

# 50plus Nottinghamshire

LinkAge Plus

## Community Outreach Advisors

Community Outreach Advisors (COA) reach people who are isolated or socially excluded and would otherwise not use 50+ services. The COAs are employed by 3rd sector organisations and concentrate on linking with mental health service users, people in rural locations, the Black and Ethnic Minority communities and Traveller/Gypsy Community.

COAs provide short term casework for vulnerable people throughout the county. They provide information, advice and support to enable those aged 50+ to access services.

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# Community Outreach Advisors

## Objectives

- Seven advisors have been recruited and aim to reach 315 hard to reach customers around the county.
- Making sure that people who need help are contacted, given appropriate support, information and their voice is heard.
- Acting as community 'eyes and ears' to support vulnerable people.
- To liaise with and maintain information on local community groups and activities.

## Activity

- Community Outreach Advisors recruited for all seven District and Borough Council areas in Nottinghamshire.
- Advisors provide information on:
  - voluntary groups and their services;
  - local lunch;
  - benefit advice;
  - Social Services/Council;
  - health services.

## Achievements against objectives

- 2,012 hard to reach customers have been contacted over a period of six months, exceeding monitoring requirements.
- Made connections with police community support officers, Asian community and strong links with White (Eastern European) ethnic minorities and lunch clubs for BME groups in the City of Nottingham.
- Forged connections and working in partnership with a whole range of community groups.
- Catered for a wide range of disadvantaged groups.

## Wider achievements

- Recognition of the importance of outreach work.
- Much greater collaboration, networking and learning between voluntary groups.

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- Increased help to ensure that people are awarded the correct benefits that they are entitled to.
  - Provided a signposting mechanism for many organisations.

The case study below demonstrates the achievements of the Community Outreach Advisors

*A 74 year old woman with a need for adaptations was thrilled with the help that she received through the First Contact Signposting Scheme as a result of being contacted on an outreach operation. She also had a fire safety check from the fire service. Although this lady was still able to drive her mobility scooter had become severely restricted and she wanted to apply for a blue badge. She was in desperate need of new clothes and found that mail order ones did not always fit well. She received the forms but nearly gave up when she realised that she needed some passport type photos and thought she would not be able to get them easily because of her mobility problems. The COA found out that she could more easily access the photographic facilities at an edge of town supermarket with a short walk to the machine. This gave her a positive reason to continue with her application for the blue badge. This lady was thrilled when she was able to go into town on a quiet day and buy some new clothes. There has been an improvement in her quality of life and confidence through the COA contact.*

## Resources

- Seven workers funded by Link Age Plus and employed by six voluntary organisations.

## Key lessons learned

- The COA are a perfect complement to the First Contact Scheme.
- Volunteering organisations now work together more closely as a result of this scheme.

## Further information

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Ref to website: [www.notts50plus.co.uk/branches/show/1066?search\\_terms=community+outreach+adviser&from\\_search=true](http://www.notts50plus.co.uk/branches/show/1066?search_terms=community+outreach+adviser&from_search=true)

## Related documents

See website above.

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