



# Age UK Living Well Service – Mrs A's Story

## Mrs A's story

Mrs A is a 78-year-old lady who has lived in her village all her life. For the past ten years, she's lived alone with her dog "Jasper" and a close friend who visited every day and drove her to social events. This friend had recently passed away. Mrs A had a childhood below-knee amputation, and she suffered with muscle weakness, fatigue, angina and arthritis. At the point of referral, Mrs A was bereaved and suffering with anxiety and loss of confidence. She felt lonely, isolated, and unvalued and made frequent home visit requests from her GP.

A Living Well link worker visited Mrs A at home and held a guided conversation about what mattered to her. She described herself as quiet and nervous but wanting to try some social groups. What mattered most to her was walking with Jasper, a love for nature and gardening, and having friends to share these with. She also values her independence, and she wanted to continue to live in her own home with the support of her nephew.

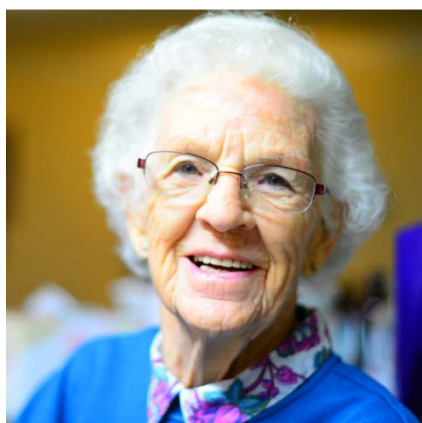
The link worker started by introducing Mrs A to a coffee morning. Although she enjoyed seeing people, she found it was too noisy. This made her nervous, and she let the link worker know that she was more comfortable getting to know people on a one-to-one basis.

With the help of the Age UK befriending service, the coordinator found a local volunteer to visit Mrs A each week. The volunteer shared Mrs A's love of animals, her garden, and going for short walks and visits to garden centres.



## Impact for Mrs A

Mrs A looked forward to her weekly visits – it gave her a focus and the social contact she craved in the way that was right for her. Mrs A and the befriender became close friends.



Her health and wellbeing improved to the point that she was no longer reliant on NHS services, and she thanked her GP for referring her to the Living Well service. As the care coordinator had helped her apply for increased benefits, this also helped her maintain independence in her own home.

Mrs A had such a positive experience that she felt she wanted to give something back, so she became a telephone befriender for the same befriending service that had helped her. She supported another lonely older person by calling them on a weekly basis, giving Mrs A her confidence back and making her feel like a valued member of society.