

Shopper-Aide Ltd

Some statistics 23rd March 2020 to 22nd March 2021:

- We spent £210,940.45 on shopping within the local economy for clients
- We shopped for 5,031 clients in 10,478 shops (includes couples)
- Our 19 volunteer Phone Buddies (31 clients) and 8 staff (25 clients) made over 5,000 calls to clients during the period
- We delivered 2160 virtual afternoon teas to all clients including those on the island of Gigha
- We arranged for 570 jigsaws to be delivered anyone aged over 60 – not counting those who called at the door for one
- We delivered glasses from the optician
- We delivered hearing aid batteries from the health board to clients
- We bought several white and other goods e.g. fridge, microwave, tumble dryer, television, iron, cutlery and many more for clients

All of the above are just some of what we carried out and have continued to do to make a difference to older peoples' lives in Kintyre. However, we have also lost clients (not to Covid) but continue to have new referrals – either self or from other statutory and voluntary agencies. We have restarted the housekeeping service and Garry's Gang (a men only weekly outing with 3-4 vehicles where volunteers and clients enjoy a time out) and other sessions using our wheelchair accessible vehicle. Until we can set up larger groups we have been mainly concentrating on those who have been alone over the last 18 months and need to engage with the outside world again.

Little Stories

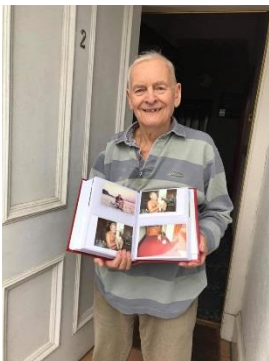
Perhaps more than anything the events of this year has shown how important we have become to the community. We have illustrated that as an organisation, we have been able to adapt very quickly to provide services for older people especially for those who needed to be shielded as well as others who had to change their lives just because of their age. Our rurality as well as the loss of social activities changed many people's lives and they now had to rely on others. We became a conduit for access to services, information and the world. Even now many are afraid to go out while others are desperate for company.

Below are some of our stories we have gathered to illustrate how we have helped and where problems arise.

- At the start of lockdown when there was a rush for toilet paper, this was a problem for many clients as they usually bought a pack of 4 every other week and as shoppers we had trouble getting it. However, as cafes, hotels and the schools shut down many gifted us any they had and if we couldn't buy any for a client we gave from this supply. This was just one of the ways we had help for our clients from the general public and businesses.
- Mrs J is in her mid to late 60's and has many health problems which limit her mobility. Due to her health status this client is self-isolating. Her only contact is from a few family members and our team on the telephone and when dropping her Shopping at her door. She is suffering with the early outset of dementia and finding the lack of social interaction difficult to deal with. We check on her every day to make sure she is okay and see if any of our services or others can help with any new issues that arise. Mrs J is using Shopper-Aides shopping and delivery service, but can't always remember what to buy; to make this easier we have kept a record of all her regular shopped for items, so we can prompt her when collecting her list on the telephone. She has access to a local sessional worker whom she can contact anytime when she wants to talk. This lady often does call the worker who can reassure her when she feels confused.
- Mrs E wanted to buy some items for the house, but hadn't purchased over the web before. Our sessional worker in East Kintyre spent some time on the phone talking through how to do so on the clients iPad and they were able to purchase the items they needed.
- Mr G used to be very involved with groups within the village, but doesn't get out much now due to becoming wheelchair bound. Our sessional worker in East Kintyre was able to help him over the telephone to navigate his iPad to the correct website to access the minutes of the groups he used to attend so he could read them. This made the client really happy, as he had previously been an active member and didn't feel connected or up to date with what was happening.
- MS J McN is in her 80's and lives in sheltered accommodation, we normally took Ms J out twice a week for shopping and befriending but stopped due to lockdown rules. She has no family in Scotland and hasn't heard from her daughter in America for some time. We call her 3 times a week to check on how she's doing and to get her shopping lists. Since lockdown Ms J had trouble paying her bills and as a result her phone was cut off, (this was her only means of contact with anyone) we contacted BT to make them aware that she is vulnerable and they put her phone back on so we could help her pay the bill over the phone. She recently found pictures of her wedding day and wanted a nice photo album to put them in, we

purchased one for her and she had fun putting it altogether. Her photos are very important to her. She has now deteriorated mentally and is currently in hospital since we found her collapsed on the floor when calling in.

- We have been very encouraged with all the support we have received not only from our Funders but the public in general. Our clients have also been doing their bit to help out during these difficult times. Tony and Enid became clients for shopping when they had to isolate but that did not stop them helping others. Tony gifted us tomato plants that he had grown and we were able to disseminate them to clients all over the peninsula. Watching a plant growing on your own windowsill allows us all to use our nurturing tendencies even when living alone.
- Maisie, was our longest client and is now 95, has progressively gone blind and during lockdown lost her sight completely. Her family live 160 miles away and she relied very much on us and her Phone Buddie. She had no help from statutory services prior to lockdown and as she became more upset we managed to get her extra help and continued to support her with shopping, phone calls and her Phone Buddie has also taken her to hospital appointments. Her family eventually moved her away from the area to be near them but she has since died.



Mr D McA has dementia and has struggled with the fact he has carers going into his house to help him with keeping his house clean and bedding changed. Once we were able to take up housekeeping again we have managed to engage with him and he is happy to let our staff in. We keep his son, who does not live locally, informed about how he is doing as he has PoA and Guardianship of Mr McA which keeps him reassured. During lockdown to help keep Mr McA occupied we gave him a photograph album to sort and put in the photos of his army days and he has enjoyed reminiscing and has also shown them to his friends so they can chat about the old days. However, he has been getting steadily worse and is going into a nursing home.

- Linda was getting ready to go into hospital and to shield for 14 days but called in a panic as her kettle had broken and she had no way of getting a new one. She called us and we purchased one and took it to her house, leaving it outside to collect.
- At the start of lockdown we received a call from a woman living in London who was worried about her father who lived in Campbeltown and should have been shielding as he had had a kidney transplant but he was fairly new to the area and was

still going out shopping as he didn't know what else to do. We arranged to get shopping for him and set up a payment plan with his daughter. This was not the only time it happened as within the first month we had many situations like this as family living far away contacted us to arrange shopping for their older relatives. Some referrals came directly to us and some from Argyll and Bute Council once they had set up their system although when local social work services were contacted they quickly referred people to us.

- Mr B was worried that he had been scammed and money taken from his bank account and wanted to visit his bank himself so his Phone Buddie arranged to take him there to meet with bank staff and be reassured personally that there was no problem.
- Ms S, new to an area had been getting shopping via us due to her health conditions but due to a domestic incident has left on her own. She has struggled to cope and a volunteer has been supporting her with visits, phone calls and outings.

These are just some of the Stories we have – they and many others can be found on our Facebook page – Shopper-Aide and our website www.shopper-aide.org.uk