really enjoyed working with her on the tasks that she has asked for my help with.

**J, volunteer**

# Handyperson Service



## What we do:

Age UK Wandsworth's Handyperson service provides practical help for older people in the borough at their homes. It aims to provide a free or low-cost service for odd jobs, and provide older people with a trusted handyperson. Often, jobs which help to prevent falls, such as fitting grab rails, taping down carpets and replacing bulbs, can be done for free. Other jobs, for example, putting up pictures, building flatpack furniture, or installing Wi-Fi boxes can be completed for a charge.

The Handyperson service is also responsible for jobs that enable older people to be discharged from hospital into their homes, such as moving furniture to allow the delivery of a hospital bed and installing keysafes. This plays a key role in supporting Wandsworth hospitals to ensure a smooth, safe and quick discharge for their clients.

I would like to provide some feedback from two clients who I recently referred to your service to have grab rails fitted. Both patients reported they had a 'wonderful' handyperson come to fit their rails, and praised her good work and efficiency. I think it's important while we are all under such pressures to stop and take a moment to give credit where credit is due. Well done to your amazing team, who I cannot say I have had any negative experiences with!

**Wandsworth Occupational Therapist**



## 2022 in numbers:

1,244 clients visited

2,602 jobs completed

519 hospital discharge dependant jobs completed

- 616 grabrails fitted
- 534 keysafes fitted
- 340 pieces of furniture moved to create 'micro-environments' for hospital beds at home



### Case Study:

Mrs C is a 71 year old woman living in a high-rise block in Roehampton. Her reduced mobility makes it difficult for her to get around her flat or go out often. She called the Handyperson service for help with fitting new lightbulbs, and the handyperson attended her flat on the next working day.

The handyperson found that Mrs C had no working lights in the bathroom or second bedroom, and only one working light in the kitchen. They also noticed that her smoke alarm was intermittently beeping, indicating that the battery needed changing. The service coordinator was able to supply replacement LED bulbs for the client, and organise another appointment to fit these. In total, 5 bulbs were changed, a tripped fuse restored, the smoke alarm battery changed, and another broken smoke alarm removed and disposed of.

This means that Mrs C can now use her kitchen and bathroom safely at night, and her risk of having a fall has reduced. She was very grateful for the quick assistance on jobs that others would consider as minor works, but were out of limits to fix herself due to her mobility. The handyperson also explained the other Age UK Wandsworth services available to her, so Mrs C knows now that she doesn't have to suffer in silence, and can reach out to us for help when she needs it.

### Case Study:

Mr M is a 68 year old man living alone in a fourth-floor flat in Wandsworth, who has recently undergone a kidney transplant, as well as living with other health issues. He had ordered a new microwave online, but was disheartened to find that it had been delivered to the ground floor of his block of flats, as he was unable to carry it safely up the three flights of stairs. He called the Handyperson service, though he was unsure whether he would be eligible for help with what some would consider a small job. On learning that the client lived just a few minutes walk away from the Age UK Wandsworth office, the service coordinator kindly volunteered his personal time to carry the microwave upstairs and install it in Mr M's kitchen. Whilst on site, it was noted that Mr M was struggling with the numerous steep stairways on the property, and the coordinator advised him that he would be eligible for hand rails to be fitted by the service to assist with his mobility.

Along with finally enjoying a hot meal in his new microwave (replacing his old one of 28 years!), Mr M obtained a completed Better at Home referral form from his GP, so the handyperson could attend to provide and fit 'mop stick' hand rails from his flat down to street level. The client was not only thankful for the quick response to his initial issue, which would seem minimal to most, but for the access to services and support that he was not previously aware of.

# Hospital Discharge Support



## What we do:

Age UK Wandsworth's Hospital Discharge Support offers short-term support to help those who have been discharged from hospital with the transition home. The service coordinator meets the client in person or over the phone, to find out what they would like to achieve from the support to meet their recovery goals. They are then supported with organisation, such as collecting prescriptions and making appointments, light household duties like ironing or washing up, or building confidence with tasks such as getting to the shops or travelling on the bus. When the support has ended, the person can then be signposted to further support from Age UK Wandsworth or other organisations, to continue their recovery at home and reduce the risk of readmission.

**2022 in numbers:**  
178 clients supported



“Hospital Discharge Support has been a great help in supporting service users to leave hospital, especially to those who have had lengthy hospital stays and are anxious about returning home. The service has reduced the pressure on my team to set up care packages unnecessarily - your team recently helped a gentleman who had a long hospital stay to build up his confidence living independently at home. I truly believe if this service was unavailable, this particular gentleman would have very likely called London Ambulance Service in a panic upon arriving home, but your team were able to alleviate his worries and show him that he is able to cope. **Wandsworth Social Worker**”

“Many thanks once again to the Hospital Discharge Support team for all of your excellent input. It is very much valued and I know that the client greatly appreciates all the support that she has received from Age UK Wandsworth services since leaving hospital.

**Wandsworth Occupational Therapist (Enablement Team)**”

## Case Study:

Mrs K is a 90 year old woman who lives alone in Wandsworth. She has lived in the area for her whole life and has always enjoyed being part of the community, particularly as part of the local church. She worked as a window dresser, and travelled extensively upon retiring. After an 8-week hospital stay at Queen Mary's Hospital, she was referred to the service for support with re-adjusting to living at home. A very independent woman who likes to keep busy, she found being unable to leave the house alone very frustrating, particularly not being able to attend church or go to the shops.

A Hospital Discharge Support assistant arranged regular meetings with Mrs K to build up a rapport and understand her recovery goals, as well as monitoring her wellbeing. This included undertaking practical tasks, such as arranging the delivery of her prescriptions, and booking her GP appointments. Mrs K was very keen to get back on her feet, so our team supported her to use a three-wheeled walker on various trips to local shops and cafes, until she felt confident using it to go out independently. She was also referred to Shopmobility, who now support her to get out weekly to shops that are further afield.

We were also able to support Mrs K with advocating for herself when issues arose with her care package. We liaised with the Enablement Team after observing an issue with the financial commitments, as well as her care provider when it became clear that she was not receiving the correct number of visits per day.

Across their visits, the Hospital Discharge Support assistant explained the other services that Age UK Wandsworth provide. The Information and Advice team supported her to apply for Attendance Allowance, which she was successful in claiming and awarded her an additional £61.85 per week. We noticed that there were loose carpets in her flat and referred her to the Handyperson service, who visited to tape them down, reducing Mrs K's risk of falls. She was also referred to Be-a-Friend, who paired her with a volunteer who visits her weekly for short walks around the area, as well as phoning her regularly. These visits gave her the confidence to start using the walker to attend church with a supportive neighbour. Mrs K reports feeling far less isolated and is very pleased to be involved in the community once again.

# Online Food Shopping

## What we do:

Age UK Wandsworth's Online Food Shopping is a telephone-based service to take regular food shopping orders to those who are unable to shop in person or use online shopping websites independently. Clients can shop with a supermarket of their choice, and choose a delivery date that suits them. The service is free, however, most supermarkets charge variable delivery fees. Prospective clients need to be able to speak clearly over the phone, and commit to weekly or fortnightly appointments with the Shopping team to place their orders.

The service aims to encourage independence and choice at home, by allowing clients to choose their groceries every week, rather than a limited meal delivery service, for example. Other benefits include the regular phone contact of the service alleviating loneliness, and clients can often report other issues to staff, who can then signpost them to support.

New referrals must have a mobile phone which is linked to their bank account, as new enhanced security processes have been introduced by most major banks. This means that for online shops to be placed successfully, the client must be able to manage the one-time passcode (OTP) sent to their mobile.

## 2022 in numbers:

1,242 shops ordered

52 clients

“ I’m housebound, and I really don’t know what I’d have done to get my groceries throughout the pandemic without you. The service is excellent, and I couldn’t survive without it.

**Mrs C, Online Food Shopping client** ”



## Case Study:

Mrs S is a 72 year old woman who lives alone in Wandsworth and is currently undergoing chemotherapy treatment for cancer. She was referred to the service by the Wandsworth and Merton Hospital at Home team, after the fatigue caused by her treatment left her too weak to shop independently. She found this particularly upsetting, as she knew that she needed to eat as well as possible throughout her treatment but was unable to do this with the little she had in her home.

Being supported by the Online Food Shopping service has meant that she can order nutritious, easily-prepared ready meals and fruit and vegetables to last her the 2-3 weeks when she is most affected by each round of treatment. The coordinator has helped her to plan in their calls and the deliveries around her medical appointments, and places all calls in the afternoon when she is feeling at her best.

The service has allowed Mrs S to feel reassured that she will always have food in the house during this difficult time. She can plan and choose what she would like to eat without having to leave the house or struggle with heavy bags. She feels that being part of the service is a tremendous weight off her mind and means she has one less thing to worry about during her treatment.

## Case Study:

Mrs L is a 93 year old woman, who lives with multiple health conditions and has limited mobility. Despite this, she has always been very independent, and enjoys socialising and getting out and about. Around five years ago, she contacted Age UK Wandsworth as her worsening mobility had left her virtually housebound, causing her immense worry about how she would get her groceries.

Mrs L was accepted into the service, and quickly started to enjoy the routine calls and the ability to choose her own food. She has always enjoyed cooking, and it has helped her to try new recipes, as well as making old favourite meals, as she can get all the ingredients that she needs every week. She also enjoys how it helps her with budgeting for Christmas and other big events, as she can add a few items to her order every week.

Mrs L also really benefits from the social aspect of the calls - she loves to chat about what she is planning to eat, what new products are on the shelves, and generally have the 'shopping experience' over the phone. The service coordinator has also been able to help her with other issues, including referring her to the Handyperson service, who have since visited several times to complete falls prevention jobs.

# Voluntary Services Navigator

## What we do:

Age UK Wandsworth's Voluntary Services Navigator (VSN) acts as a link between the organisation and community health services and GPs. They work in part within the community health teams, providing information and support to the teams and their clients who are receiving health and social care services. The VSN participates in multi-disciplinary meetings and supports community teams and GPs by undertaking assessments with clients to look at ways they may require support and inform them of services and activities they may not have known about. The VSN provides information on a wide range of services and will facilitate referrals for the clients as often they are not able to do this themselves, due to not feeling confident or well enough to follow referral processes through. The VSN helps clients to build their confidence and promote their independence at home and to engage with their community.

## 2022 in numbers:

189 clients supported  
207 referrals made to  
other services

“

I can't thank you enough, I was at my wits end and I was so worried about mum. We were both really unhappy, but you have been amazing, and I am so grateful for your help and kindness.

**Daughter of VSN client**

”



## Case Study:

Mr T is an 85 year old man living in Putney, who was caring for his terminally ill wife at home when he first came into contact with the Voluntary Services Navigator after his wife was referred to the service by community nurses. The VSN visited them at home several times to listen to their concerns and signpost the couple to support.

Mr T was struggling with his own health issues at the same time as caring for his wife, and had recently been unsuccessful in applying for Attendance Allowance to help them with extra costs at home. The VSN made an internal referral to an Age UK Wandsworth adviser, who helped Mr T to successfully reapply, increasing his income by £89.60 a week. Referrals were also made to the local charities Paul's Cancer Support Centre and Royal Trinity Hospice for further support for the couple, which included massage therapy, counselling and visits to see the hospice. Over the course of the visits, the VSN was able to arrange a wheelchair loan for her to use, as well as other mobility aids. Before she passed away, Mrs T expressed how worried she was about how her husband would cope after her death. The VSN was able to reassure them both that Age UK Wandsworth's services would always be there for him to get in contact with.

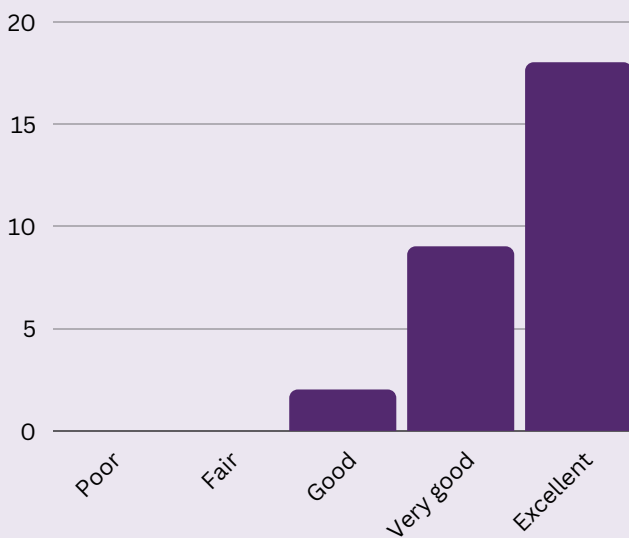
After she passed away, Mr T visited the office and broke down in tears. He explained that he had felt very low and isolated, and felt that he wasn't able to go on living without his beloved wife. They had been very close throughout their life together, and he found that he didn't have many friends or family nearby for support. The VSN made an appointment to come and see him at home and discuss options for how he could be supported. He wasn't keen on the idea of bereavement counselling - instead, he thought it might be a good idea to get out and meet new people as a way to process his grief. He mentioned his love of football, and after some persuasion, he agreed to go along to a local walking football session.

At first, he found interacting with others at the walking football sessions difficult; talking about his wife made him tearful, and angry. He persevered with encouragement from Age UK Wandsworth staff, and with time began to talk about his wife with a smile, as well as making friends with the other men in the sessions. Even when he was unable to participate due to an injury, he still came along for a post-match cuppa with his new friends and decided to join the Age UK Wandsworth weekly coffee morning group and our drop-in Digipals sessions. The VSN and other staff agreed that he was a very different man to the one they had first met, and he has become a very popular member of the community with his cheeky sense of humour. He has regained his confidence, and now has a lovely group of peers, who kept in contact with him when he was admitted to hospital in late 2022. Upon hearing he was in hospital, he was contacted by our Hospital Discharge Support team, and they were able to support him with attending activities again once he was home.

# Our Stakeholder Feedback

Each Better at Home service records feedback under different criteria and at different periods to reflect the nature of the work being conducted. It's really important to us that we continually collect feedback from our clients and referrers so that we can measure our impact and make changes to meet the evolving needs of the community in Wandsworth. The feedback below is a sample from our January 2023 stakeholder evaluation survey.

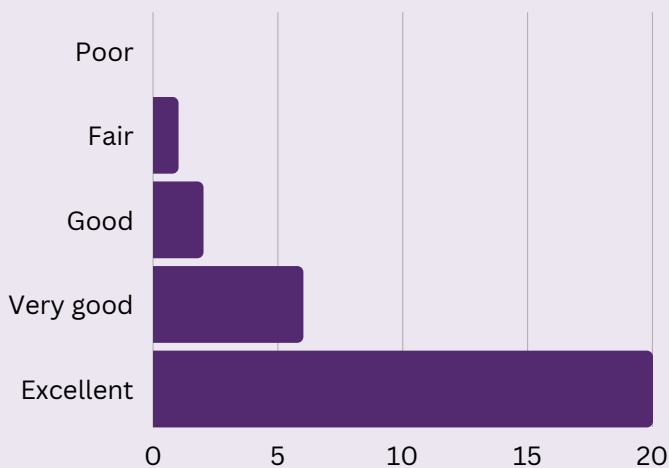
How would you rate the helpfulness and efficiency of Better at Home staff?



“Better at Home has been absolutely amazing at helping our patients maintain safety and independence at home. All patients and staff speak extremely highly of your services; you are friendly, timely, extremely helpful and go above and beyond for patients. Thank you for all of your hard work!

**Wandsworth Care Coordinator**”

How would you rate the experience of using the service/s that you have made a referral to?



- 97% of referrers would be **Extremely Likely or Likely** to recommend the Better at Home services to a colleague, client, friend or family member.
- 97% of referrers rated their overall experience of the Better at Home services as **Excellent, Very Good or Good**.



# Our Innovations

In order to keep meeting the needs of our community, we always listen and take on board feedback about our services from our clients and our referrers. Whether this is informally, through trial and error, or through our stakeholder evaluation forms, feedback helps us to identify where we can evolve our services to effectively support more clients.

## Volunteer Recruitment

After the pandemic lockdowns ended, many people went back to the office, and our volunteers did too. Along with the cost-of-living crisis and other pressures leading to higher demand for our services, we needed to develop a new volunteer recruitment strategy.

We delivered new social media campaigns in collaboration with popular local news pages, held open days at our offices, and visited libraries and Putney Jobcentre to talk to prospective volunteers.

We also updated our application forms and information pack, as well as our volunteer policies, to ensure the entire application process is efficient and straightforward for our service coordinators and volunteers.

## Hospital Discharge Support Assistant

Social workers gave us feedback that because the Hospital Discharge Support service relies on volunteers, it meant that there were sometimes delays in finding a suitable volunteer to support a client after they left hospital. Therefore, we applied for funding to trial a paid 'Home from Hospital' assistant in order to reach clients more efficiently from the day of discharge.

The new assistant started working for the team in September 2022 and we have since been able to increase the number of new clients from 15 to 40+ per month, providing 3x as many hours of support than the previous quarter.

The role is funded until May 2023 and our CEO is working on securing future funding avenues.

## Better at Home referral pathway

To enable fast and efficient responses to referrals, the team introduced the triage process in 2022. All referrals (phone and email) are directed to the coordinator on duty, who will contact the client and conduct a phone assessment, if appropriate.

- If the client declines or is unsuitable, the referrer is informed, and the client is signposted to an external service if possible.
- If the client is accepted onto the service, the duty coordinator will log this for the service coordinator to contact the client and begin service delivery.



# Value Added

At Age UK Wandsworth, we pride ourselves on being able to support older people 's overall physical, emotional and social wellbeing, in addition to what is offered as part of the Better at Home contract.

## Financial

All clients who pass through the Better at Home system can be offered a free benefits check from Age UK Wandsworth's Information and Advice Service, which supported 2289 people and achieved £372,997 in benefit gains for clients in 2021/22.

## Signposting

Our staff are continuously keeping up to date with local organisations and support services through training and networking in order to signpost clients to the most appropriate services within the borough and around South West London.



## Digital

Often, a good way to reduce social isolation in older people is through the use of technology to stay in touch with friends and family. If a client shows an interest in trying out tech, or improving their existing skills, we are able to refer them to our Digipals service, which offers friendly drop-in tech support sessions and a free tablet loan scheme. One Online Food Shopping client who expressed an interest in trying the shopping orders herself was referred to Digipals, and now completes her weekly shops on a loaned tablet.

## Our local community

Age UK Wandsworth is now in its 60th year, and we are proud to be well-established members of the community. As part of this, our ethos for staff and volunteers alike is to encourage a connected community and being a 'good neighbour'. We find that our volunteers feel more engaged in the Wandsworth community and are more likely to seek out other ways to help others.

## Volunteer Hours

We can measure the social value of the Better at Home services in the Wandsworth community through Wandsworth Council's volunteer hours calculation, which offers an alternative way to measure the value of community organisations. Therefore, with the positive societal value of one volunteer hour being calculated as worth £16.09, in 2022 the Be-a-Friend service contributed £134,464 and Befriending Plus £26,130 back to the community through their volunteer hours.

## Volunteer Employability

We are proud of the way in which volunteers for the Better at Home services are able to hone their soft skills, such as patience and considerate listening, as well as improve their awareness of issues facing older people. Whether this leads to a change in career, or just offers a fulfilling opportunity outside of work, our volunteers often gain as much from their roles as the clients do.

# Volunteers

**Our volunteers are at the heart of Better at Home and we would not be able to run the services without their enthusiasm, dedication and commitment to helping vulnerable older people in their community. Each has a different background, age and career, and all have a story which brought them to volunteering with Age UK Wandsworth.**

Our volunteers receive monthly email updates, and are asked to fill in regular feedback forms, so that the service coordinator can monitor the pairing, and the wellbeing of the client and volunteer. This also offers the volunteer the chance to report anything that concerns them, so support can be given where necessary. We also ran several events this year for our volunteers, including our annual volunteer appreciation party, a group wellbeing evening, and online dementia awareness training.

“I’m so happy I was matched with Mrs P. I am Indian too, and I have learnt so much about Indian culture through her. I love that I am helping someone in my community, and the mutual learning means a lot to me.

“The Befriending Plus service gave me an opportunity to feel useful and gave purpose to my free time. I made a lifetime friend thanks to it, so thank you again!



## Find out more about volunteering with us:

To volunteer, you must be over 18 years old and a Wandsworth resident. You can find the information pack and the application forms on our website. When the completed forms have been returned, you will be invited to interview, and to apply for a DBS check.

# Making a referral

We welcome referrals from a variety of pathways for each service. Please see the information below to find out more.

## Professional referrals

The Better at Home referral form was designed by the team to be used for all referrals made by health and social care professionals. Examples of referrers under this category include GPs, social workers, occupational therapists and social prescribers.

You can use the referral form to refer a client to more than one Better at Home service, but not to Age UK Wandsworth's other services.

Completed forms must be returned to [bah@ageukwandsworth.org.uk](mailto:bah@ageukwandsworth.org.uk) where they will be processed by the team member on duty and transferred to the relevant coordinator to start the service.

If you have a question about the form or your referral, you can call 020 8877 8940, or email [bah@ageukwandsworth.org.uk](mailto:bah@ageukwandsworth.org.uk).

**The referral form and further guidance can be found at [www.ageuk.org.uk/wandsworth/about-us/professional-referrals/](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/wandsworth/about-us/professional-referrals/)**

## Friends, family or self-referral

**Non-professional referrals do not require the above form.**

If you are referring yourself, a friend or family member, you can do so by sending an email to [bah@ageukwandsworth.org.uk](mailto:bah@ageukwandsworth.org.uk), calling 020 8877 8940 or visiting our office at 549 Old York Road, Wandsworth, SW18 1TQ between 10am-3pm Monday-Thursday. It is helpful to include a brief summary of what you would like support with and your contact details, so that the coordinator can get in touch to begin the support.

**Please note that the Befriending Plus service only accepts referrals from social workers.**

Wandsworth  
ageUK

**Better at Home Referral Form** Date:

If you have any questions regarding this form, please contact the Better at Home Team. When you have completed the form send to the BAH email.  
Email: [bah@ageukwandsworth.org.uk](mailto:bah@ageukwandsworth.org.uk) Contact number: 020 8877 8940

**Better At Home Referral Form**

Has the client consented to the referral: Yes  No

When making a referral please bear in mind the information below:  
All Sections of the referral form must be complete for us to accept your referral and clients must give their consent to make a referral.  
Our services are unable to offer domestic support or personal care.  
Most of our services are supported by volunteers.

**Client Information**

Name:	DOB:	Phone Number:	Email:
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Does the client live in the borough of Wandsworth Yes  No  (Wandsworth Borough residents only)  
Address:

Can the client be contacted directly or contact Next of Kin (NOK) Client  NOK

Next of Kin:	GP:	Referrer Name:
Relationship to client:	Name:	Referrer's Role:
Phone Number:	Address:	Organisation:
Email:	Phone number:	Phone Number:
Emergency Contact:	Email:	Email:
Relationship to client:		
Phone Number:		
Email:		

Home circumstances  
Living alone  With a partner  With family  Other  (if other please specify: \_\_\_\_\_)

Estimated Hospital discharge date (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

You can also find more detailed information about all of our services at [www.ageuk.org.uk/wandsworth/our-services](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/wandsworth/our-services)



020 8877 8940

[info@ageukwandsworth.org.uk](mailto:info@ageukwandsworth.org.uk)