

Statistics for the Faringdon Town Meeting on 30th April; for the year 2024/2025

Vale Community Impact (VCI) is a relatively small, independent local charity that provides a suite of services to the Faringdon community. We offer free and impartial advice on a broad range of topics such as debt & money management, benefits, and housing alongside a community transport service, a befriending scheme, isolation support and weekly shopping trips. Though our main office base is not in the market town of Faringdon itself; we offer out-reach advice services at Day Centres, community groups, information cafés, village/church halls, information fairs and GP surgeries. In addition to the transport and befriending services obviously involving support to, from and within the clients' own homes, we also have specialist volunteer advisors who will undertake benefits works or deliver key advice support at a client's residence where it has been assessed in advance from a safeguarding perspective.

Residents are able to obtain the advice support that they require Monday through Friday with face-to-face appointments and drop-in available throughout each day. The advance of technology and the growing confidence in it for many clients means that telephone, email, on-line chat and video-calls are also available as it is a must to ensure we are fully accessible.

The understanding of the clients' needs is of paramount importance and the nature of change is often dynamic and swift. VCI strives to keep its services' focus as customer centric as possible and this requires flexibility and adaptability. The clients' needs present with ever increasing complexity and multiple layers. Budgeting worries, life-changing events, decreasing confidence and a lack of certainty bring with them a significant toll on mental health and the destructive nature can be overwhelming.

VCI has in the region of 130 volunteers, numerous volunteers participate in more than one of our services. These volunteers, who are at the centre of our resident-focussed delivery, are supported by a small part-time team of staff working a little over 130hrs a week collectively. VCI is particularly keen to talk to prospective new volunteer drivers!

Over the last 12 months, VCI has provided **2,118** instances of "help assistance" to residents of Faringdon Town. Comparatively, that's a 12.3% increase on the previous year which saw 1,885 instances of help received.

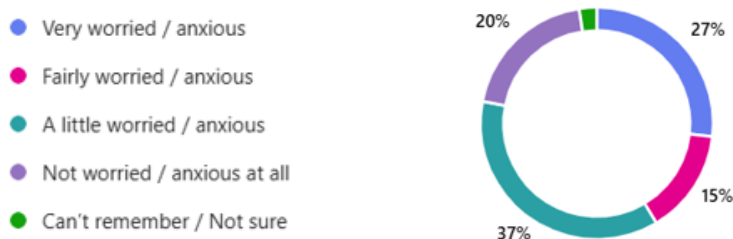
In 2024/25 VCI provided **1,335** advice consultations to Faringdon residents.

Faringdon residents most frequently sought advice on the following issues and concerns – Debt & Budgeting (22%), Benefits & Disability Benefits (35%)

Quotation from a Faringdon resident receiving support through our social isolation pop-up events' programme:

"I'm so pleased you asked me to try and explain how I feel a few months down the line, because I don't feel as afraid to use my voice now, in fact I can catch glimpses of the old me now – my son in Australia says, "he's lost his mouse!" "

How worried were the Faringdon residents that sought support from VCI before receiving assistance from VCI?



98% of VCI clients surveyed recently (not exclusively Faringdon residents) said they would recommend VCI to other residents.

VCI has continued to collaborate well with other local community groups to collectively deliver an overall solution of best-fit to a resident. VCI has continued its close working relationship with the White Horse Medical practice, with both parties enthusiastic about the overall wellbeing of residents.

There were **431** transport bookings for Faringdon of which 44% were for trips to one of the hospitals or a medical appointment (physio, dentist, optician etc), 24% were for shopping, 18% were to take residents to a VCI pop-up loneliness event, 14% were participation at a Day Centre or Community activity.

The Good Neighbour Scheme has been really busy in Faringdon in the last year, it has seen a 23% growth increase. THE GN scheme has undertaken **352** befriending consultations, interactions or visits between Faringdon clients, the Good Neighbour volunteers and the VCI Liaison staff team over the last 12 months.