

Willingham Parish Council Annual meeting **2023.2024**

Willingham and Over Community Warden Scheme

The scheme has continued to support local older people to remain living at home safely and independently throughout the year, coming across a wide range and continued increase in complex levels of support need, mostly linked to gaining access to health care. It has also highlighted that society is rapidly moving towards a digital and online world which is confusing and isolating for many older people, with so few having access to the internet.

The greatest number of service users at any one time this year was 13 households, 14 people. At present the scheme is supporting 11 households, 11 people, so there is capacity to support more currently. Across the year the scheme has received 19 new referrals, and these range from self-referrals, Adult Social care, Family members and health care professionals. There have been several inappropriate referrals due to the support needed being out of the warden remit, or they were too young. All except one of service users on the scheme, who only wishes for a daily phone call, receive 2 or more weekly visits.

The community warden has continued to build links with key people within the community to help promote the scheme as well as ensure support provided to those on the scheme is holistic and achieves quicker outcomes. This has proven to be the case with increased joint working with health professionals, especially the Social Prescriber.

In addition to the daily phone calls and usual tasks of shopping, prescriptions, some examples of support this year are.

- Referrals made to Household Support Fund to gain financial support towards heating and food bills.
- Several referrals made to the Social Prescriber, mainly for occupational therapy assessments.
- Referral to Age UK CAP Handyperson service to reduce risk of falling.

Legacies - Support Our Future

Chair: Hazel Williams MBE ~ Vice Chair: Clive Adkin ~ Chief Executive: Melanie Pittock

Age UK Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is a charitable incorporated organisation registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales with registered Charity No. 1165856

Registered Office: L24 South Fens Business Centre, Fenton Way, Chatteris, Cambridgeshire, PE16 6TT.

- Referral made to Age UK CAP Information and Advice team to support informed decision making.
- Referrals to the Cambs Fire to arrange for fire safety checks to take place.
- Supported a couple whose electric kept tripping and they didn't know what to do. Arranged for electrician to visit and in the meantime took kettle round to the neighbours to boil water and make them a hot drink.
- Arranged for a service user to have a perching stool to assist them when in the kitchen as they were struggling to stand for extended periods of time.
- Supported family and service user to look for suitable respite options.
- Found 2 different service users on the floor this year, which has resulted in an ambulance being called on both occasions with a waiting time of 2 hours minimum.
- Gentleman's boiler burst which resulted in warden having to consult with the Power of Attorney to ensure enough funds were available for replacement, finding reputable company, sorting alternative heating option in the interim and buying bottled water.
- Supporting a service user to set up an online account with supermarket to keep their independence of ordering food shopping. This has taken an extensive period of time and visits due to the service user not having a mobile which prevented her from being able to register her card details.
- Helping with several phone calls which can become exceedingly long winded with automated options, and some find this difficult to navigate.

Another significant role of the scheme is to bring people together to help reduce the feeling of isolation and loneliness. To support this, the warden, jointly worked with 3 other local schemes in October and arranged an event to recognise the International Day of Older People. This gathering involved lunch and some live music and was well attended.



Age UK CAP has been working with SCDC and Rose Regeneration who are conducting a review of the community warden scheme model since summer 2023. The 2nd part of the review is currently in progress, aiming to complete in September 2024. We feel it is a vital piece of work which will provide information and data, evidencing the true value these schemes provide and in turn hopefully help towards ensuring future sustainable funding is provided. The outcome of the report will be shared with the parish.

On final note, Age UK CAP is an independent charity, which means we are responsible for securing our own funds to support service delivery. It has been a difficult year financially with a several of the schemes ending in deficit which has impacted on the



charity's unrestricted reserves. To help support the sustainability of this scheme, the warden hours will be reducing from 20hrs per week to 15hrs per from April 2024.

We are incredibly pleased that the Parish Council have committed towards supporting the scheme in 2024.25 and along with the older people in Willingham, thank you for their support.

Sarah Thomson
Service Manager
19th April 2024