

Age Concern Todmorden Appendix

To accompany the Town Council Grant Monitoring Form. June 2020

Office Drop-in support: We hold an office drop in every Monday -Friday 10am-12noon. This ensures people always know they have someone to turn to and where to go to for support and information.

The Town Council's grant was to provide funding for one Drop-in day per week. This supports working with clients and carers to provide a wide variety of information, access to online; home visits; managing our charity activities and events, such as three weekly lunch clubs, tai chi classes, IT classes, trips etc. In usual times this makes up the bulk of our work.

Other activities:

Public meeting that raised our profile in the town: With the Town Council's extra help we were able to organise and hold a large public meeting (Feb 2020) to discuss the critical cuts to the Cornholme/Burnley bus service. This involved a considerable amount of staff time, not least because Todmorden was hit by flooding in the previous week.

The public meeting at St Marys was attended by over 150 people, many of whom we had never previously had contact with before. The meeting was featured on BBC Panorama.

Christmas Raffle: As well as a fundraiser (raising £950) this was used as an opportunity to raise our profile with various local business, and we had exceptional support from market traders. Our Christmas window featured market traders (who are, and we won a prize for best local Christmas window. (STAFF TIME)

Covid-19 working: During the period of the grant we have had to change how we work owing to Covid-19. One of our two members of staff has worked from home during lockdown, but our office drop-in has continued throughout the lockdown, predominantly by phone.

Keep going: Lockdown has inevitably meant almost all of our regular activities are suspended, because of our exceptionally vulnerable age group. We have instead

offered practical help, clear information and reassurance, and a friendly voice at this very confusing and lonely time. We have still seen many people in person either because they cannot use the phone, or because they needed IT help. Many enquiries have been Covid-19 related, but our usual work regarding housing, access to social care, information about services, disability equipment, help to get on line etc has all continued through the pandemic.

Information: We created a number of information sheets, letting people know about local organisations and services and how they can help, different food and shopping options, and ways to keep well at home; vital for the many older people who aren't online.

Community support: With our volunteers we have delivered 260 food parcels containing this vital information to help people stay safe and well, one to every resident of nine local blocks of flats and sheltered accommodation complexes, many of whom have not previously accessed our services.

Keeping in Touch: We purchased an unlimited-minutes mobile phone to ensure the member of staff working from home could conduct wellbeing calls 10am-12 every weekday and she has reached over 150 local older people. Many of these people are now receiving regular wellbeing phone calls, to help ensure they are safe and well, to reduce loneliness and isolation, and to impart information and reassurance.

Keep smiling: We conducted a photography project titled "On Our Doorstep". This highlights Age Concern and local older people in lockdown and is designed to share cheerful faces across the community during this difficult time. The photographs are currently on display in the TIC window and a bigger exhibition will open inside the TIC soon.

Lockdown delays: inevitably some important aspects of the project have had to be postponed due to the lockdown. We cannot start to set up a Friends or membership group, nor can we introduce ourselves to the wider community through a street survey as we originally intended.

To raise our profile we had planned to work with other providers of services for the elderly with a presence at events, all cancelled this year, such as Carnival, the Country Fair, Great Get Together and Craig Whittaker MP's Older People's Fair. Our work with volunteers at these and other events has also been put on hold.

These parts of the project will be picked up again when circumstances allow.