

Older People in Telford

Presentation to Scrutiny Committee

by **Age UK Shropshire Telford & Wrekin** | Robert Smith & Heather Osborne

Ageing in Telford: local and national context

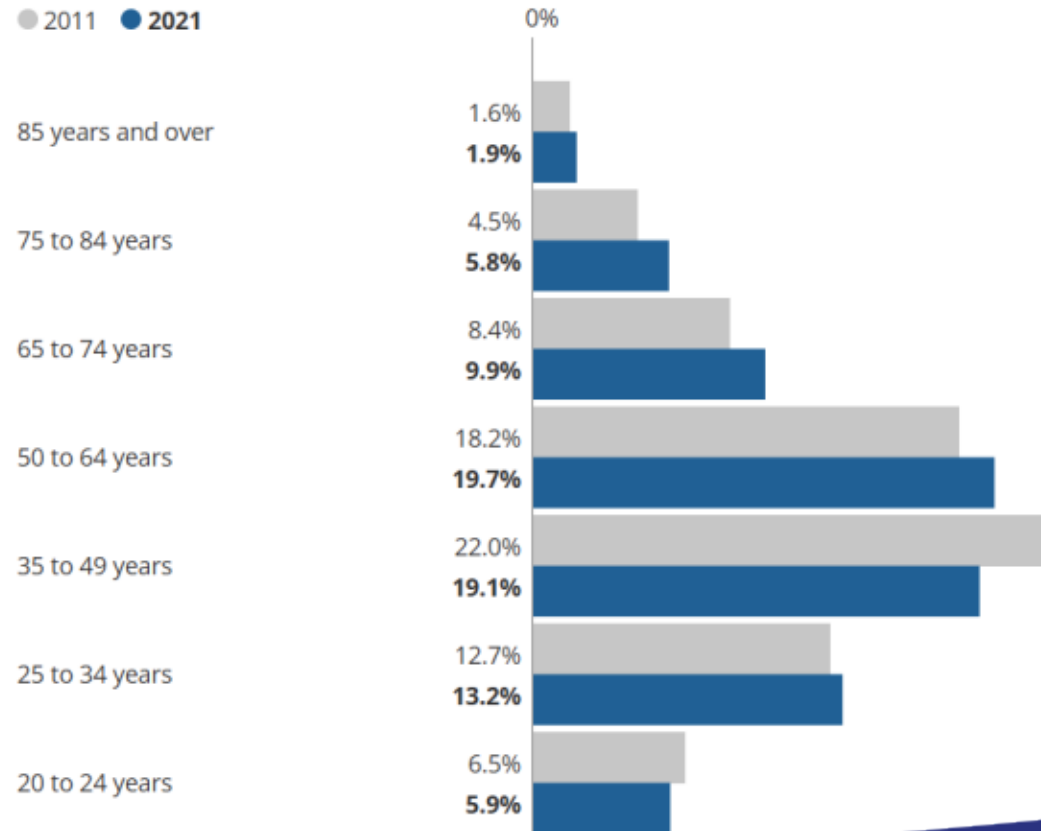
National context & policy issues – source Age UK & Centre for Ageing Better reports

- Cost of living/energy costs impacting on older people – winter fuel cut 2024
- Digital exclusion – offline and overlooked – significant issue
- Corridor care/access to health/long waits – leads to poorer health outcomes
- Mental health issues – lack of recognition and diagnosis for older people
- Housing – Late Movers report re lack of suitable adaptable housing
- Pensions – lack of resilience for low-income pensioners
- Work – lack of support for those 50 – 67 to get back into or remain in work
- Increased age-related multiple morbidity

Context

The share of residents aged between 50 and 64 years increased by 1.4 percentage points between 2011 and 2021

Percentage of usual residents by age group, **Telford and Wrekin** ▾



The amount of resources the VCSE sector have to deliver services for older people, have been increasingly difficult to obtain, yet at the same time demand for services in the borough has drastically increased.

Local context for Telford

- New town factor – sudden and very significant increase in the older population, 65+ increase of 35.7% since last census, 80+ over 76%
- Higher rates of poor health in some areas than Shropshire
- High rates of deprivation in some areas
- Not all housing is suitable to age in place, but good housing strategy in place
- Loss of transport support for frailer older people to access day centres
- Loss of information & advice VCS support – Forum 50+ and Age UK STW
- Maintained benefits advice and support for older people
- Loneliness and isolation – demand for befriending going up and up
- Good digital hubs network – but only if you can get there, recent issues with PODS

Current national context for the VCS

- Significant reduction in volunteers since the pandemic
- Significant reduction in donations since the cost of living crisis – up to 50% for some organisations
- Increased costs along with everyone else – NMW, fuel, travel, etc.
- Grant funding becoming increasingly competitive and difficult to find
- Reductions (or lack of increases) in statutory funding
- Increasing complexity of governance but also accessing funding
- Toxic contracts – some organisations handing back, or going under, or very short term
- Unable to plan for any long-term sustainability

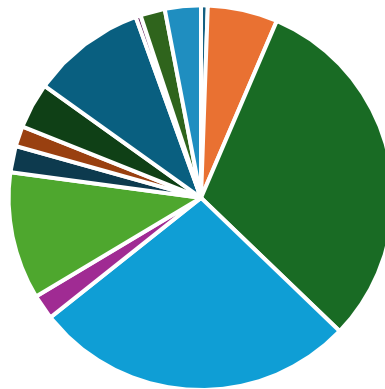
Key issues we want to highlight today

- Information & advice for older people
- Benefits advice

Enquiries and demand

Over 3000 enquiries last calendar year in Telford:

Enquiry data



- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| ■ Abuse & relationship breakdown | ■ Age UK Services | ■ Benefits |
| ■ Social Care | ■ Digital Exclusion | ■ Health Conditions |
| ■ NHS Services | ■ Housing | ■ Legal Products & Services |
| ■ Social Isolation | ■ Finance | ■ Residential Care |
| ■ Blue Badge & Concessionary Travel | | |

Benefits advice outcomes

**1.6 million in
benefits gained for
older people**

**A return on
investment of £42
for every £1
invested in benefits
advice**

**Improved resilience
leading to far fewer
clients approaching
acute HSC services**

**An extra £4941.82
a year for every
client supported
with a claim**

**Added value of
volunteer hours
worth £4810.74**

Our ask from scrutiny

- Continue to support us with **benefits advice**; it has a massive positive impact
- Look at the wider **information & advice** needs for older people in Telford, especially those not online and digitally excluded (PODS example)
- Work with us to develop a more **robust funding** and infrastructure support to enable us to continue helping the older population of Telford
- For the future - look into the needs and costs of transport for frailer older people in the borough