



Press Release

Ref: Big Lottery's Funding Award

September 2014

Age UK Cheshire is absolutely thrilled to announce that it has been granted £5.2m as part of the Big Lottery's Ageing Better Programme.

Over the next 5 years, Age UK Cheshire and Cheshire West and Chester Council will work in partnership with a range of local agencies from across the voluntary, public & private sectors. These organisations will identify, design and implement a wide range of innovative solutions to address loneliness and isolation in older people across the county.

BrightLife, as the project is now known, will work with older people to develop a greater number of sociable services by utilising the existing assets and potential of the local communities and by increasing the range of choice available. This includes the creation of a social pharmacy where older people will be prescribed a social script to enable them to access these new sociable services. The script will complement any medical care and help to prevent the need for more expensive NHS services. It will also increase choice so that older people can be given tailored support for their particular needs. The project will also create community hubs linking older people in primary care, and their carers, with non-medical sources of support, and develop best practice toolkits' to provide systems of support for those with particular needs such as older people with dementia.

Ken Clemens, CEO at Age UK Cheshire, comments:

“The announcement of our successful application to the Big Lottery's Ageing Better Programme is wonderful news. This is a fantastic opportunity to make a real and tangible shift in the culture around attitudes towards later life in Cheshire; and to put in place practical and proven measures that will combat loneliness and isolation.

From our own experience and involvement of working with older people, the difference that can be made to older people's lives by putting in place a number of simple interventions and by developing more innovative services is hugely significant. Our aim is to create a better life for older people by giving them a sense of purpose and fulfilment."

Comment from one of current Age UK Cheshire service participants, Jack from Men in Sheds:

"What do I get from being part of the "Men in Sheds"? Well I enjoy going but I never stopped to think about what I have gained from going.

Company, camaraderie and banter. I enjoy company; it helps me see beyond myself and my life. I have opinions and a sense of humour so I enjoy discussions and banter on almost any subject. I do think I have a knack of keeping discussions lively!

My health has taken a few knocks in recent years and it certainly helps to be able to discuss the challenges I encounter and find out how others tackle them. We don't always find answers but it helps to know others not only understand, but that they are also coping. The trips out are a good thing as it is very tempting, as you get older to retreat into your shell. Reducing your circle of friends and how far you are prepared to travel means you leave yourself more and more isolated. Going out on trips is so much easier when you go with a group of friends.

Yes, being part of a group, being accepted by the group, a sense of belonging are certainly benefits I have discovered in "The Shed".

We try to be friendly, make newcomers feel welcome and offer help and advice whenever we can. I get a lot from this as I find it boosts my self-esteem. I suppose we like to feel we still have something to give."

For further press information, please contact

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