



2024 Annual Report

Executive Summary

Angela Gill, Chair of Trustees



In the past year, Age Concern Gosport has continued to deliver vital support and advocacy for older residents across the borough, with a strong focus on financial wellbeing, health, and social care. This has included: -

Information & Benefit Application Support: the Co-ordinator and small but friendly team of trained Volunteers have supported 459 individuals, helping them navigate complex welfare systems and access the support they are entitled to.

Financial Impact: Age Concern Gosport successfully secured £392,390 in benefits for our Clients - a 38% increase from the previous year - demonstrating the growing need and effectiveness of our services.

Geographic Reach: The highest levels of benefit support were provided in the wards of Lee East, Alverstoke, and Elson, highlighting key areas of need within that area of Gosport's community.

Referral Trends: The most common referrals were for Welfare Benefits, Adult Social Care, and Support Groups, including those for Bereavement, Dementia, and Carers Support.

Health Insights: Among our clients, prevalent health conditions included High Cholesterol & Blood Pressure, Osteoporosis/Rheumatoid Arthritis, and Heart Conditions, underscoring the importance of integrated health and social care support.

Staff and Volunteer Contribution: Our dedicated Volunteers contributed 632 hours, playing a crucial role in delivering our services and maintaining community engagement. We continue to be grateful for all the hard work and vital community outreach and quality assurance, undertaken by Age Concern Gosport's experienced Co-ordinator, Angela Gould.

Funding Support: We gratefully acknowledge a £10,000 grant from Hampshire County Council's Connect4Communities – Household Support Fund for 2024, which helped us to continue our important mission also, the much-valued, continued funding received from Gosport Borough Council.

Community First: After Gosport Voluntary Action merged with Community First in October 2024, Age Concern Gosport became a member of Community First. We continue to support the project's local financial outcomes for Gosport residents - as part of the Close Encounters partnership project.

Age Concern Gosport remains committed to empowering older people, reducing isolation, and ensuring access to essential services. I would personally like to thank once again, our Co-ordinator, Volunteers, Partners, and Funders for their continued support.

We continue to look for a Trustee for a few hours a quarter and a Volunteer who has a couple of hours a week for a really rewarding role as one of the small but friendly team of Information Assistants. Full training will be given for both roles – please contact Angela Gould in the first instance – coordinator@ageconcerngosport.org.uk

Our Services

Age Concern Gosport is supported by Gosport Borough Council; it offers free and impartial information and form filling for people aged 55+ of Gosport including their families and carers. Volunteers can provide:

- ✓ A broad range of information to help people aged 55+ in Gosport. If they don't have the answer, they will direct you to someone who does.
- ✓ Assistance with form filling including Attendance Allowance, Carers Allowance, Personal Independence Payment (PIP) Pension Credit and Blue Badge applications.
- ✓ Domestic help information such as cleaning, personal care, mobile hairdressers, chiropodists, gardening, repairs and more.
- ✓ Details of social clubs, day centres, lunch clubs, health and wellbeing services, bereavement and financial support.

The Age Concern Gosport office is situated within Community First (formerly Gosport Voluntary Action) at Martin Snape House, 96 Pavilion Way, Gosport PO121FG. Open Monday to Thursday 10am to 12pm.



Our Volunteers

Elaine, Hilary and Maria continue to dedicate their time and effort to supporting and helping older local people within our community. Each of these volunteers plays a crucial role in delivering essential services, and they are all deeply valued members of the team. Their unwavering commitment and contributions have been instrumental in Age Concern Gosport's ability to serve older residents.

We are incredibly grateful for their time, expertise, support, compassion and the care they bring to their roles. They make a real difference to the lives of older people in Gosport. Without their dedication, the delivery of our services would not be possible.

Elaine



Maria



Hilary



Our Achievements in 2024

459 people were helped

459 General information & signposting provided (of which the following forms were completed...)

87 Attendance Allowance (AA)
62% = Female
38% = Male

23 Blue Badge (BB)
70% = Female
30% = Male

5 Personal Independence Pay (PIP)
60% = Female
40% = Male

92

Financial Benefit claims completed

£392,390

Confirmed benefits received (annual)

632

Volunteer hours given

Referrals to Support Services

Gosport Voluntary/CFirst

Advocacy	19
Befriending	8
Dustbusters	14
Mend & Tend	21

Adult Social Services

31

Home Safety

Personal Alarms, Fire Checks
6

Citizens Advice Gosport

11

Mobility Equipment

7

Personal at Home Care

Podiatrist, Hairdresser, Home Help
21

Transport

Hospital & Shopping
8

Housing

Sheltered & Care Homes
21

Benefit Enquiries

126

Support Groups

Social Clubs, Bereavement, Dementia and Carer Support
26

General Enquiries

Letter Writing, Budgeting, Household Bills
43

Legal

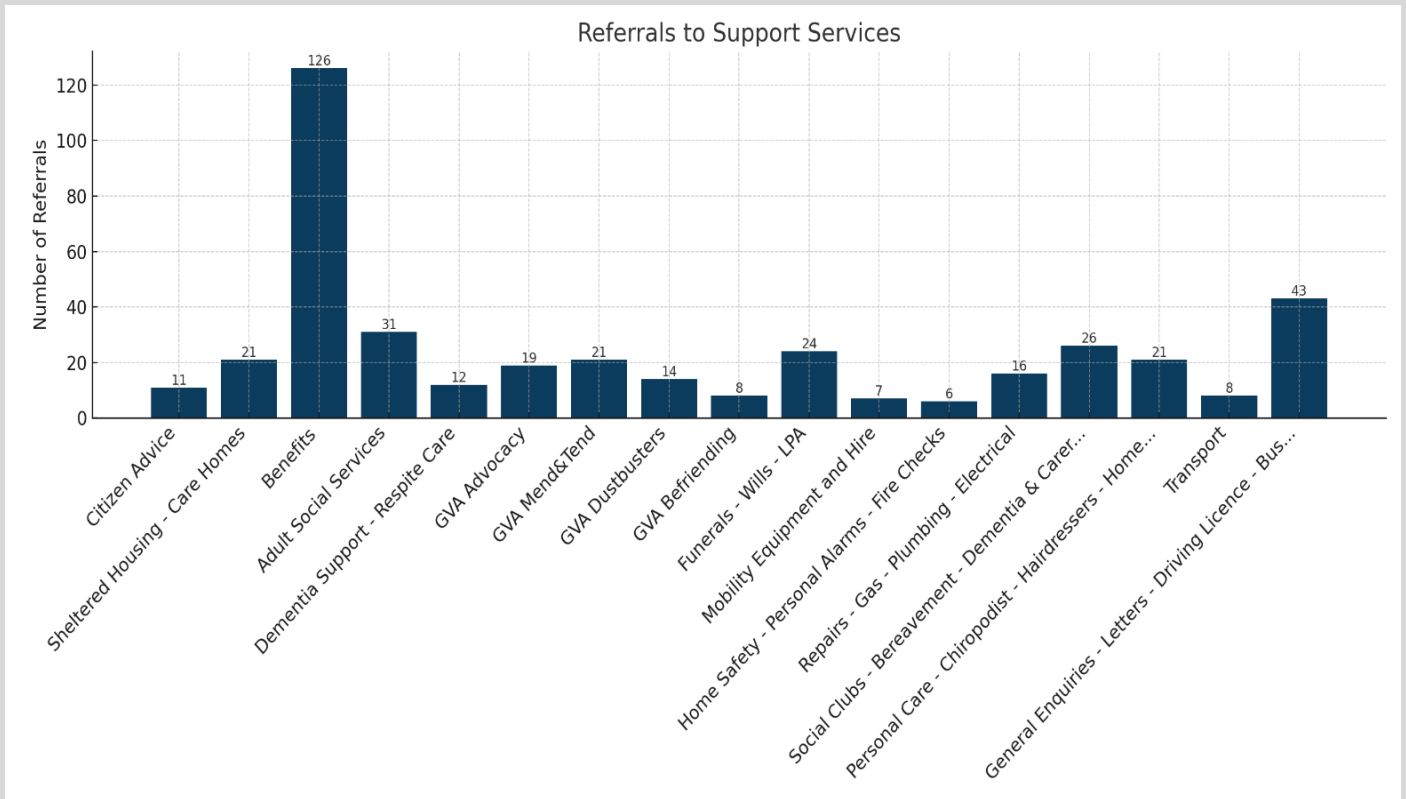
Wills, LPA's & Funerals
24

Repairs

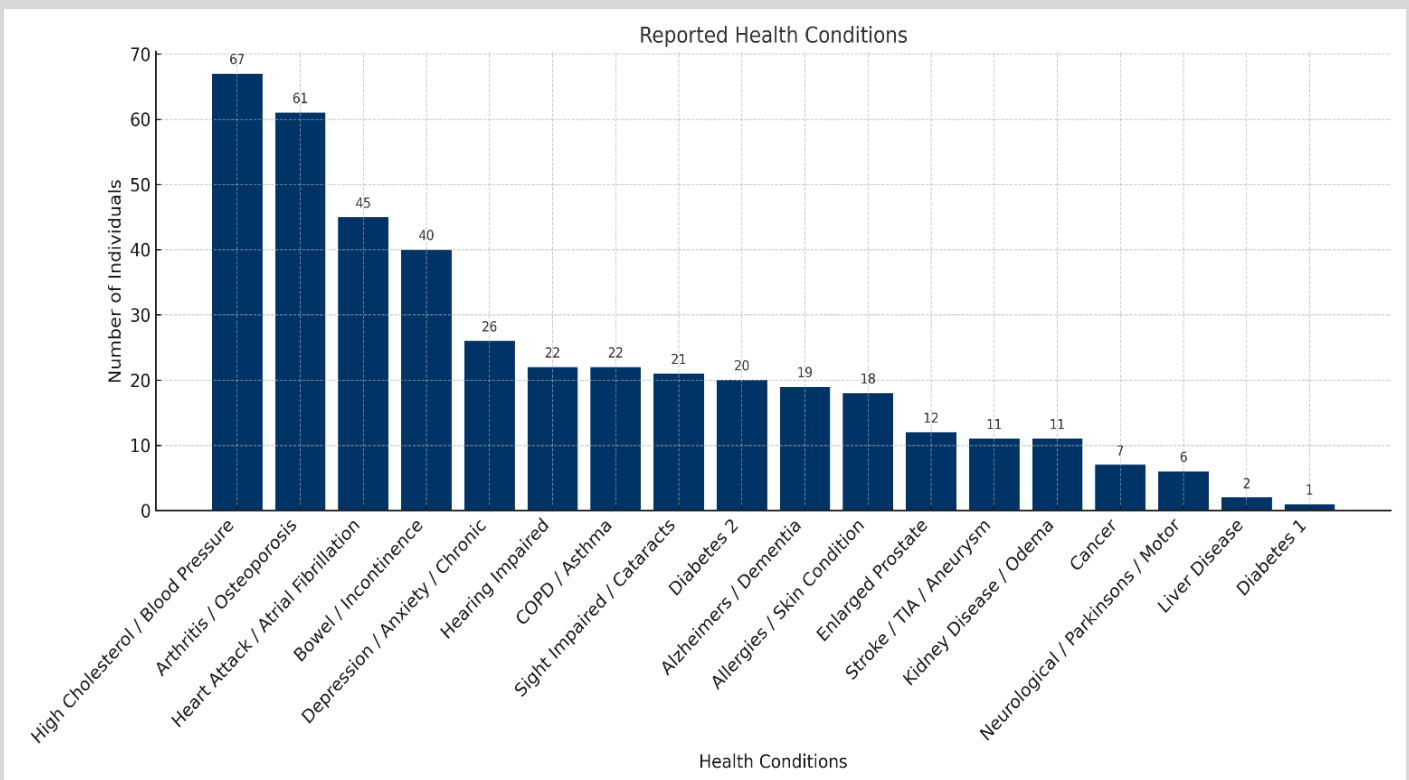
Gas, Plumbing & Electrical
16

Statistics

Referrals to Support Services - (1) Welfare Benefits (2) Adults Social Services (3) Social Clubs, Bereavement, Dementia and Carers Support (4) Funeral Wills & Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA)

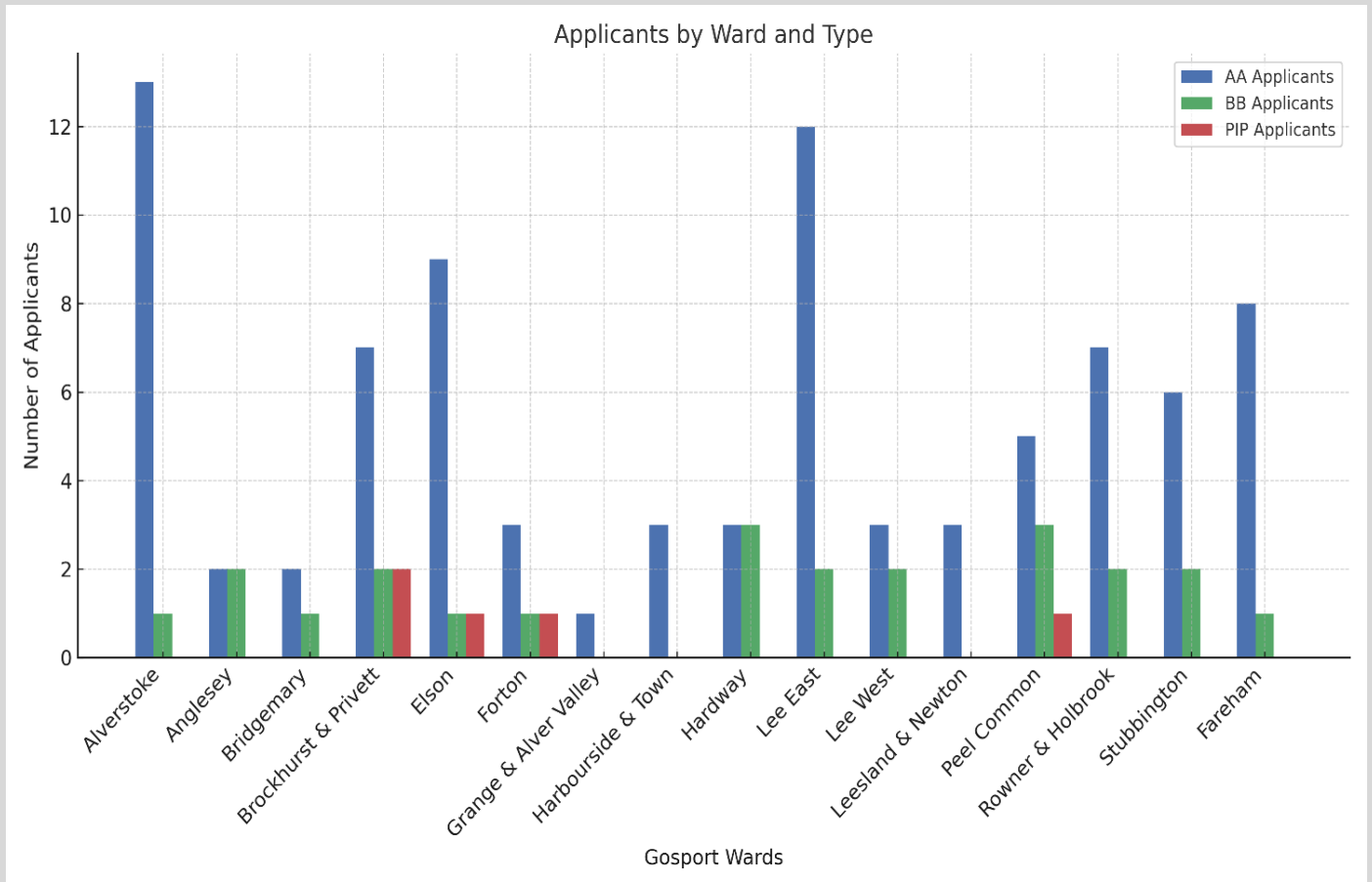


The most common reported Health Conditions - (1) High Cholesterol & Blood Pressure (2) Osteoporosis/Rheumatoid Arthritis (3) Heart Conditions.



Statistics

Applicants by Gosport Wards – (1) Lee East (2) Alverstoke (3) Elson. It is noted that applicants from Stubbington and Fareham were considerably high in numbers too.



Thank You's





Thank You's



It's appreciated a lot for all your help and advice; you are unsung heroes - Anne

Thank you so much for your kindness, humour and expertise with the Attendance Allowance form, much appreciated - Joy

I just want to thank you for the help and your kindness and thoughtfulness will always be remembered. You helped me get a Blue Badge, Thank you very much - Kathryn

Thank you very much for all your help and support filling in all the forms, we really appreciate it - M & H

Thank you for all your help getting PIP, it really means a lot - Janet

Please accept these chocolates as a thank you for your time and work filling in my AA form. I heard this week and have been awarded the highest amount. Thank you once again - Pauline

Thank you so much for all your help with the form filling for our parents Attendance Allowance, it was invaluable; P.S we got the higher rate - N & S

Just to let you know that the claim for Attendance Allowance that you so kindly helped me to fill out has been successful and my wife has been awarded the higher allowance. Thank you very, very Much - Kenneth

Community Events

The **Fareham and Gosport Voluntary Sector Health Forum** and the **Hampshire and Isle of Wight (IoW) Social Prescribing Network** are key initiatives aimed at enhancing health and wellbeing services and community support in Hampshire.



The **Fareham and Gosport Voluntary Sector Health Forum** acts as a bridge between local health services and over 300 community groups in the region, focusing on the needs of people with health conditions. It provides information and quarterly Webinars on a range of topical health-related themes. The Forum's recent face-to-face meeting took place on 12 September 2024 at Gosport Borough Council Chambers, Town Hall, Gosport with 43 attendees and a wide range of local organisations sharing valuable resources and information via Market Stalls, including Age Concern Gosport.



The **Hampshire and IoW Social Prescribing Network**, launched in 2017, connecting patients with non-medical services to improve their health and wellbeing, especially in cases where social issues play a major role in their health concerns. Social Prescribing helps patients find support from community services, such as charities or local council initiatives. The Network, supported by Community First and Gosport Voluntary Action, offers free webinars, regular updates, and newsletters to its 400 members, all focused on social prescribing projects across the county. The Network is funded by Hampshire's Integrated Care System. These programmes aim to integrate health services with community-based care to improve patient outcomes and well-being. Age Concern Gosport is regularly represented at the quarterly Webinars.

For more information, you can contact healthforums@cfirst.org.uk.

Community Events

Kings Academy – Brune Park School - Mental Health and Safeguarding Event



Age Concern Gosport was pleased to attend a Safeguarding and Mental Health Information Sharing and Support Event held at Brune Park School (Kings Academy) on 30th April, from 4:30–6:00pm. The event focused on encouraging open conversations between parents, carers, and support services around safeguarding and mental health, in a welcoming and inclusive setting. Key aims of the event included, providing a safe space for parents and carers to voice concerns and access support, offering guidance and resources through stalls hosted by professional organisations and strengthening collaboration between stakeholders to support young people and their families.



Attendees engaged informally with a range of local services, including the Mental Health Support Team and Police Community Support Officers. The atmosphere was enhanced by live student music, poetry on the theme of school refusal. Anti-stress giveaways were included in take-home information packs. The event served as a valuable platform for meaningful dialogue and marked a positive step toward ongoing community engagement and support for mental health and wellbeing.

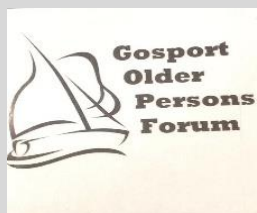
Princess Royal Trust in Partnership with SGN - Home & Well Hubs for Carers



Age Concern Gosport attended the SGN and the Princess Royal Trust for Carers, Home and Well Carers Hub events, in both Gosport and Titchfield, ACG provided information on welfare benefits and local support groups. These community events offered advice and support on topics such as energy tariffs, fuel poverty, and accessing the Priority Services Register. Carers were also able to connect with peers and speak to experts about managing energy bills and accessing benefits.

Community Events

Gosport Older Persons Forum – 55+ Infofest



Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Gosport proudly hosted an annual exhibition known as Infofest—an event dedicated to promoting the wide range of services, activities, and support available to the over 55's residents in the community. The last event took place in October 2019. Five years on, the Gosport Older Persons Forum (GOPF) successfully revived this much-valued initiative with a more modest version of Infofest, held at the Masonic Hall, 5 Clarence Road, Gosport, on Friday 18th October 2024.



This year's event was designed to gauge current interest and levels of community engagement. GOPF remains committed to the importance of accessible, face-to-face information sharing, particularly for older people who may not regularly use digital platforms. A free raffle was included as part of the event to encourage attendance and participation.

Infofest 2024 was well received by both attendees and participating organisations, and, as a result of its success, planning is already underway for a larger Infofest to be held at Thorngate Halls on Friday October 17th 2025.

Hampshire County Council & Connect4Communities Household Support Fund

Information Desks at Local Hampshire Libraries & Community Hubs

Age Concern Gosport (ACG) sought funding to deliver a community-focused outreach initiative aimed at promoting our free support services to residents aged 55 and over. This initiative includes the delivery of regular *Information Desk Days* in local libraries, where staff will be available to offer information, advice, and signposting to local services. By engaging directly with local communities through libraries, support groups, and outreach events, we aim to *reach those who are most in need*, particularly those who may be socially isolated, digitally excluded, or unaware of their entitlements. This targeted approach will ensure that financial and practical support (including Asda and Morrisons Food Vouchers) are directed toward individuals facing disadvantage or hardship.

Elson Community Library and Hub



Bridgemary Library



Food Vouchers



Food Vouchers



Financial Benefits and Putting Your House in Order - Presentation Talks

As part of the funding received from the Hampshire County Council Household Support Fund, ACG deliver an engaging 50–60-minute PowerPoint presentation focusing on Age Concern Gosport's information services, with a particular emphasis on Financial Benefits for the Over 55s. Topics covered include practical advice, guidance, and support on how to claim key financial entitlements such as: - Attendance Allowance, Blue Badge, Carer's Allowance, Pension Credit, Personal Independence Payment.



The COPD support group at Gosport Leisure Centre



The presentation also featured a segment titled "Putting Your House in Order" which takes a light-hearted but informative approach to important topics such as Wills, Funeral Plans and Lasting Powers of Attorney, highlighting the value of early planning and preparation. Each session concludes with an open question-and-answer segment, offering attendees the chance to share their experiences and receive tailored guidance in an informal and supportive environment



Bridgemy Library



Community Project Support



Support for a New Frailty Initiative in Gosport

The Primary Care Network – Gosport Locality Manager, Rachel Hunter reached out to ACG to share an exciting new initiative they were currently developing to better support the moderately frail population in Gosport. As part of their commitment to holistic and integrated care, they were launching a pilot project, a 'Carousel'-style surgery, designed to enhance the health and well-being of their patients.



This innovative clinic will provide patients with the opportunity to be seen in one visit by a multidisciplinary team, including a GP, Practice Nurse, Clinical Pharmacist, and Health & Wellbeing Coaches. The carousel model enables a more rounded and co-ordinated approach to care, ensuring patients receive tailored support across various aspects of their health.

As part of the pilot, Hilary, our Volunteer from ACG attended the first session to welcome patients in the waiting area and to help promote the valuable services ACG provides. It was also to add warmth to the experience and offer an important link to further community support for local patients.

Hampshire County Council – Live Longer Better – Gosport Community of Practice

Age Concern Gosport actively contributes to the Live Longer Better in Hampshire – Gosport Community of Practice – a local initiative aligned with the national Live Longer Better programme. The project aims to support older residents in Gosport to live healthier, more independent lives by promoting physical activity, preventing falls, improving hydration and continence, and reducing social isolation. As part of this collaborative group, we are working alongside partners, Gosport Borough Council, Gosport Older Persons Forum, Gosport Primary Care Network – Gosport Locality, Citizens Advice, Community First, Love Outdoors CIC and Gosport Places Leisure to shape and deliver a local action plan that addresses these priorities, with a focus on reducing health inequalities and ensuring long-term sustainability. Our involvement reflects our continued commitment to partnership working for the benefit of our ageing community.



Volunteer Support

Gosport Voluntary Action – Volunteer Cream Tea - June 2024

In 2024, Volunteers' Week (3-9 June) celebrated its 40th year, honouring the invaluable contributions of volunteers across the UK. As part of this celebration, Gosport Voluntary Action invited **Age Concern Gosport** and other local charities and voluntary organisations to come together and recognise the tremendous impact volunteers have on the community. Although the efforts of volunteers often go unseen, their impact is deeply felt throughout society, making events like Volunteers' Week crucial for acknowledging and appreciating their dedication.



This year, Gosport Voluntary Action marked the occasion with a special **Cream Tea event** held on Thursday, 6th June at **Nicholson Gardens, Gosport**, where volunteers and organisations gathered to celebrate the vital role they play in supporting local communities and the voluntary sector.

Acknowledgements

Age Concern Gosport would like to give sincere thanks to all who supported the charity, the organisations and individuals listed are included below.

Organisation	Contribution
Age UK Portsmouth	Support via the Close Encounters funded project
Gosport Borough Council	Continued support and funding
Gosport Voluntary Action & Community First	Support in Close Encounters funded project
Hampshire County Council – Connect4Communities	Funding from the Household Support Fund
University of Portsmouth	External Examination of Accounts

Age Concern Gosport
 Martin Snape House
 96 Pavilion Way
 Gosport
 Hants. PO12 1FG

Tel: 02392 069722
 Email: info@ageconcerngosport.org.uk
 Website: www.ageconcerngosport.org.uk

Opening Times: Monday to Thursday – 10am – 12noon



Charity Number: 211876