

East Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership

Local Area Co-ordination for Older People

Issue 3



Annual Newsletter 2024-25



Who are the Local Area Co-ordinators for Older People?

East Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) has a team of Local Area Co-ordinators specifically employed to work with older people. There is one full time Co-ordinator and two part-time Co-ordinators. The Older People Local Area Co-ordinators (OPLACS) Team has been in place since March 2019.



Carol

Carol is a full-time Local Area Co-ordinator who works Tuesday to Friday and centres her work on the West locality which includes Bearsden, Milngavie, Balmore and Bishopbriggs.



Lynne

Lynne works on Monday, Tuesdays and Wednesday mornings and covers the East locality which includes Kirkintilloch, Torrance, Lenzie, Lennoxton and Twechar.



Dan

Dan also covers the East locality and works on Wednesday afternoons, Thursdays and Fridays.

What do we do?

The team has a strong understanding of the challenges faced by older people and their carers. They are committed to enhancing the lives of older people and support capacity building at an individual, family and community level. Local area co-ordinators identify, connect, develop and lead strong partnership working with local communities. They foster links with voluntary organisations, statutory agencies and other stakeholders to improve connections and develop pathways within local communities. They will support the older person to identify issues that affect their ability to live well and will work with the individual to help them access community assets and services that would best meet their needs.

Members of the team will work with individuals to help identify suitable local resources and assets and connect the older person to their community. They work closely with local community groups and third sector organisations.



What is Social Support?

Social Support can mean different things to different people. People have different types of circles of support, which may include family, friends, faith connections, community clubs and groups, but everyone benefits from some kind of social support in their lives. Social support means having people to turn to in times of need or crisis. It can enhance a person's quality of life by having a positive benefit impact on their physical health and mental wellbeing. It can also be about shared interests, strengthening your own skills and sharing those skills with others, providing mentoring and teaching opportunities to others, and having opportunities to learn new skills.

Social support for people without significant formal care needs can be delivered in the community by connecting individuals to local clubs and groups that are organised and run by volunteers.

For those individuals who are unable to attend local clubs and groups, even with volunteer support, because of the type of support they require (for example personal care), the HSCP will undertake an assessment of need. This will determine whether the older person is eligible for formal social support such as that delivered in a formal day centre with access to social care staff who can provide personal care support.

The HSCP's Eligibility Criteria and Fair Access to Community Care Services Policies are available on the website: <https://health.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/services/a-z-of-services/adults-older-people>

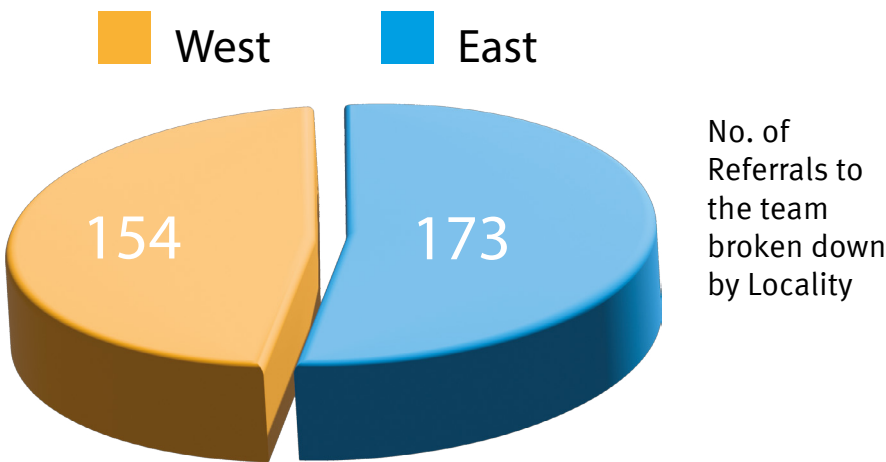


Who do we work with?

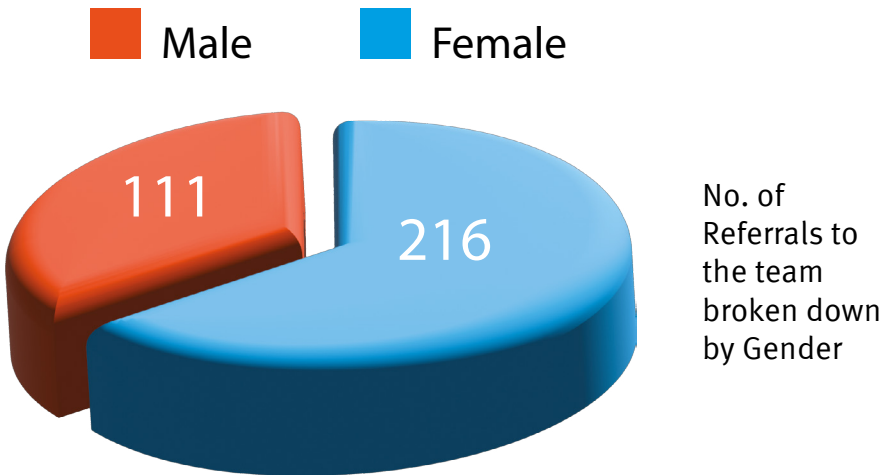
The team works with a variety of people across the authority. These can include third sector organisations, places of faith, and community centres. However, a significant portion of their working week is focused on helping older people explore local community social support opportunities or assessing older people for formal support. This can also involve working in partnership with customers, unpaid carers, families and social care providers.

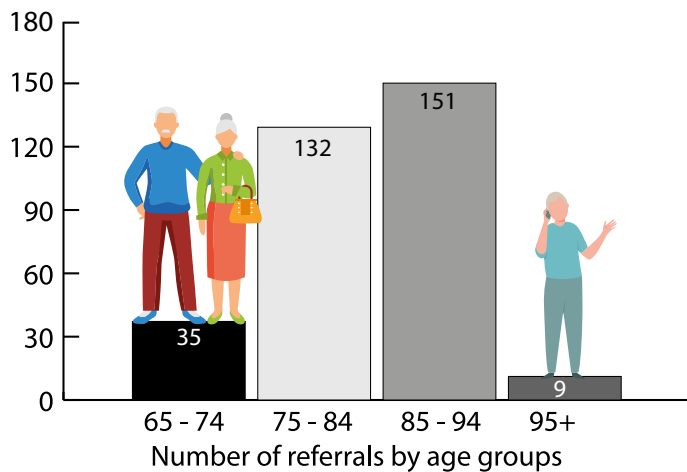
During the year from April 2024 to March 2025 the team received 327 referrals. The referrals were a mixture of requests to assess individuals for formal support along with requests to help older people connect with their local communities.

2024 - 2025 –
Referrals to the Older People Local Area Co-ordination Team:



There has been a 10% reduction in the number of referrals received into the team during April 2024 to March 2025, in comparison to April 2023 - March 2024.





There has been a small reduction in the number of referrals across all four age groups - an average of 9%. The biggest reduction - of 15% - was within the 65 to 74 years age group.

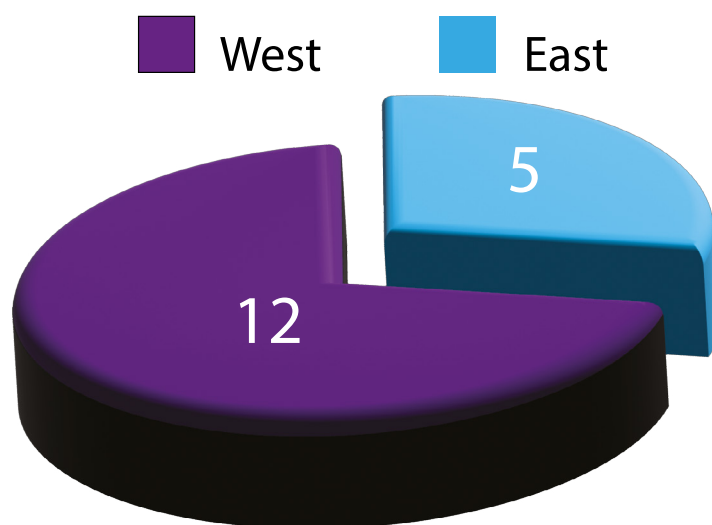
The team also works in partnership with unpaid carers and supports them to identify their own needs and outcomes. The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 extends and enhances the rights of carers in Scotland to help improve their health and wellbeing, so that they can continue to care, if they so wish, and have a life alongside caring. One of the legislative duties within the Act is that HSCPs should ensure that unpaid carers' needs and outcomes are recorded in an Adult Carer Support Plan, where this is the wish of the carer.

The HSCP's Carers Strategy and Eligibility Criteria Policy can be read on our website:

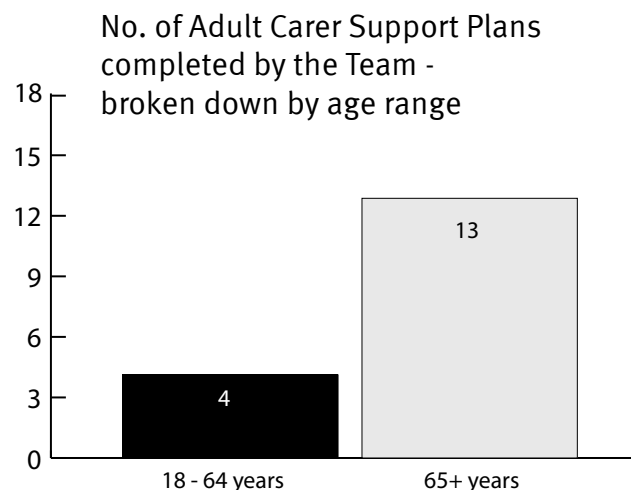
<https://health.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/services/a-z-of-services/carers/carers-strategy-2023-26/>

<https://health.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/services/a-z-of-services/carers/eligibility-criteria-policy-for-adults-and-young-carers-for-social-care-support/>

During 2024 – 2025 (April to March) the Older People Local Area Co-ordination Team supported 17 unpaid Carers through the completion of Adult Carer Support Plans and Reviews of Adult Carer Support Plans.



No. of Adult Carer Support Plans completed by the Team - broken down by Locality



Supporting the Carer – Mrs A

Mrs A has been caring for her husband since his health began to decline, and at the point of contact with the OPLAC team, Mr A's health had deteriorated significantly. Mr A is dependent on his wife to support him with all aspects of his daily living and care needs. The team member observed that Mrs A was committed to caring for Mr A despite her own health issues. Mr A began to attend services which met his identified social support needs, but this also had an indirect benefit for Mrs A who was able to get a break from the caring role.

The OPLAC team, and their colleagues in the other social work and health teams, encourage main carers to consider taking some time for themselves whilst maintaining their caring role. Through the completion of Adult Carer Support Plans, the teams can offer advice and guidance, provide information on community support and signpost unpaid carers to sources of support, for example, Carers Link.

<https://carerslink.org.uk/>



What have customers and carers told us?

Throughout the year, the team has received a number of comments from customers and carers about the work they have undertaken with individual older people. This work included assessing and support planning with customers who were eligible for formal social support, and introducing other customers to local clubs and groups.



Our Survey

The team undertook a survey for all the customers who had been signposted or referred to local community groups and clubs during 2023-2024. There was an increase in the number of survey participants who provided feedback. This increase was as a direct result of the team reviewing the method by which they gathered feedback, writing out to all potential participants and following up with a survey telephone call.

The data collection exercise identified 68 potential survey participants which saw an increase of 127% from 2022-23 survey participants. The response rate for the 2023-24 survey was 45% which was an increase of 32% on the previous year. The analysis and outcomes from the survey included:

- Changing methodology from postal surveys to telephone surveys significantly increased the number of customers who provided feedback.
- During 2023-24 only 23% of the participants experienced a health decline which required those customers to commence a formal social care support package.
- Survey participants reported that as a result of the input from the OPLAC team they were now attending various local community assets including lunch clubs, memory groups, dementia-led groups, singing and exercise activities.
- At the time of the survey, more than 62% of the participants were still attending the community assets that they had been referred to by the OPLAC Team.
- Over 15 different benefits of attending community resources were cited by participants, including:
 - * Social company
 - * Friendship/companionship
 - * Getting out of the house
 - * Reducing loneliness and isolation
 - * Mood lifting
 - * Confidence boosting
 - * Reducing anxiety and depression
 - * Providing a routine
 - * Having something to look forward to
 - * Making new friends
 - * Trying something new
 - * Reconnecting with people

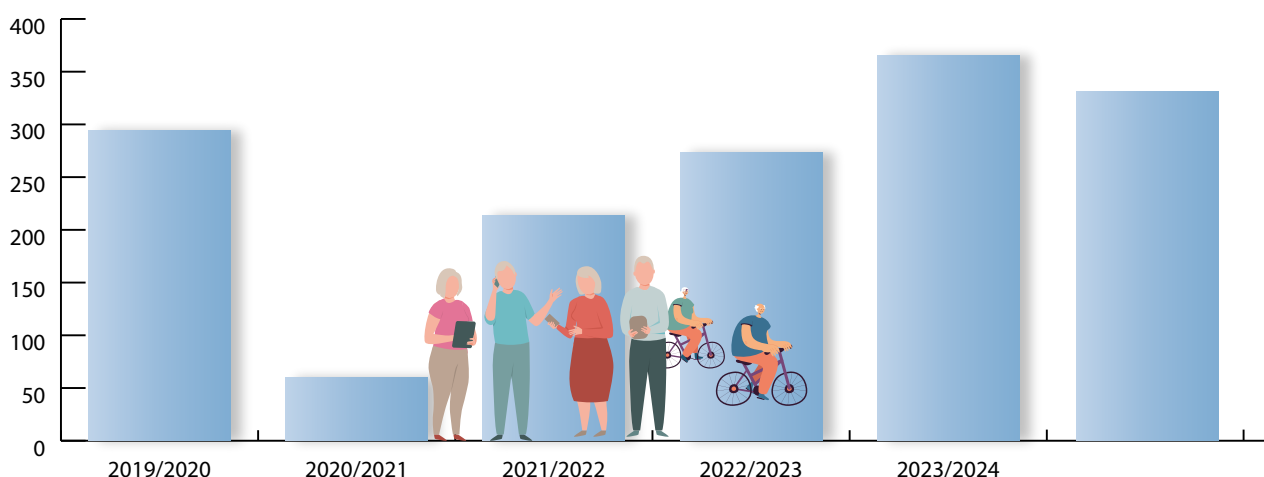
- Participants' unpaid carers also reported indirect benefits for their relative/friend attending local clubs and groups, including:
 - * Providing a break away from each other
 - * Family like that I am meeting up with other people
 - * An opportunity to visit local shops and cafes
 - * Feeling more content and happier
- Some participants, who had stopped attending community assets, were prompted, upon receiving the survey telephone call, to request a re-referral to local groups.
- During the consultation process, 38% of the participants advised that there were a couple of areas that if developed further would support the continued attendance at older people community groups, or may increase membership numbers. These included more volunteers and transport options. There are a number of areas that the OPLAC team are involved in, in relation to trying to support increase in those identified areas. These include:
 - Signposting customers to existing volunteer driver programs.
 - Participating, alongside third sector partners, in volunteer recruitment drives.
 - Referring customers to the Welfare Rights team at the Citizens Advice Bureau for income maximisation such as disability benefits for transport costs.
 - Supporting customers to apply to the My Bus Scheme
 - Supporting clubs/groups to apply for external grant funding.

It is our intention to repeat this survey in the summer of 2025 for those older people who were referred and signposted to community resources during 2024 - 2025.

What we have learned?

Over the last year, from April 2024 to March 2025 the service has seen a slight decrease in the number of referrals for older people.

No. of Referrals to the Service each year



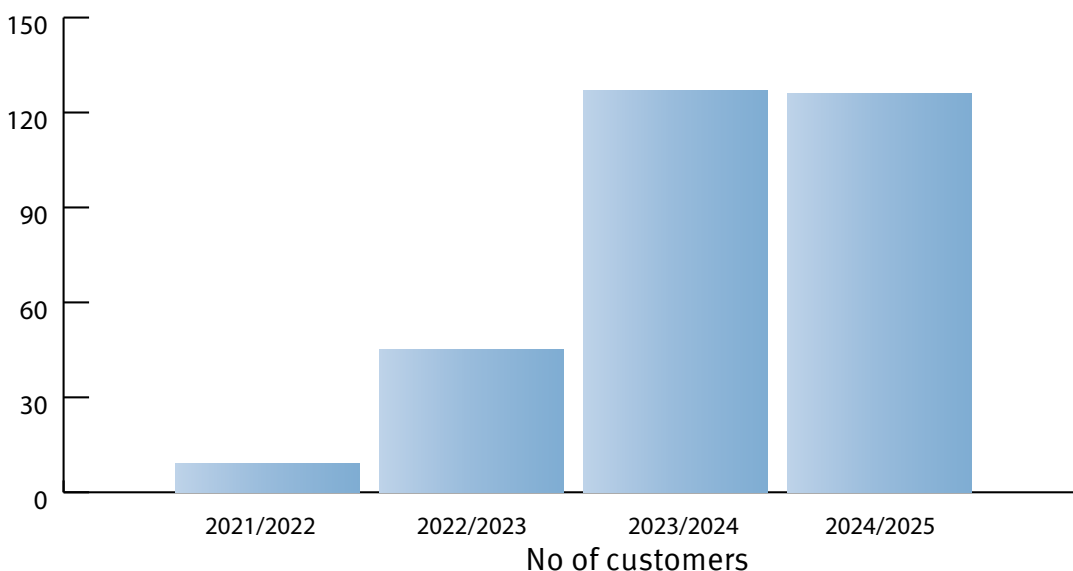
n.b: 2019/2020 included referrals from 2018/2019 which were awaiting the establishment of the Local Area Co-ordinators Team

What difference has the Local Area Co-ordination for Older People made?

Over the year (2024-2025) the team has received referrals for older people who wanted to reconnect with their communities. We helped 126 older people to access local community assets by providing information, signposting, making a referral or introducing the individual to different clubs.

Whilst the number of older people referred to the team for the purpose of accessing local clubs and groups has decreased slightly during 2024 - 2025 (-0.5%), the team, along with third sector partners, promotes the local East Dunbartonshire Community Assets Map at awareness sessions which may be impacting the number of referrals to the team as older people are able to self-refer to local community assets.

No of customers referred for Community Asset support

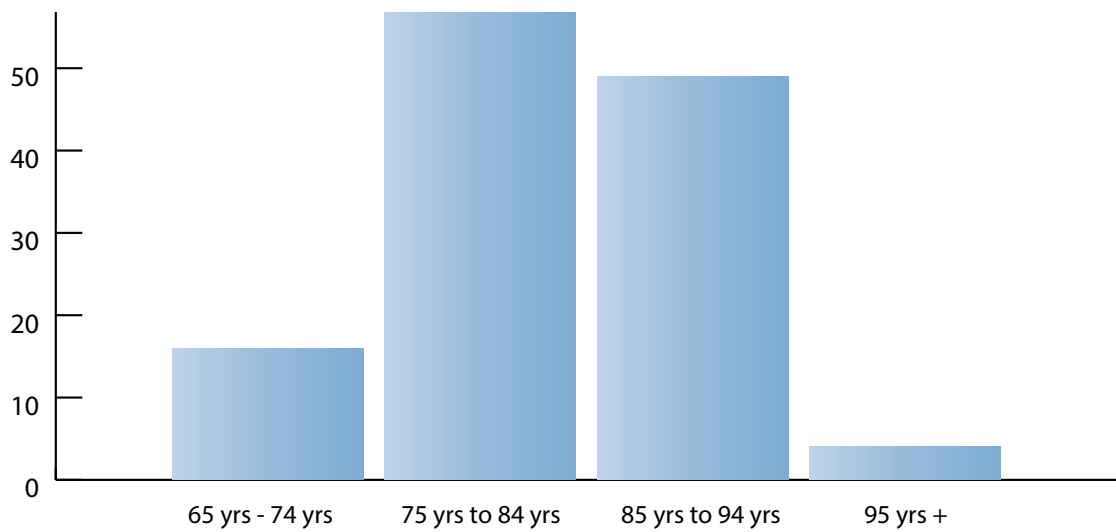


There are lots of ways that people can improve their social support opportunities and there are various organisations that can provide information and advice.

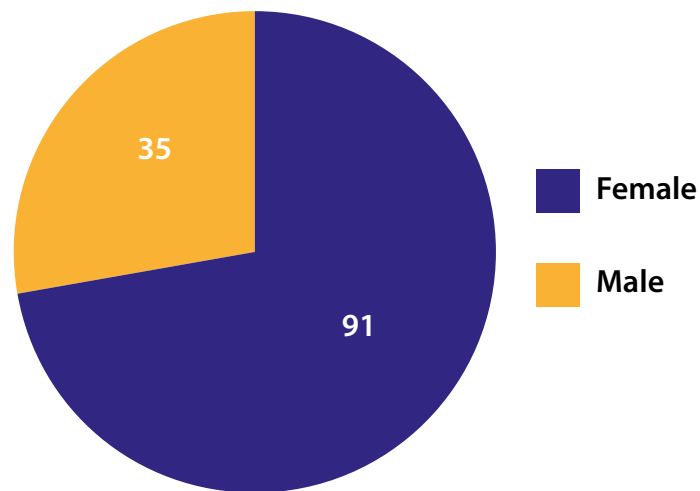
However, there are ways that individuals can improve their own social support opportunities such as:

- Explore the use of technology
- Follow your interests
- Be pro-active, seek out people or groups
- Get together a group of like-minded people with similar interests
- Improve your own strengths and skills

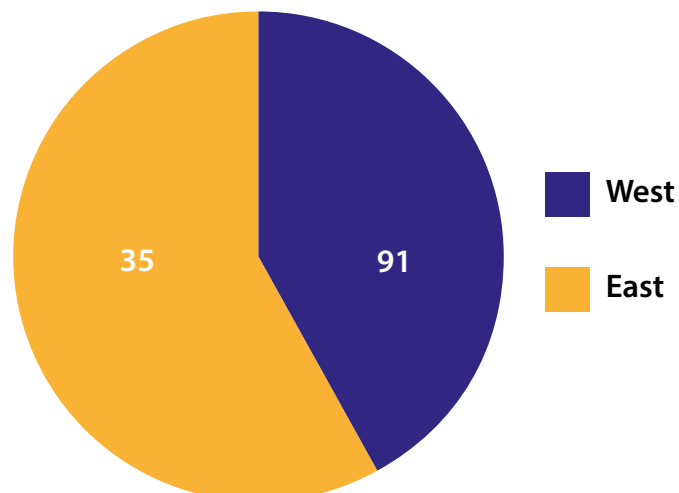
No of customers the team supported to access community groups - by age range



No of customers the team supported to access community groups - by gender



No of customers the team supported to access community groups - by locality



Community Assets for Older People

East Dunbartonshire HSCP, in partnership with third sector partners, has provided an online community assets directory 'East Dunbartonshire Assets Map' which is available at: <https://www.eastdunassets.org.uk/>

If you run or attend a local club or group, and it is not advertised on the Community Asset Map, please complete the online form and let us know about your community asset. <https://www.eastdunassets.org.uk/>

Congratulations Mere Apna!

Mere Apna, who meet on Monday afternoons in the Fraser Centre in Milngavie, celebrated their first anniversary in April 2025. The OPLAC team was invited along to the celebrations on 7 April 2025. The group has seen their membership grow from around 10 members, when it was initially established, to 34 members over the course of the year. They hope to continue increasing their membership numbers and introduce new activities in the coming year. Happy 1st Anniversary Mere Apna.



Working in partnership with Community Groups

Below are some of the local community assets that the team has helped to support this year by encouraging membership and signposting to funding opportunities:

G61/G62 Community Respite Team - West Locality

The Community Response Team covering the G61 and G62 areas provides valuable support to people in the community. This resource was originally established during the pandemic because it was recognised that people who were isolating were at risk if they could not arrange essential shopping provision or collect prescriptions.

The Team, which has now achieved charity status, has continued to operate and offers essential and important support to people within the community.

Some examples of their support for older people, provided by their volunteers, have included:

- Supporting people at the early stages of dementia or who are physically frail and have lost confidence to access community groups;
- Assisting many older people to attend groups by offering peer support and transport;
- Assisting people to and from hospital who would otherwise struggle to arrange or would not be suitable to use taxis or public transport.

The organiser and the volunteers are always very approachable and keen to engage in partnership working with the OPLAC team, older people and their families and community groups, to ensure that customers have the appropriate support and assistance.

The Team supports a number of the local groups and clubs including the Monday Club, Bite and Blether, Board and Brew and Day Break through the provision of transport. Without this support many people would struggle to attend social groups and access appointments.

Contact Point at the Park Centre, Kirkintilloch

Contact Point is a non-profit making organisation. Their vision is for people with disabilities to achieve their full potential in a supportive community. They are a voluntary service aiming to improve the quality of lives for vulnerable people within their community.

The volunteers run different groups and clubs within the Park Centre. The Centre is based in Kirkintilloch town centre. The OPLAC team has been working closely with the volunteers to help support and promote their valuable services.

Last year the volunteers identified that a significant barrier for some individuals attending the Centre was the need for assistance to get to and from the group - including transport. Some people needed support to get in and out of their homes and vehicles. Contact Point secured some grant funding and the Board agreed that they wanted to utilise the funds to address these barriers.

The OPLAC team supported the Board by making contact with a local transport contractor who could provide appropriate vehicles, drivers and escorts. Following successful meetings and negotiations, a suitable contract was established between the Board and the transport provider.

To date, this additional resource has proved extremely successful and ensures that a valued service can be provided to people who are isolated and physically disadvantaged.

The OPLAC team have been able to increase the number of referrals to Contact Point because of the introduction of assisted transport.

Torrance Music Group and the Warm Space at Kirkintilloch Baptist Church

Do you live in the East locality and wish to try some new groups? If so, why not get yourself along to the music group which is run by volunteers in the Torrance area. The music group takes place every third Thursday in the month. It gives you the chance to reminisce through the use of music.

You could also go along to the warm space at Kirkintilloch Baptist Church on Wednesdays to have the chance to meet new people and feel at home.

As we approach the throes of the summer weather, thoughts can turn to getting out for walks or exercising in the local community. Different health walk groups run throughout the week and are open to people of all abilities. Similarly, you could drop into the chair exercises sessions every Tuesday in Bishopbriggs.

There are a wide range of social groups that are waiting on you to join them across East Dunbartonshire. The OPLAC team can help to connect and introduce you to these groups. Further details for all these groups and more can be found in the East Dunbartonshire Community Assets Map:

<https://www.eastdunassets.org.uk/>

What difference has the Local Area Co-ordination Team made for individuals?

Helping older people to access local community resources

Customer B:

Mrs B is 97 years old, lives alone and has a number of age-related frailty and health conditions. Mrs B was struggling to access social activities and local resources in her community which resulted in her feeling isolated and lonely at home.

A referral was received into the OPLAC team and following a home visit to Mrs B, the Local Area Co-ordinator was able to connect Mrs B with a local club, The Monday Club. Mrs B started attending the club with the support of local volunteers and transport. The provision of these resources encouraged Mrs B to leave her home.

Mrs B is now regularly attending The Monday Club and has reported that she is “overjoyed and so thankful for having the opportunity to mix with new friends and to leave her home”. Mrs B said that the club and its members have made a big difference in her life and she looks forward to attending each session. Mrs B is also waiting to be matched with a volunteer befriender in the near future and is hopeful that she will also be able to attend a new befriending group that is being established.

Customer C:

Mr C is an 85-year-old man who reached out to the OPLAC team because he was feeling socially isolated within his community. The team member visited Mr C at home to help him identify social options. The team member was able to identify that Mr C was facing the challenges associated with ageing, but that he was still capable of being independent with limited support. Mr C needed assistance to build up his confidence because he had been without the company of his peers for some time.

Because Mr C had not been active in his community, the team member accompanied him to a local singing group for the first time to help him build up his confidence so that in the future he could attend alone. The singing group, which is run by a team of volunteers, instantly made Mr C feel welcome. He met new people, enjoyed the hospitality and listened to the music.

The following week Mr C contacted the OPLAC team to express his interest in continuing regular attendance at the singing group. Mr C has been able to arrange transport via his local taxi service and is now attending the singing group on a regular basis. Providing Mr C with a little support at the beginning of this journey has helped him to build his confidence and has made a big difference to his life.

This is one of the main purposes of the OPLAC team: being committed to helping older people to tackle the social challenges they face.

Customer D:

Mrs D is an 84-year-old lady who lives alone. She has very little family contact and has recently experienced a difficult time resulting in her becoming very isolated which has impacted her mood, anxiety levels and overall wellbeing. Mrs D also suffers from poor mobility and respiratory illness, which makes getting out into the local community very difficult and frightening for her.

Mrs D was referred to the OPLAC team because of concerns that she was not receiving any regular social interaction with her peers and she was experiencing loneliness and isolation. Mrs D is a friendly person who enjoys the company of others, but she had lost all confidence and motivation.

The OPLAC team considered if there was a way that Mrs D could receive assistance with transport to safely take her out. They ascertained that she would be willing to try a visit to a local community group. The team arranged for Mrs D to attend a weekly coffee morning run by Contact Point in the Park Centre. She was also referred to 'A Bite and a Blether', a local community resource, which takes place fortnightly and is run by Ceartas Advocacy. Both groups were able to provide transport and support to assist older people to attend.

Mrs D tried both groups, but in the end, she decided that attending just the one group, Contact Point at the Park Centre, would be enough for her to manage. Mrs D says that attending this club has "changed her life". She describes everyone as "welcoming, helpful and friendly". The driver and escort ensure that Mrs D gets to and from her home safely and she describes the volunteer who runs the group as an "angel".

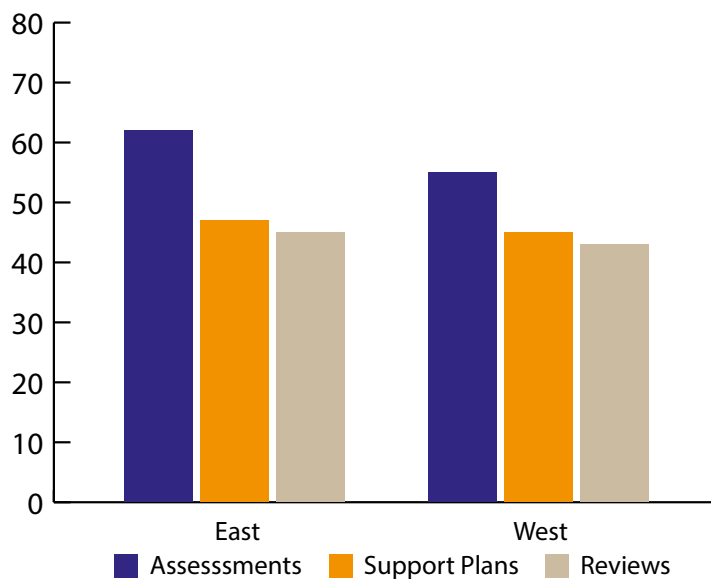
On one week when Mrs D was unable to attend, the group leader called her later that day to check that everything was fine and to have a chat. Mrs D looks forward to Wednesdays, when she meets up with all her new friends, and she is excited for the upcoming planned summer outings and future events that are going to take place.

Who are we providing formal support to?

We provide formal support to older customers, who have been assessed as eligible for social care support and have had the Eligibility Criteria and Fair Access policies applied. The assessment has recognised that those individuals require formal social care support to meet socialisation needs and outcomes. Any customers who receives formal social support will have a support plan which will be reviewed at least annually. These policies can be read on our website pages:

<https://health.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/services/a-z-of-services/adults-older-people/eligibility-criteria-for-community-care-adults-policy/>
<https://health.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/services/a-z-of-services/adults-older-people/fair-access-to-community-care-adults-policy-june-2023/>

Progression of Formal Support for Older People by OPLAC Team



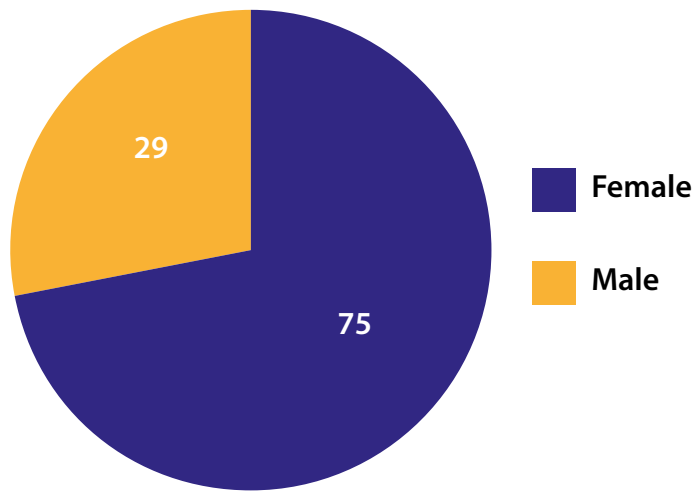
One of the options that the customer can choose is to attend a Social Work funded Day Centre placement (via Self Directed Support Option 3). <https://health.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/services/a-z-of-services/adults-older-people/self-directed-support/>

As at 31 March 2025 the two older people Day Centres, Oakburn Park Day Centre in Milngavie and Birdston Day Centre in Kirkintilloch, were supporting 170 older people.

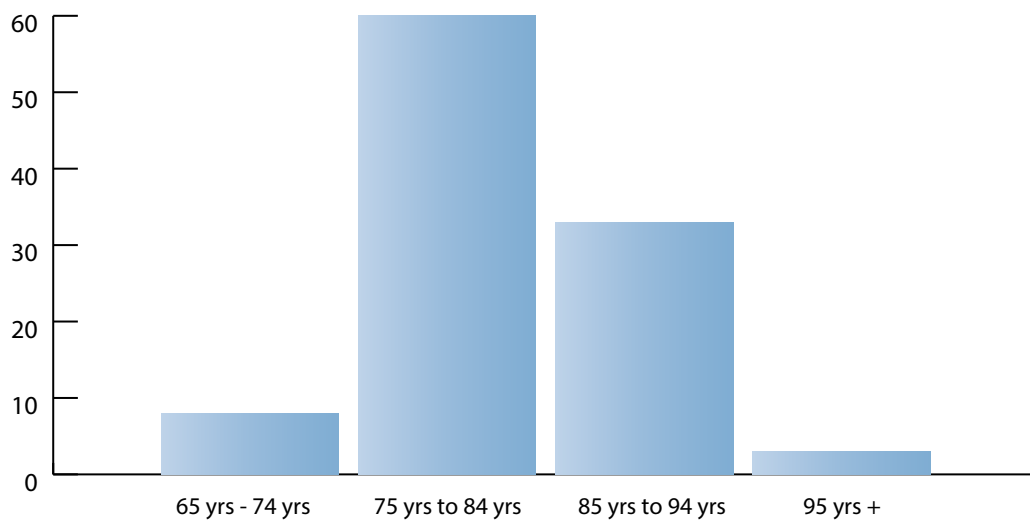
East Locality: Birdston Day Centre:

104

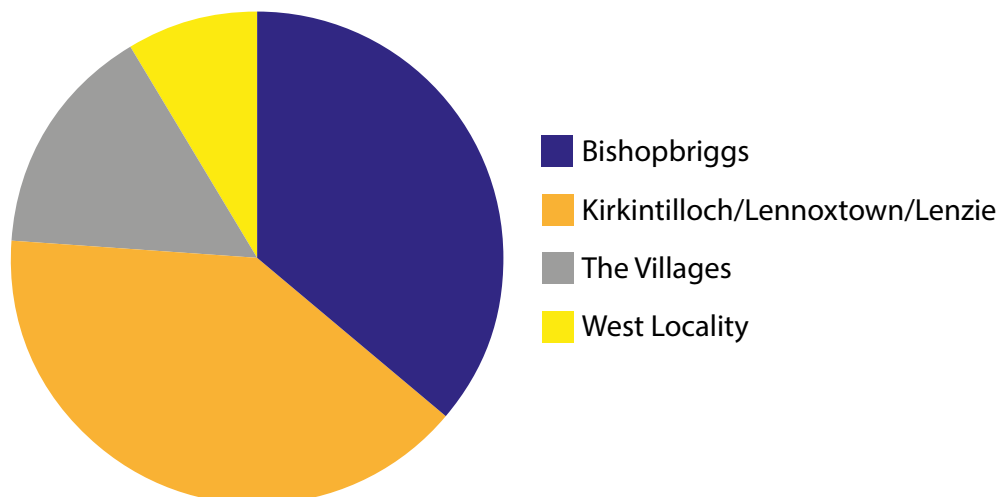
- the Number of Social Work funded older people customers as at 31.3.25 attending Birdston Day Centre.



Birdston Day Centre - Customers' Age Ranges



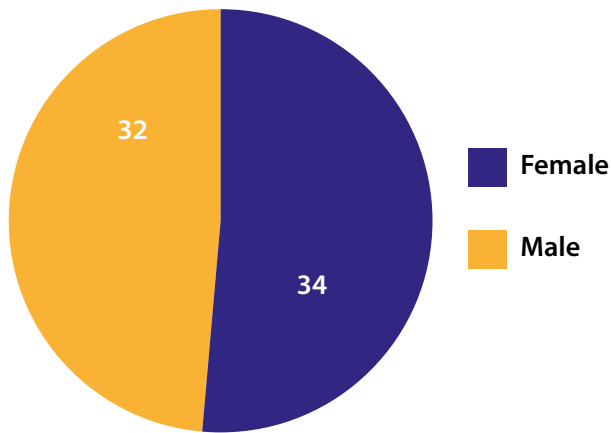
Birdston Day Centre - Customers' Home Areas



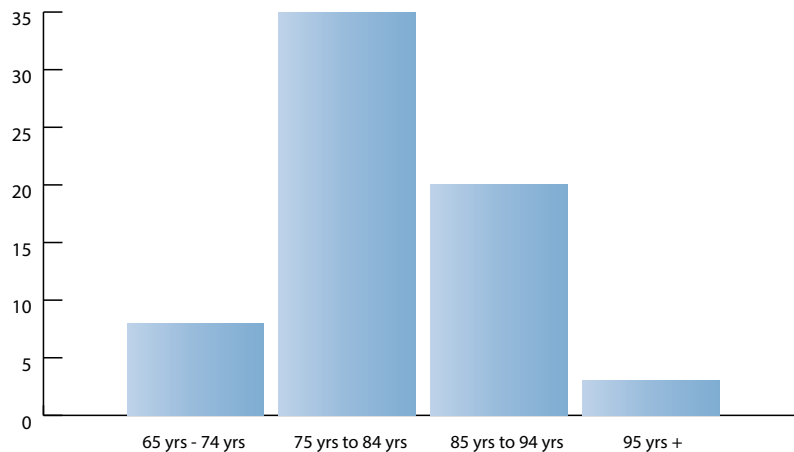
West Locality: Oakburn Park Day Centre:

66

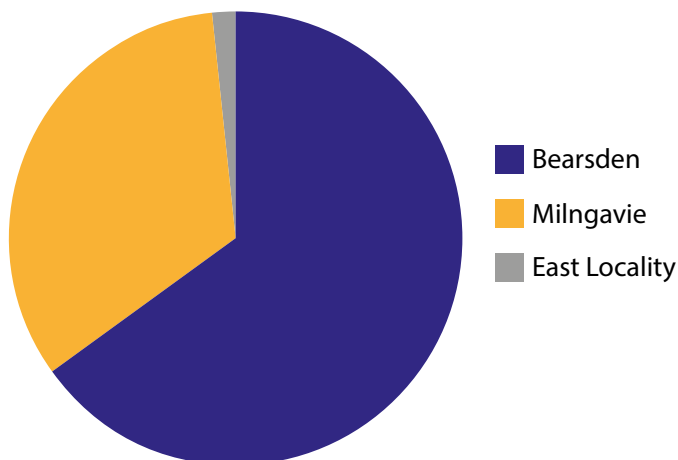
– the Number of Social Work funded older people customers as at 31.3.25 attending Oakburn Park Day Centre



Oakburn Park Day Centre - Customers' Age Ranges



Oakburn Park Day Centre - Customers' Home Areas

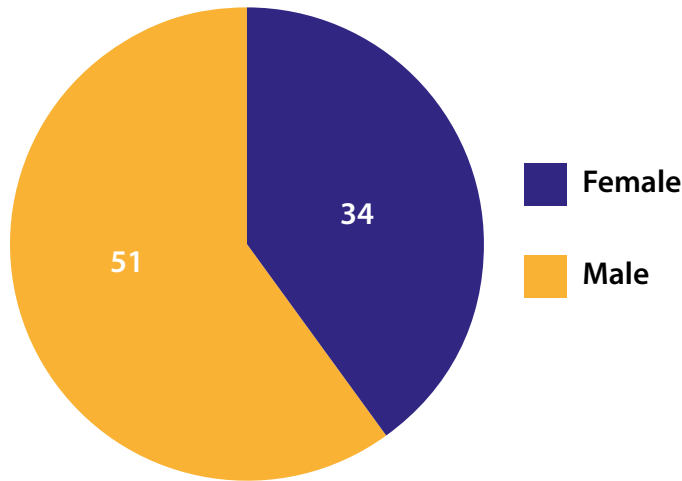


There are more options and alternative ways of delivering formal social care support to meet socialisation needs and outcomes (Self Directed Support Options 1, 2 and 3) where the customer may choose to be supported in the community through the provision of support from a registered social care practitioner. (<https://health.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/services/a-z-of-services/adults-older-people/self-directed-support/>)

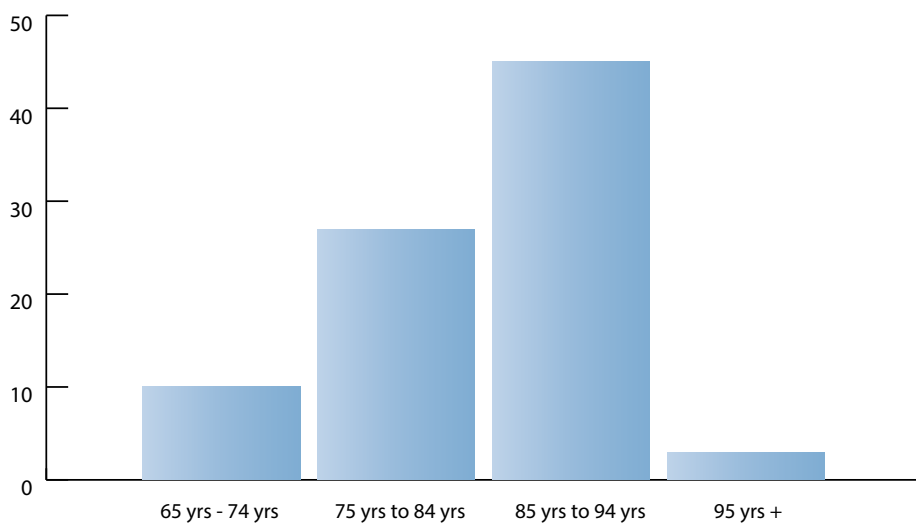
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- the Number of Social Work funded older people customers as at 31.3.25 who are receiving socialisation opportunities in their local communities whilst being supported for a registered social care practitioner.

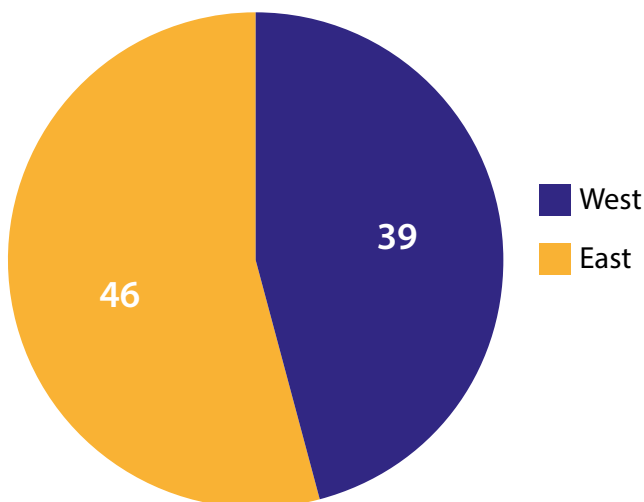
Alternative to Day Centre - Customers' Genders



Alternative to Day Centre - Customers' Age Ranges



Alternative to Day Centre - Customers' Home Locality



What difference has the Local Area Co-ordination Team made for customers and carers?

Assessing and arranging formal social support for older people

Customer E:

Mr E, a gentleman living at home with advancing dementia, requires 24-hour care from his wife. His wife is also his unpaid carer and supports him with all daily living activities. Due to increasing confusion, Mr E also has to be supervised to monitor any risks of harm and danger. He is unaware of his surroundings and often disorientated to time and place. Mr E attends the local day centre to socialise with his peers, but it is also an environment where his personal care needs can be met and he is in a safe and supportive environment. Mr E's wife also benefits from him attending the day centre because it gives her a break from the caring role allowing time to rest and recuperate. Mr E's wife reports that she is appreciative that her husband has excellent care and support whilst also receiving social stimulation..." very grateful for the support of day care services...really benefit from having time away from caring role". Mr E's wife also feels "...guilty at times but then I have to be realistic and acknowledge that I have to rest and prepare myself for caring for him on his return home from day care".

Mr E's wife told the Local Area Co-ordinator "...I really do not know how I managed before and I suppose I was naïve and unprepared for my role as a carer 24/7...I cope better in the knowledge that I have this support to look forward to and this gets us both through the week".

Customer F:

Mrs F, who uses a wheelchair to mobilise, referred herself to the OPLAC team to explore social opportunities. Mrs F wanted to attend a local club, which meets on a weekly basis. However, despite having been a regular attendee at the club when it was established, she had not been able to attend as regularly as she would wish because she was relying on family members being available to support her in the wheelchair.

The OPLAC Team member carried out an assessment to determine Mrs F's eligibility for formal social care support based on the type of care needs she would have when out and about in the community. The team commissioned services from a support worker to assist Mrs F to attend clubs in the community. The support package gave her the freedom to socialise without waiting for family to be available and she has begun to attend her local club on a regular basis.

Whilst Mrs F attends her social club, her main carer also enjoys a break from his caring role, using the time to unwind and relax.

Both Mrs F and her carer have seen a significant difference in their lives and Mrs F no longer feels socially isolated.

Customer G:

Mrs G lives with her son, who is also her main carer. She has suffered for many years with depression and more recently was diagnosed with Vascular Dementia resulting in episodes of confusion and disorientation.

In her younger years Mrs G had been a very social and active lady, who loved her career as a nurse. Over the last few years, as a result of her medical conditions she became very isolated and lonely. She was referred to the OPLACS team because of concerns that she had no structure to her life or regular social interaction with others. Mrs G's son was also feeling the strain and increasing pressure associated with being an unpaid carer for his mother, whilst trying to continue to work fulltime.

Initially, Mrs G was assessed as being suitable to be supported at some of the volunteer-led community groups, specifically run for people with dementia. However, due to their popularity, by the time transport had been sourced and a placement at the group confirmed, Mrs G's cognition had deteriorated significantly and she could no longer be supported by volunteers.

The OPLAC team revisited Mrs G to consider her future support requirements and assessed that she met the eligibility criteria for formally funded social support. Mrs G and her son chose for her to attend the local day centre, Oakburn Park Day Centre in Milngavie. It was determined that this service and its staff would be able to meet Mrs G's care and support needs as well as providing much needed social stimulation and interaction with her peers. Mrs G's son would also benefit from knowing that his mother was being cared for whilst attending the centre, and he would not have to worry about her or revolve his day around meeting her care needs.

Mrs G's son said that she is now like a "different person". He cannot believe the difference attending the centre has made to her mood and overall wellbeing. He explained that he feels "relaxed and confident" that she is safe and happy when she is at Oakburn Park Day Centre.

Mrs G's previous profession means that she wants to care for and help other services users whilst she is attending the centre. She is very popular with everyone who attends.



Useful Websites:

East Dunbartonshire Community Assets Map:

<https://www.eastdunassets.org.uk/>

Ceartas Advocacy:

<https://www.ceartas.org.uk/>

Carers Link:

<https://carerslink.org.uk/>

East Dunbartonshire Voluntary Action:

<https://edva.org/>

East Dunbartonshire Befriending Service:

<https://www.facebook.com/people/East-Dunbartonshire-Befriending-Service/100064372494508/>

East Dunbartonshire Citizens Advice Bureau:

<https://edcab.org/>

Age Concern:

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/>

Scottish Older People's Assembly:

<http://www.scotopa.org.uk/>

Kirkintilloch Men's Shed:

<https://kirkintillochmensshed.wordpress.com/>

Milngavie and Bearsden Men's Shed:

<https://mandbshed.org/>



Other Formats and Translations:

This document can be provided in large print, Braille and can be translated into other community languages. Please contact the Council's Corporate Communications Team at:

East Dunbartonshire Council
12 Strathkelvin Place
Kirkintilloch
G66 1TJ
Tel: 0300 123 4510

本文件可按要求翻譯成中文，如有此需要，請電 0300 123 4510。

اس دستاویز کا در خواست کرنے پر (اردو) زبان میں ترجمہ کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ براہ مہربانی فون نمبر 0300 123 4510 پر رابطہ کریں۔

ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦਾ ਮੈਗ ਕਰਨ ਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ 0300 123 4510 ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

Gabhaidh an sgrìobhainn seo cur gu Gàidhlig ma tha sin a dhìth oirbh. Cuiribh fòn gu 0300 123 4510

अनुरोध करने पर यह दस्तावेज हिन्दी में भाषांतरित किया जा सकता है। कृपया 0300 123 4510 पर फोन कीजिए।