

Help the Aged – ‘A Call in Time’ programme

Help the Aged is one of the leading UK charities providing support for older people. They provide many services and advice to avoid poverty, isolation, age discrimination and neglect including practical help to keep older people safe and secure in their own homes. They are also very active campaigners for the rights of older people.

Zurich Community Trust involvement

In 2002, the Zurich Community Trust invested £1.5m in its new ‘Older People Programme’. Partnerships were set up with six charitable organisations, including Help the Aged, to support a wide range of issues affecting older people.

In 2005 we reviewed the overall learning from the programme and concluded that the area that we would most like to focus on was the prevention of isolation experienced by many older people in the UK by using telephone support. This saw the creation of the ‘Call in Time’

programme. Help the Aged was selected as our chosen partner because of our positive experience of working with them in the past and because we had very similar aims in terms of preventing the isolation of older people.

During this first phase of the ‘Call in Time’ programme Help the Aged set up eight pilot projects to evaluate a range of different types of telephone befriending. This phase of the programme lasted for three years, and was independently evaluated by Leeds Metropolitan University.

The evaluation concluded that it was a highly valued service and consequently we are now developing Phase 2 of the programme by focussing on replicating the use of Zurich employee callers, with other corporates.

“Through taking a hands-on approach Zurich has helped us pioneer ‘Call in Time’.

The dedicated Zurich volunteers who have taken part in the service over the past few years are now integral to the lives of the older people they contact. Around 80 percent of older beneficiaries say the phone call from their Zurich befriender is the thing they most look forward to each day.”

Kate Woode, Senior Manager for Corporate Accounts at Help the Aged

Integrated package

	Total input 2005–2008 Phase 1	Future input 2008–2012 Phase 2
Zurich Community Trust Funding	£500,000	£378,000
Additional funding from Zurich		£250,000
Leverage from other funders	£100,600	
Help the Aged funding	£100,000	£150,000
Value of Zurich Call in Time volunteers	£115,510	
Value of Zurich business expertise	£1,960	
Value of Zurich Community Trust Programme Manager	£58,168	

Case study

Bob moved into sheltered housing following the death of his wife. He was depressed and could not cope with day to day living on his own. At first he did not mix with the other residents and hardly ever left his rooms. The warden of his residential home told him about the Call in Time service and he agreed to have a call. Initially he was quite reserved with his befriender and told her that “his only friend was his cat”. After a while he started to open up to the Call in Time befriender and this made him feel that someone cared about him. After a few months of calling he was encouraged to go to the local bingo evening and he met some other people that he got on with. Bob is now the caller at Bingo sessions twice a week and goes out regularly to meet other residents and newly found friends.



Key objectives 2005–2008

To investigate the effectiveness of low level support and befriending services using the telephone for older people who are socially isolated, and/or vulnerable by:

- measuring and identifying the impact of a range of models of support in relation to their health and quality of life;
- identifying best practice in service delivery; and
- examining the extent to which befriending services are of preventative value for older people, their carers and the wider health economy.

Focus of Zurich Community Trust Involvement 2005–2008

- Main funder for the 'Call in Time' programme.
- Recruited, trained and supported over 80 Zurich employees as volunteer callers. This provided us with a pilot

to test the employee volunteering model which Help the Aged aim to roll out to other corporates in Phase 2 of the programme.

Key achievements to date

- 491 isolated older people have been supported/befriended by over 200 volunteers.
- A unique employee volunteer model has been developed using Zurich employee volunteers calling isolated older people in work time.
- A national network of telephone befriending organisations has been set up.
- The Leeds Metropolitan University's evaluation concluded that the service was highly valued by isolated older people and had a positive impact on their mental and physical health.
- In 2009, The Prudential signed up as our first new corporate partner.

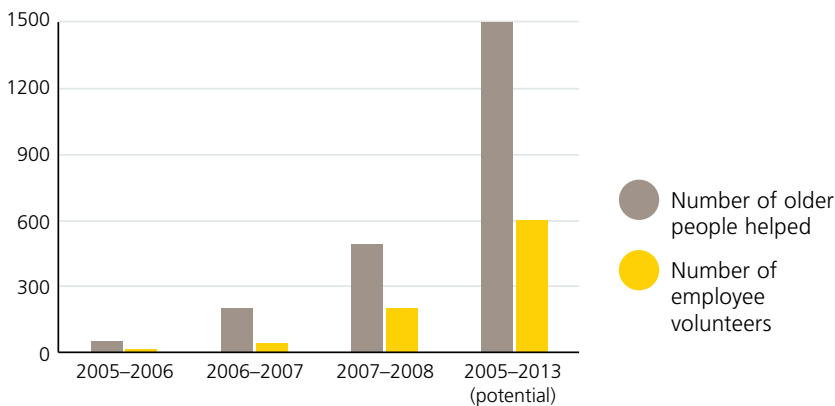
Quotes from older people supported

"I often don't see a soul and don't speak with anyone. It is wonderful to have the calls especially when you don't see anyone in the day."

"It makes you feel better and that you are not forgotten."

"I'm very much happier than I was, I feel like doing things again."

Current and projected reach



Looking ahead

- Between now and 2013, the aim is for ten new corporate Call in Time partners to join the programme.
- Over 1500 older people will be supported by up to 600 volunteers.
- A rolling programme of corporate support will ensure long-term sustainability for the Programme.

