

Providing integrated and sustainable services



The challenge

Peaks and Plains Housing Trust (PPHT) is a Cheshire-based not-for-profit organisation which offers support services to approximately 10,500 people across the north west of England. Many of these people are older, or have long-term conditions.

How has the housing association and its TrustLink control centre diversified to offer a wider range of services, working in partnership with other organisations to provide integrated and sustainable support to help people live independently and with increased wellbeing?

What we did

PPHT's TrustLink team helps people of all ages and abilities to live safely, securely and confidently in their own homes by providing them with technology enabled care and assisted living solutions. The TrustLink team consists of three interlinking groups of professionals:

Independent Living – a dedicated team with specialist knowledge of how technologies can be used and tailored to individual circumstances to give independence, safety and security. Independent Living Advisors identify customers' concerns and recommend solutions which will provide maximum benefit, including for people with more complex needs such as dementia, epilepsy or learning disabilities.

Control Centre – delivering services 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Highly trained advisors establish the customer's needs and react accordingly, contacting a family member, friend, TrustLink Responder or the emergency services depending upon the circumstances.

Response – available throughout Cheshire East, the highly trained response team will attend the homes of customers following an alert received at the control centre, where this is appropriate and the customer has chosen this service.

“ The key to our success has been working in partnership with other agencies to provide integrated care. We have a wealth of information about the communities we work in and the services available, and we can act as a lynchpin between the two, identifying underlying needs and signposting to other agencies. This collaboration means we can take a more preventative approach, which delivers better outcomes for the people we support and is more cost effective.

Dianne Hutter, TrustLink Service Manager, Peaks and Plains Housing Trust

Highlights

- Range of short and long-term community alarm telecare options
- Range of service levels to suit individual need
- Falls project reduced hospital admissions, with only 10% of referrals attending A&E
- Integrated working with a range of community groups
- Life Links service reducing the need for statutory health and care services
- Passport to Health addressing health inequalities and self-management



TrustLink Services

TrustLink offers a range of services, all of which are underpinned by a Lifeline home unit and pendant to enable customer to call for help from anywhere in their home, 24 hours a day:

Service level	Telecare Service	24 hour monitoring	Nominated contacts required	24 hour response service	Wellbeing visit	Availability
★	✓	✓	✓			Nationwide
★★	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Local
★★★★	✓	✓	✓	✓	Monthly	Local
★★★★★	✓	✓	✓	✓	Weekly	Local
★★★★★★	✓	✓	✓	✓	Daily	Local

TrustAlert

Developed to provide support in situations where carers cannot provide care as usual. TrustLink issues carers with an ACE Card (Alert Card for Emergencies) which contains a contact number in case of emergencies. Should anything happen to a carer, all they need to do is call the number on the card. Control centre staff will access records to ensure they act in accordance with the instructions held on the account, which have been agreed with the customer in advance and progress with support from Adult Social Care as appropriate.

TrustLink also offers a range of short-term services for new and existing customers who may be rehabilitating at home after time in hospital, recovering from illness, temporary mobility issues or family/carers taking a holiday. The Home Safety, Home Alone, Safe & Well and Community+ services combine a Lifeline and pendant, telecare sensors, monitoring, telephone calls and wellbeing visits to different degrees over a period of several weeks.

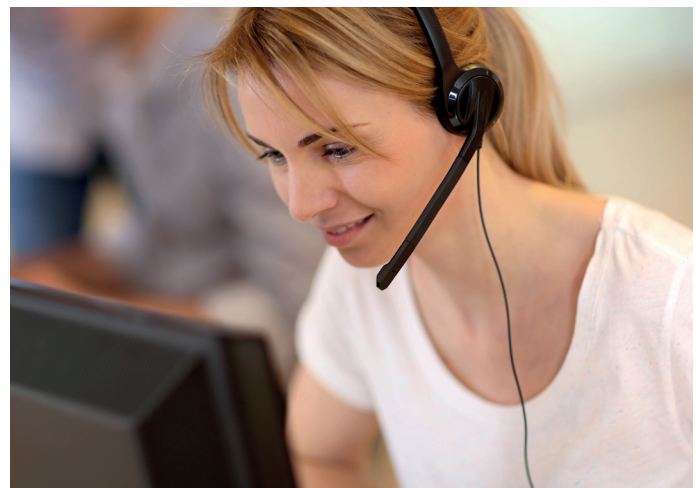
TrustLink can also provide specialist services such as lone worker monitoring, police domestic violence alarms and complex telecare packages for people with conditions such as epilepsy, which may otherwise require waking night carers.

Funding

Since March 2016, Supporting People funding has been withdrawn, affecting various TrustLink services such as monitoring and response, signposting services, activities to reduce loneliness and isolation and added value services such as birthday cards and calls. As a result TrustLink remodelled its service delivery to focus on a private

customer service model and Housing Benefit eligible services such as Intensive Housing Management tasks, signposting to referrals and support, assistance with rent and tenancy queries, tenancy sign up visits, checking and reporting repairs.

TrustLink also undertook an eight week intensive customer communications programme, which involved one-to-one visits with individuals affected by the withdrawal of Supporting People funding and their families. These visits explained how the funding change would affect them and highlighted the benefits of the TrustLink service. Next of kin and family members were involved in discussions where possible to help support decision making. As a result, 63% of people chose to continue with the service, funding it themselves. 60% of these chose the 2 Star service which includes a response service if required. In many cases, this was because of the added reassurance given by access to an experienced response team with first aid training and falls pick up equipment.



Falls project

Launched in November 2014 to combat winter pressures, and part funded by NHS Eastern Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group Resilience Fund, the falls project has seen TrustLink successfully forge partnerships with health, social care and the third sector.

The service is aimed at patients who have fallen and require an ambulance response. Whereas often these patients would be conveyed to hospital for observation only, they can now remain at home and be referred, following clinical assessment, by North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) to TrustLink following a falls pathway. Following the referral, a TrustLink Falls Advisor will visit the client (usually within 24 hours) to undertake a falls risk assessment, identifying and addressing issues that might be contributing to the risk of falling. They will also signpost to other services which may support the patient to live safely in their own home such as:

- Community Rehab Team (rapid access to OT and physio service, often within 24 hours)
- Community Outreach Pharmacy for medication review
- Feedback to GPs and request home visits if required
- Adult Social Care SMART team for care package
- Telecare referral
- Falls Clinic for strength and balance exercise classes and education
- 3rd sector voluntary agencies such as Red Cross

From April 2015 to March 2016 TrustLink received 664 referrals from NWAS and 1,512 from TrustLink, assisting a total of 2,176 patients. Of these **1,941 patients were able to stay at home** with only 235 taken to hospital (10.8%).

Assuming a cost of £110 per A&E visit not taking into account any further assistance required this has saved up to £213,510. Assuming an average cost of stay for an emergency admission at £1,179 if only half these customers had been admitted (970) the saving could be identified as £1,143,630 over 12 months. **In total, there is a saving of up to £1.35m to the NHS.**

The service has secured funding for a third year, and has recently been expanded to receive referrals for falls prevention visits from GPs and voluntary sector via a dedicated falls email address. Long term, PPHT is exploring the benefits of providing specialist physiotherapy support in community hubs for priority groups to teach resilience techniques and prevent future falls. The aim would be for these sessions to eventually become subject to a minimal charge in order to become self-sustaining.



Integrated working

Prior to the withdrawal of Supporting People funding TrustLink had a dedicated Lifestyles and Activities Co-ordinator (LAC) based at a sheltered housing scheme. The LAC offered assistance to customers in organising social and learning events, working closely with partners on health related issues such as annual flu vaccinations, fall prevention initiatives and home safety.

TrustLink continues to work with groups to deliver a diverse range of activities in its sheltered schemes and to the wider community. Working with partner organisations they offer activities as diverse as healthy lifestyle talks, Tai Chi, Zumba, exercise classes, falls prevention, arts and craft sessions, food tastings, live music, coach trips, and energy roadshows. The Fire Service provide fire safety talks and Police Community Support Officers attend to advise on community safety.

Life Links: Early intervention and prevention

Commissioned through the Better Care Fund and delivered through PPHT and Age UK Cheshire East, Life Links is a free service designed to help people in the Cheshire East community Live Life and Stay Well. A team of eight Wellbeing Co-ordinators work in the community to reduce the need for statutory health care services by co-ordinating support packages and signposting to appropriate agencies. Advice is offered over the phone, or home visits can be arranged if appropriate.

Life Links provides information on home adaptations and equipment, such as telecare, to help people live independently at home and works with them to prevent minor health conditions from becoming a major problem. The team is also tackling social isolation by helping people get involved in local groups and activities in the community.

Life Links also has a team of trained community volunteers working from community hubs helping people get online, teaching basic ICT skills such as internet shopping and using Skype to help customers keep in touch with loved ones who may live abroad or some distance away. Each PPHT sheltered scheme has a computer for customers to use with broadband connectivity and webcam.

Passport to Health

Passport to Health is a new service being provided by PPHT to address some of the key issues for public health in an integrated way. The service will work with partners to provide access to support with healthy eating, physical activity, sexual health, alcohol services and smoking cessation (particularly for people with mental health needs and pregnant women).

“ As a charitable organisation and not-for-profit company, the goals of Peaks & Plains are different from our commercial competitors. We continually reinvest funds to improve our services and ensure we are offering value for money, using our in depth knowledge of our communities to interact with other services to work collectively to provide preventative support.

Long-term, the aim is to support behavioural and cultural change, giving people the information and tools to make good choices about their own health and help commissioners deliver interconnected and sustainable services which meet the real needs of individuals.

Chris Twomey, Assistant Director of Housing Services, Peaks and Plains Housing Trust

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