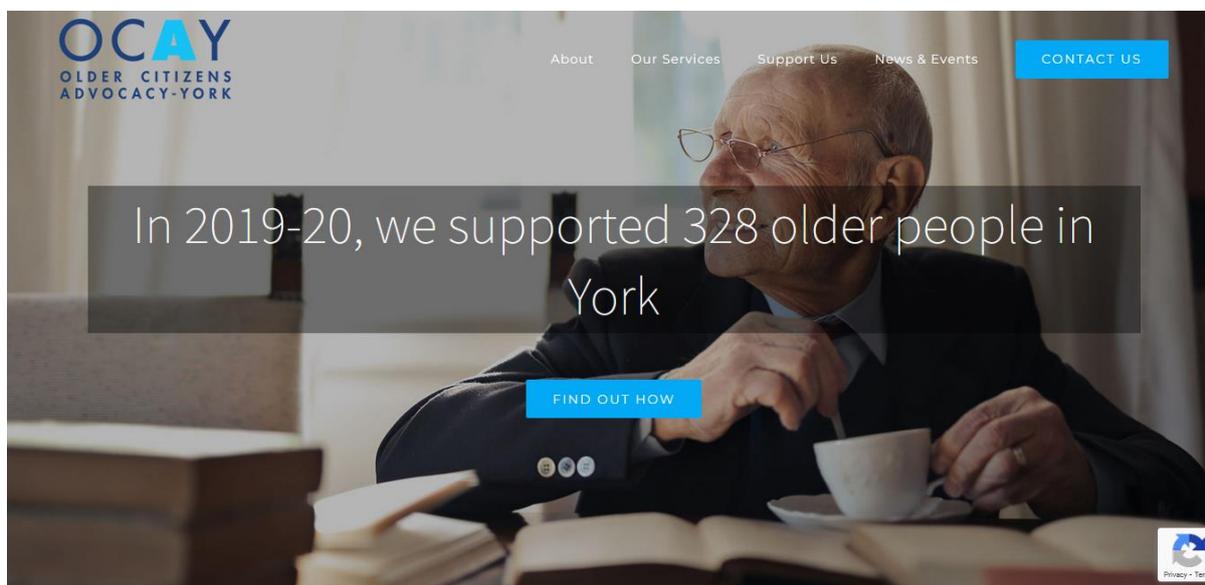


[Older Citizens Advocacy York Newsletter – October 2020](#)

We are excited to welcome you to our first partnership Newsletter! Back in April we created a survey for Partner Organisations to ask what they thought we did well and what we could improve, in preparation for our bid to National Lottery Community Fund. One of the suggestions was that OCA Y create an external newsletter to keep you up to date with everything at OCA Y. We responded to that feedback and well, here we are! We hope you enjoy reading our newsletter.

[OCA Y Website Launch](#)



We have a brand-new website! Our old website was looking a little outdated, it wasn't the best to navigate and was difficult for staff to edit. One of our Trustees, Louise recommended Wordpress to us as a popular website platform. It is now looking much more modern and sleek, and most importantly it will be much easier for the public (and staff) to navigate. It still has the same website address.

Click [here](#) to take a look. You can let us know what you think, by emailing us at info@ocay.org.uk.

[Trustee Blog – Becoming an OCA Y Trustee](#)

I applied for the role of Trustee at OCA Y in 2019, after seeing an advert on LinkedIn. I have to admit that I'd not heard of the charity, but on finding out a little bit about what OCA Y does, my interest was piqued. Having spent my career in a very commercial setting, I have wanted to use the skills I've developed for some time to help others. As a passionate 'York-er', the opportunity to help a local charity also really appealed to me. OCA Y was looking for someone with experience in digital marketing and PR, which is my background, and so it felt like a really good mutual fit.

In the very surreal 10 months since I was appointed a Trustee (surreal due to COVID, not OCA Y!), I have learned so much about OCA Y, how charities are governed and run and about some of the challenges facing

older people in society today. It's been eye opening. The most inspiring part has been watching how the OCAY team, trustees and volunteers have responded to the unprecedented challenges of this year. The organisation has proven itself to be flexible, nimble and creative in finding ways to continue to engage with the clients that so benefit from its advocacy service.

Having learned a little about the history of the charity and how carefully it has been managed, I am not at all surprised at the resilience it has shown. I am very much looking forward to continuing to provide whatever support I can to OCAY during and hopefully beyond these difficult and challenging times.

Louise Reid

Adapt, adapt, adapt

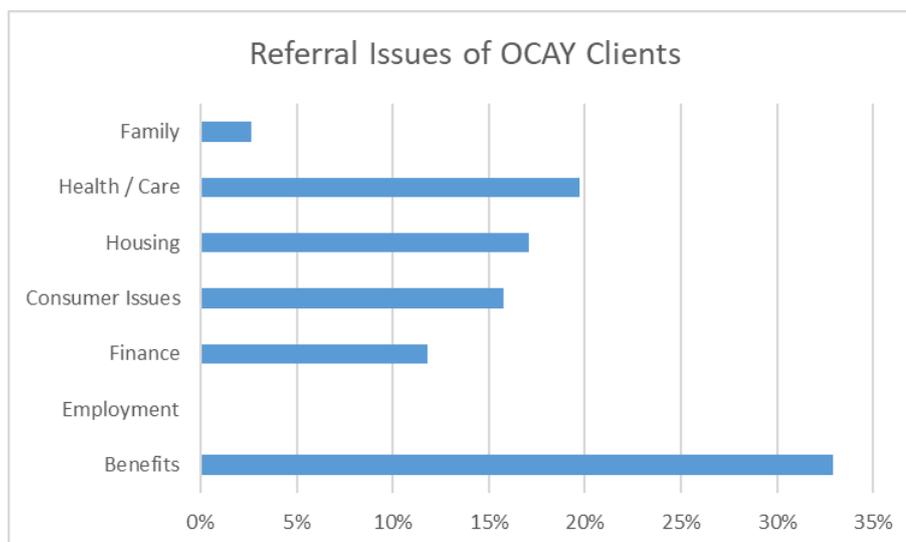
Plan to be flexible is my new mantra and keep adapting. What we all thought was going to be a brief lockdown has now become 'normal'. We are really pleased that we have managed to continue delivering our service to older people in York throughout this period. Staff and volunteers have been amazing in their ability to work from home and continue to provide advocacy support. We have had challenges around technology and supporting people to complete online forms over the phone, we have had some interesting drop offs for verifying identification or picking up paperwork, but the good news is that they have all worked. So, we continue in the same flexible way, adapting to changing circumstances and working in this way for the foreseeable future.

Ruth Potter, Charity Manager

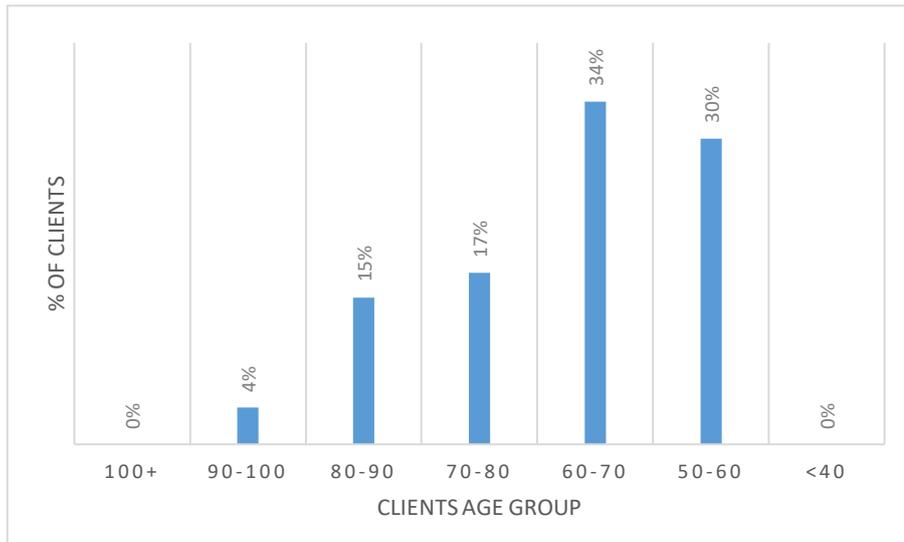
OCAY Quarter 2 Stats: July – September 2020

So far, this financial year, we have supported 155 older people. 60% of our clients were female and 40% were male.

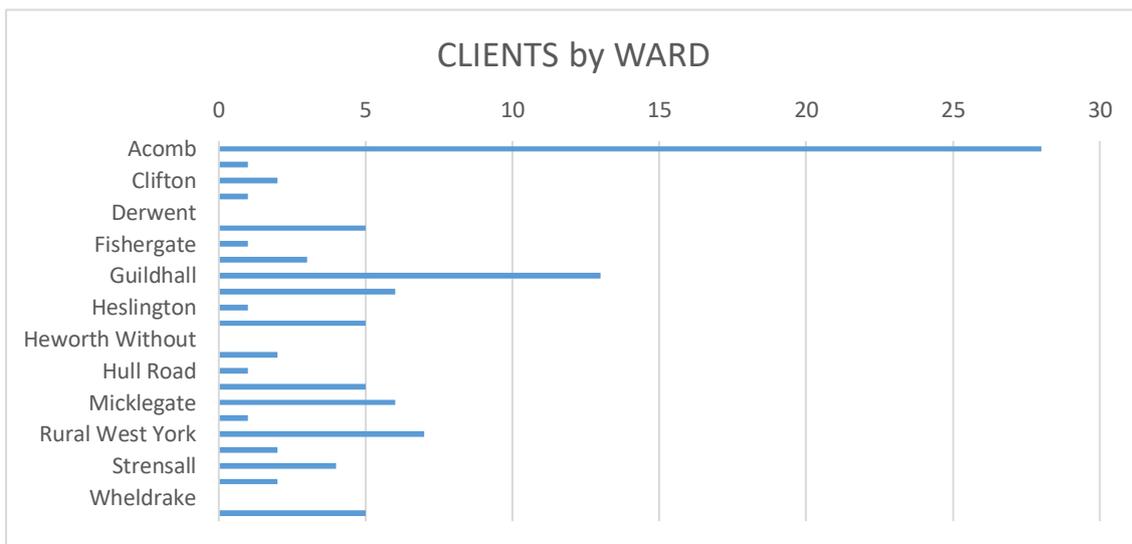
Below, is a graph, showing the types of issues we have been supporting our clients with:



Age of our Clients:



Where our clients live:



We want to try new ideas for keeping in touch with partners.....

We would like to try Drop-in Chat Sessions Over Zoom so that partners can just drop in between set times to see what we are up to or ask about how we might support particular clients.

We will be waiting to see you on Wed 18th November at 2pm, here is the link:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87456622533?pwd=a1VXRWpXU0lyamhMa3RTcUFwLzR6QT09>

OCAY Case Studies

Here are some examples of cases:

1. Client approached OCAY. The client had complex mental and physical health issues. The Lead Advocate did an initial assessment with the client over the phone. The client was having their Disability Living Allowance stopped and their assessment for Personal Independence Payment was unsuccessful. They were living on a very low income of £73 per week Employment Support Allowance and wanted to know how to maximise their income.

Our volunteer advocate phoned them and agreed with the client to explore their options for improving their income. They phoned a benefits adviser at the council and found out that the client was not entitled to other benefits. They also contacted the Welfare Benefits Unit and found out the client was not entitled to help from York Financial Assistance Scheme. However, following further communication with the council benefits adviser, they discovered that the client's rent account with the council was in credit and they were entitled to a payment of £2704. This payment will significantly improve the client's current financial situation and help to alleviate poverty in their household.

2. We were approached by an elderly person who had been referred to us by a local charity. The Lead Advocate phoned them up for an initial assessment. The client was distressed as a large branch from a neighbouring building site had fallen on their garden. The client had mobility problems. A volunteer advocate took the case and did some research about who owned the neighbouring property. Eventually after making several enquiries, the advocate discovered the company who owned the property. They contacted the company and they agreed to remove the branch from the client's garden at no cost. The client was delighted with the outcome and phoned the charity manager to express their gratitude.

3. A previous client contacted us. Their partner had recently died and they were unable to access their landline. A volunteer advocate phoned the client to find out more information. They then contacted the phone company who explained the landline had been deactivated. They explained the process the client would need to follow to reactivate the landline. The volunteer advocate wrote down this information and put it in a letter for the client.

They also explained in the letter about other phone companies that might be able to help. The client was delighted with the letter and very grateful for the support.

AGM Reflections

After the cancellation of our AGM set for June in the CVS centre, our Trustees decided to hold a public AGM using Zoom. We had reservations: Would anyone come? Would the internet drop out? Would our speaker be willing? How do we do this over zoom?

We were really pleased to have 34 people attending. A wonderful mixture of Trustees, volunteers and partners from all sectors of the community. Vicky Japes gave us a really interesting background to and insight into the rationale of the Council 's Older People's Accommodation Strategy, as well as an update on specific accommodation projects. She made us all think about how we enable older people to stay in their own homes through making adaptations as necessary or moving to a new home that is more suitable to their needs. The emphasis being on 'home', which will mean different things to different people.

The AGM gave us the chance to celebrate our work in 2019-20, to publicly thank our volunteers and to look forward to the future, with OCAY continuing to thrive. Thank you for supporting us.

[Click here](#) to see OCAY 2019-20 Annual Report and [Click here](#) to see 2019-20 OCAY Accounts.
