



advice and support for older age  
**Independent  
Age**



# Year in review 2013



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**Welcome to the 2013 review of older people's charity, Independent Age, featuring our main activities from our 150th year of service, no less, which we could not provide without your generous support.**

It has been an extremely busy anniversary year, which has seen us provide direct support to almost 12,000 vulnerable older people, their families or carers, and helped over 56,000 more through our public information service.

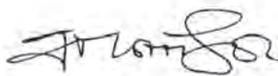
In October, the UK came unlucky 13th in the first Global AgeWatch Index of the best places to grow old in. While we're actually far luckier than some, of course, we should be aiming much higher than this in our care of older people and urgently need to address some serious issues. Recent figures show, for example, that thousands are living in poverty, completely unaware that they could be claiming benefits and, even more heartbreaking, one in 10 are so isolated that they speak to friends, family or neighbours less than once a month.

After the launch of our 'ABC' strategy in 2012 - developing our work in the key areas of advice, befriending and campaigning - we worked hard in 2013 to expand our nationwide advice and information service and develop our on-the-ground volunteer befriending services. We also stepped up our campaigning activities, highlighting important issues like the shameful lack of support for carers, and collaborating with partners like Campaign to End Loneliness, who share our values.

While we now work with more older people than ever before, there are still thousands more out there who desperately need our help. So, with this in mind, we are determined that 2014 will be another valuable year in the long history of Independent Age.

Thank you for your support.

Best wishes



Janet Morrison  
Chief Executive



# January

## Giving advice on the issues that make a difference

We kicked off the new year with a marked rise in the volume of calls to our national advice service, as usual. Many callers at this time of the year have spent time over Christmas with a parent or older relative, becoming aware of their declining health and increasing need for support. They turn to us to find out what help is available.

Our advisers are experts in social care and benefits entitlements and also provide information on local social activities. They help thousands of older people, their families and carers each year with the issues that really matter, from how to cover the cost of care home fees to finding the right disability aids. They even book in a follow-up appointment if the problem requires it for more detailed discussion.

Jonathan, who lives in London, phoned us about his 83-year-old mother after

he took his family to visit her over Christmas at her home in Teesside. He says: "We were shocked to see how much Mum's health had declined. She was even struggling to get out of the chair. She'd lost weight, too, because she wasn't able to get up to make meals as much, though she never told us this when we phoned. It was really stressful - we thought we'd have to try and persuade her to move into a home.

"I phoned an Independent Age adviser who explained all the options really clearly. She told me about getting an assessment and talked me through homecare and disability aids. We bought a recliner armchair and a raised loo seat, and installed grab rails. Mum also gets a daily visit from a carer now. I guess it's all just part of getting older, but I wouldn't have had a clue what to do if it wasn't for Independent Age."

For free advice for older people, call us on **0800 319 6789** or email **[advice@independentage.org](mailto:advice@independentage.org)**.



In 2013 we received almost 6,500 calls to our advice service from older people, their families or carers.

# February

## Taking action to end loneliness

Loneliness and isolation has become the invisible epidemic of our ageing population. Research shows that 1 in 5 older people are in contact with friends, family and neighbours less than once a week while, shockingly, for 1 in 10, it's less than once a month.

As an older people's charity and a founding member of Campaign to End Loneliness (a coalition of organisations and individuals working together to combat loneliness), we are committed to tackling the widespread issue of social isolation among older people head on. Last year, we expanded our volunteer befriending service and further developed our volunteer training and support in order to reach more older people who are suffering alone.

Two years ago, we matched Audrey, 68, from Tyne and Wear, with volunteer visitor

Sue. Audrey had become very lonely since the deaths of her brother, her husband and her son, who were all disabled. She had been the prime carer to all three and found it very difficult to adjust to life without them, despite making efforts to keep herself busy.

Sue hit it off with Audrey immediately and in February Audrey wrote her experience for our *Golden Link* magazine, written by and for older people, describing what a huge difference their friendship has made to her life. She told us: "As the years passed I started to feel very depressed and relied on my two dogs for company. Sue came into my life like a breath of fresh air and we were friends from the first meeting."

Audrey went on to describe how Sue encouraged her to try a local women's group coffee morning and she now attends many of the group's

activities. She said that it's given her a whole new lease of life, writing, "I have never

felt so happy. I can't thank Sue enough for giving me the push."

**If you think you or someone you know might like a volunteer visitor or to volunteer for us, visit our website or call us on 0800 319 6789.**



**Audrey and Sue**

"Sue came into my life like a breath of fresh air."

# March

## Boosting the income of the poorest pensioners

Did you know that over £5 billion worth of benefits go unclaimed by older people on a low income in the UK every year? Around one third of those eligible to receive Pension Credit and up to 60% of those who could be claiming the disability benefit for over-65s, Attendance Allowance, miss out. This is despite the fact that the recent rise in the cost of living has hit older people the hardest.

Research we conducted on Attendance Allowance alongside the policy think tank, the Strategic Society Centre, revealed that there is a lack of accessible information about the benefit. Our recommendations to the government in a report we released in June were for it to be better promoted and for its name to be changed to 'Independence Allowance' to help people understand that its purpose is to support

disabled older people maintain their independence.

Patricia, 83, from West Sussex, first got in touch with our advice service seven years ago and we've been supporting her ever since. Although she and her husband both worked throughout their lives and managed to buy their own home, after she was widowed she found it increasingly difficult to survive on her meagre income and had become extremely stressed about money. We helped her to apply for Guarantee Pension Credit then, as her health worsened, went on to help her with her claim for Attendance Allowance.

Patricia says: "I'm so grateful to Independent Age. The extra money they helped me to claim has made such a difference. It means I can stay in my own home, which I love, and pay people to come

and help me with the things I can't do anymore. I've got someone to help me get in and out of the bath, someone to do a bit of housework and someone to do a bit of gardening now and again. It's

a relief to know it's all being taken care of and it's nice to have people popping in, too. I'm so pleased I contacted Independent Age - I don't know what I would have done without them, I really don't."

**For free advice on benefits for older people, call our advice service on 0800 319 6789 or email [advice@independentage.org](mailto:advice@independentage.org).**



Over £5 billion worth of benefits go unclaimed by older people on a low income in the UK every year.

# April

## Launching new *Wise Guides* for the over-65s

Back in 2010, we became so frustrated about the lack of straightforward information out there for older people that we produced our own *Wise Guide* - a practical pensioners' handbook to help people through the ups and downs of later life.

It received such positive feedback that, in 2013, we expanded the series, producing a revised version of our original *Wise Guide* in April as we put the finishing touches to two more on remaining independent and alleviating loneliness, which came out in July. We are soon launching a fourth addition to the series on care homes.

***Wise Guide 1: Advice for later life - support and entitlements for over-65s*** offers money-related tips such as how to boost your pension, cut your bills and make the most of available discounts.

***Wise Guide 2: Extra help at home - essential advice for over-65s to live independently*** is full of great advice on staying in the home you love for longer, including how to apply for a grant to adapt your home and getting free help with your garden.

***Wise Guide 3: Healthy, happy, connected - support and advice for older people living alone*** focuses on overall happiness and wellbeing, including how to find local social groups and volunteering opportunities, and what to do if you feel down.

***Wise Guide 4: Your guide to care homes*** looks at the different options available, exploring how to choose the right home for you and how to cover the cost of the fees.

To order free *Wise Guides* for yourself or someone you know, call **0800 319 6789**, email **[advice@independentage.org](mailto:advice@independentage.org)** or order online at **[www.independentage.org](http://www.independentage.org)**.

"Thank you for sending the *Wise Guide* to me. As soon as I read it, I applied for Attendance Allowance disability benefit. I'm pleased to tell you I'm now receiving the maximum amount."

**Margaret, pensioner**



"What a fantastic little collection of gems your *Wise Guides* are. Keep up the good work!"

**David, Dementia Adviser**

# May

## Bringing joy through telephone discussion groups

As local services that provide human contact for older people continue to dwindle, we are extremely concerned about the growing number of older people who are stuck at home without anyone to talk to. In response to this desperate situation, we are working hard to expand our telephone discussion groups, which connect older people to each other and provide them with a stimulating activity.

This popular free service is open to everyone. It enables older people to enjoy a monthly group discussion over the phone from the comfort of their own home, so even those struggling with illness or mobility issues can join in. Each group has around six members and is facilitated by a trained volunteer who makes sure everyone has a chance to contribute. After receiving extremely positive feedback from participants, we are now making plans to significantly

increase the number of groups we deliver.

Jonni, 88, from Cumbria, who's housebound, joined our telephone book group last May. Her husband died six years ago and her four children are scattered across the UK and abroad. Although she has good friends and correspondences, she's reliant on others to take her out in her wheelchair and so spends a lot of time indoors. She says, "When you get to my age you have to keep your mind busy so when I heard about the book group I thought it was a marvellous idea."

An avid reader, Jonni is really enjoying being able to discuss books with others while she gets to know new people. "It's so good to be able to speak to someone else who's reading the same thing and exchange news and views on what we've read," she says. "At the beginning I thought, 'Well, if there are six of us on the line

at once, how are we going to know whose turn it is to speak?' But it just works extremely well. It's very enjoyable. I'd like to know more about each

member of the group. I'm always interested in people - I really enjoy getting to know more people."

**To join a telephone discussion group or volunteer for us, call Harjinder on 020 7605 4267 or visit [www.independentage.org](http://www.independentage.org).**

"It's so good to be able to speak to someone else who's reading the same thing."



Jonni

# June

## Demanding better support for carers

We joined forces with other national charities for Carer's Week, 10-16 June, and released research on carers that shows how woefully unsupported they are when they first take on their caring role.

Of over 2,000 carers interviewed, 81% said they were not aware of the support available to them when they first took on their caring role, and 35% believe they were actually given the *wrong* advice about the support on offer.

The report, *Prepared to Care?*, paints a bleak picture and shows how carers are left to struggle alone with the huge emotional, physical and financial effects of their role. Almost half of the carers said they had been forced to give up work in order to fulfil their caring responsibilities, while many had experienced stress and depression.

Paddy, 49, from South Yorkshire, who has a disability

herself, cares full time for her mother, Catherine, 88. Paddy says: "I had no idea just how hard caring would be - I don't think anyone realises. When I first started caring for Mum, I was doing everything on my own. Mum had just come out of hospital and I had no idea how best to care for someone in her situation. It was so hard being thrown in at the deep end like that.

"Mum is so private that she would hate to go into a home but it would just be nice to have someone here to look after her, just for a short while. I haven't been away for over two years - I haven't even had a day off."

With around 6.5 million carers in the UK and 6,000 people taking on a new caring role every day, we are calling for the government, GPs and health and social care professionals to ensure that more support is given to carers from day one of their caring role.

For more information about support for carers, download our free guide, *Carers - what support is available* (Guide 10). You can also contact us on **0800 319 6789** or **[advice@independentage.org](mailto:advice@independentage.org)** to order a copy.

Catherine  
and Paddy



"I had no idea just how hard caring would be - I don't think anyone realises."

# July

## Care home top-up fees - the 'Secret Subsidy'

Our advice service receives a call every working day from someone who has been asked by their council to 'top up' the costs of an elderly relative's care home fees.

Though councils are responsible for paying the care home fees of poorer residents, their relatives are sometimes told that the care home they have chosen charges more than the council's standard rate and they will need to pay the difference. This can amount to anything from tens to hundreds of pounds a week.

People phone our advice service desperately trying to find out whether they should really have to pay, anxious that their relative will lose their place in the home if they refuse. Yet many callers can't afford to pay. In fact, some are pensioners themselves.

In July, we launched a 'Secret Subsidy' campaign with a report into top-up fees in England, revealing that some

families end up paying because councils are not fulfilling their legal obligations and many don't provide proper advice and support. It also voices the concerns of care homes that top-up payments are being paid by relatives because the council standard rate is too low.

Top-up fees should only be paid if relatives of council-funded residents have chosen to pay for better accommodation than that offered by the council - they are not meant to subsidise the council's standard rate. Councils are required to check that these top-up payments are voluntary and that families can afford to pay them, but many don't bother.

Of the 129 councils that responded to our Freedom of Information requests, only 36, including Bolton, East Riding, Lancashire and North Somerset, had recorded information about all top-up fee contracts in their area,

while 36 had no information, and 57 had only incomplete information. Often, after an indepth discussion with the caller, our advisers find that

they are within their rights not to pay the fees. Once the caller is armed with this knowledge, we find that councils usually back down.

In 2012, Ann, 61, from Dorset, was told she'd have to pay a top-up fee of £125 per week to keep her 101-year-old mother in the same nursing home she'd lived in for over six years. Ann says: "My mother had been funding her own care for 14 years but then her savings dipped below the threshold so I contacted social services to take over funding her. The nursing home is right opposite where I live and at that age my mother would have never coped with a move.

The council took all of her pension - £535 a month - and her Attendance

Allowance was stopped, but they still demanded that I pay a top-up fee to keep her in the home! It was so stressful - I don't work and I couldn't afford to pay it.

The Independent Age adviser was absolutely brilliant; really clear, saying "If this happens, do this; if that happens, do that." Just brilliant. I felt I had proper support. She even sent me paperwork showing exactly why I was entitled not to pay. Well, when I showed it to the council they didn't have a leg to stand on - they quickly changed their minds and withdrew the fee."

**To find out more and to join our Secret Subsidy campaign, visit [www.independentage.org/campaigning/secret-subsidy](http://www.independentage.org/campaigning/secret-subsidy) or email [policy@independentage.org](mailto:policy@independentage.org).**

# August

## Preventing isolation through *Telephone Buddies*

Nearly 2.5 million people over 75 live alone and many find it increasingly difficult to get out and about. Illness, disability or simply a lack of available and affordable social activities or transport can mean being stuck indoors alone, so it's no wonder half of all older people say the television is their main source of company.

In 2013, we launched a free, national *Telephone Buddies* befriending service, after piloting it in 2012, to give older people a supportive volunteer to have regular one-to-one chats with over the phone. It helps older people stay connected, no matter what their circumstances, without having to step outside their home. The volunteers call once a week for as long as they're needed.

Elsie\*, 87, from Manchester, was referred to us by her granddaughter. Widowed and disabled, she had become very

isolated as she has no family living nearby. One of her sons, who used to live locally, tragically died from cancer, while her other son lives abroad. Despite the fact that she's lived in the same house for many years, she doesn't know many of the neighbours as most are young couples who have recently moved in. Elsie received her first call from her telephone buddy in August.

She says: "I used to be very busy - I worked as a hairdresser and did everything for my husband as he was in a wheelchair for over 30 years. But when he died it all suddenly stopped. I damaged my spine from lifting him over the years so I need a walking frame now, which makes it hard to get out. I feel very grateful to my telephone buddy. It amazes me that someone like her would be interested in me. It helps a lot - it gives me more of a sense of security."

If you think you might like a telephone buddy or to volunteer for us, call Rosalind on **020 7605 4232** or visit **[www.independentage.org](http://www.independentage.org)**.

We launched *Telephone Buddies* to give older people a supportive friend to chat to.



\*Name has been changed as this person prefers to remain anonymous.

# September

## Political Party Conferences 2013

Part of our campaigning work involves lobbying the government to prepare our public services for an ageing population. As all the main political parties start to consider their priorities heading towards the 2015 General Election, we are pushing them to deliver changes in a number of areas, particularly in adult social care. It was with this in mind that our Chief Executive, Janet Morrison, and members of the policy team travelled to Glasgow, Brighton and Manchester for this year's Party Conferences.

The team contributed to a number of debates that took place in each conference involving high-profile MPs. Janet pressed Ministers on their plans for tackling unfair top-up payments in residential care and also represented Independent Age at well-attended debates on health and social care. Members of the

policy team asked searching questions of politicians at events on the fringes, including debates on suitable housing for older people and an event that broadcaster, Esther Rantzen, chaired on 'Downsizing in later life'.

They explored the Conservative Party plans with regard to the future of Winter Fuel Payment and whether it will remain universal or become means-tested, and pressed the Labour spokesperson on pensions as to what plans the Party has to appeal to older voters. They also met with individual MPs to update them on our Secret Subsidy third party top-up campaign (see pages 14-15) and the research we have done highlighting the huge disparity between different English councils' approaches to these fees.

Encouragingly, our presence at the conferences helped to further raise our profile

among politicians and make them aware of the work we do. A number of MPs

requested copies of our *Wise Guides* (see page 8) to hand on to their constituents.

**To find out more about our campaigns and policy work, visit [www.independentage.org/campaigning](http://www.independentage.org/campaigning).**



**We played a leading role in a number of debates during the Party Conferences**

Photo: The Health Hotel

# October

## Keeping pensioners warm over winter

In 2013, shocking figures released by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) revealed that the number of pensioner deaths linked to cold weather had risen by almost a third.

While the winter of 2012/13 was indeed a particularly harsh one, in our experience a growing number of older people are becoming increasingly worried about rocketing fuel prices, and many are also struggling to stay warm in badly insulated homes.

As well as advising older people on state benefits, schemes and discounts that can help them through the colder months, we also have a team of caseworkers who give practical advocacy support to those who need it most.

Frances, who's 81 and suffers with arthritis, lives in a bungalow owned by a housing association in

Merseyside. Last winter, her Independent Age volunteer visitor, Mary, discovered that Frances was going to bed as early as 4pm because her living room was so cold. The gas fire had been disconnected and so all that was left to heat the large room was a small radiator with a wooden cover that blocked much of the heat.

The housing association had offered to replace the gas fire with an electric one, but Frances had refused because she thought it would be too costly to use. She says, "I didn't think a little electric fire would make much difference and would cost a bomb, but it was so freezing that sometimes all I could do was get into bed early with a hot water bottle."

Mary contacted the housing association herself to see if anything could be done, then our casework team chased

the company for updates. In the end, a bigger radiator was installed without a cover. Frances says, "I can feel the

heat off the radiator much more now, so it's a lot better. I was really glad of the help."



"It was so freezing that sometimes all I could do was get into bed early with a hot water bottle."

Mary and Frances

# November

## Tackling ageism in the media

Our annual Older People in the Media Awards were held on 19 November at a special ceremony in central London, hosted by Gavin & Stacey star, Larry Lamb. The awards, sponsored by care provider Barchester Healthcare, aim to shine a light on coverage which has either positively portrayed older people or sensitively highlighted the issues they face.

Around 165 guests attended the event, including celebrities and media professionals, and it attracted significant press and social media coverage. A total of 10 awards were given out, from Best Factual Television Programme to Best Use of Photography, for which we received hundreds of nominations, giving our judging panel an enormously difficult task.

From a prestigious shortlist which boasted a range of

national media outlets such as BBC1's Panorama, Channel 4's Dispatches and BBC News, a young dementia care worker, Darren Gormley, took home the night's top prize. His blog, Making Dementia Care Personal, which he has been writing since April 2013, outlines his personal experiences of working with people with dementia and was praised by the event's judges for being engaging, insightful and positive.

Darren said he was "completely overwhelmed" to win, adding: "I'm so proud. I can't wait to take these awards to the people I visit and show them that their stories really matter and there are people who want to listen and celebrate them."

Other winners included Julia George from Radio Kent for her programme Is Old Age Something To Dread, Or Can It Be Fun?, and actress

Anne Reid, who beat off stiff competition from a host of celebrities to be voted Best Older Person's Character by

the users of social networking site, Gransnet, for her role as Celia in Last Tango in Halifax.

**You can find out more about our Older People in the Media Awards at [www.independentage.org/news-media](http://www.independentage.org/news-media).**



**Larry Lamb with this year's overall winner, Darren Gormley**

# December

## Helping older people to have a happy Christmas

We all know Christmas can be a difficult time, but did you know that around half a million over-65s who live in the UK spend Christmas Day alone? And with friends and neighbours often away over the Christmas period, for many the isolation can extend well into the new year, making it a truly miserable and even frightening time.

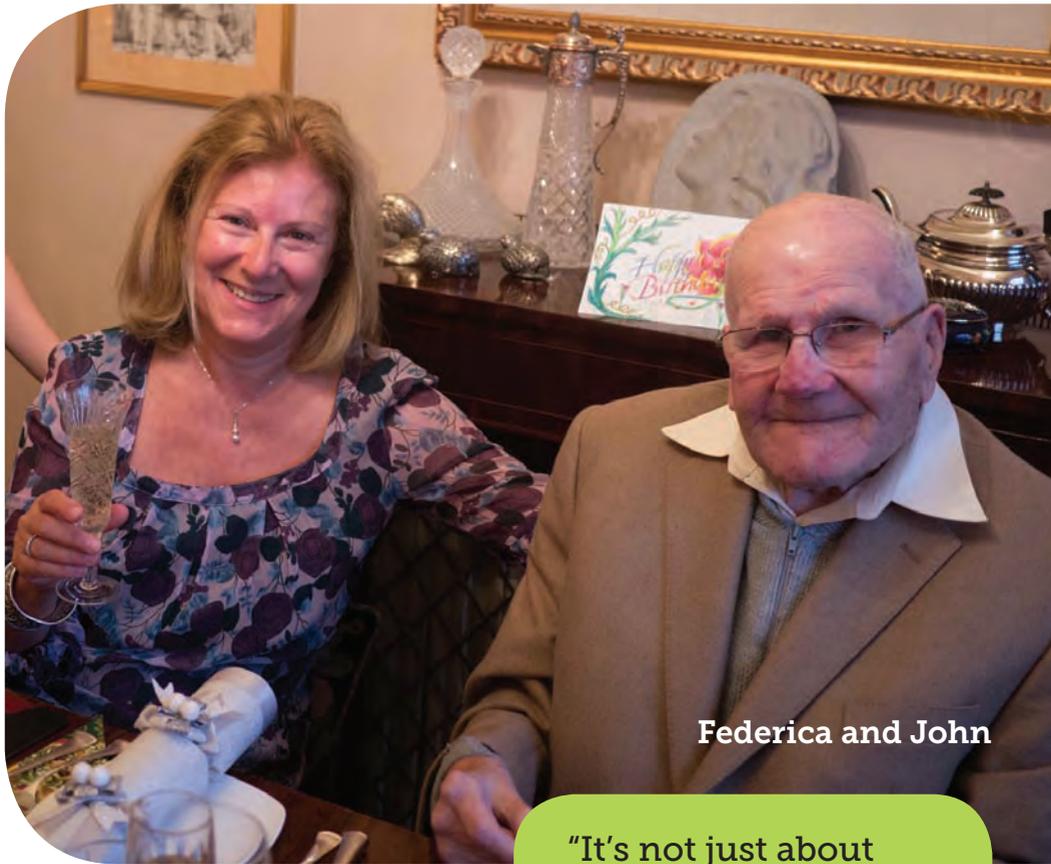
John, 90, lives on his own in London and, after losing most of his siblings, has no surviving family that he's still in contact with. John struggles with being alone and goes out as much as he can on his mobility scooter to be around others, even eating his lunch most days in the local hospital canteen.

In July 2010, we introduced him to volunteer befriender, Federica and now they're almost like family. John even spends Christmas Day with her, her husband, George, and

their daughters Alexandra, 25, and Michelle, 22.

John says: "I always enjoy seeing Federica, George, and the girls. It's not just about having somewhere to go; it's about having someone to talk to. It's boring when you live on your own. After we had Christmas lunch last year, I sat there and had a natter with Freddie. It was a nice day... It's made me a lot happier to know them."

Federica says: "I know how difficult it is to be older and dependent because I saw it with my mother. All of a sudden you're at home without anyone to talk to. I think my daughters benefit from knowing John and being involved in helping older people - I hope that they will continue, as they grow older, to be part of a caring community."



Federica and John

"It's not just about having somewhere to go; it's about having someone to talk to."

We helped to make Christmas a little bit special for 695 older people by sending out Christmas hampers full of treats.

## Future plans

Since the launch of our 'ABC' - advice, befriending and campaigning - strategy in 2012, we have made great progress, reaching far more older people than ever before and receiving extremely positive feedback about our services.

But now as we head into 2014, we have begun to implement exciting plans for an even bigger 'step-change' in key areas of our work. This will ensure that the next few years will see a marked rise in the number of older people we support.

We plan to invest, in particular, in our popular *Wise Guide* series of practical handbooks for the over-65s (see page 8), commissioning new *Wise Guides* and increasing the distribution to 200,000 by 2017. Our research has revealed that older people are overwhelmingly impressed with our *Wise Guides*, finding them extremely useful, with almost half (42%) of the people we asked saying they had

already used a *Wise Guide* to, for example, claim a benefit or find a service.

We are also taking on the challenge to tackle the epidemic of loneliness and isolation in older people as a matter of urgency. We plan to significantly scale up our telephone book and discussion group service (see page 10), which consistently receives positive feedback from those who use it and has proven to be an effective way to help lessen the boredom and loneliness that can take hold after retirement.

Finally, we are stepping up our campaigning activities, moving steadily towards our goal of becoming a well-known and dynamic voice nationally for older people and their families and carers. This has already resulted in more than 30 MPs signing a motion in Parliament in recognition of our 150 years of service and committing to supporting our work.



We couldn't make these ambitious plans without your generous support and we very much look forward to updating you on our progress over the coming years.

## How you helped in 2013



- Overall, **12,444** older people, their families or carers received direct support from the charity in 2013, with a further **56,278** accessing our publications and guides.
- **6,417** older people, their families or carers contacted our advice service to receive personalised advice and/or information. This large increase on the previous year was partly because we began to take orders through the service for our popular *Wise Guides*. Our original target of **6,000** by 2015 will now be reviewed.
- We distributed **42,292** *Wise Guides*, providing accessible, expert advice about claiming benefits and other services. We aim to increase this number to well over **200,000** by 2017.
- **43,467** people visited the advice section of our website in 2013 and **27,986** downloaded our information guides and factsheets.
- Over **4,000** lonely and isolated older people received friendship, conversation and practical help from **1,500** volunteers. We aim to increase the number of visits to befriended older people to **50,000** by 2017.
- **6,027** vulnerable older people benefited from continuing individual caseworker support and a personalised package of care.
- Over **1,456** grants were provided for one-off emergencies.
- **2,569** emergency packs (bedding packs, hospital packs and warm packs) and **695** Christmas hampers were sent out.
- **209** isolated older people took part in regular telephone group discussions or had regular one-to-one chats over the phone with a volunteer. We aim to increase this number to **700** by 2016.

# Help us to continue our work for another 150 years and beyond

In celebration of our 150 years of service, many of you have rallied around, responding generously to our appeals, taking part in our raffle and hosting a Big Tea.

What's more, no less than 150 staff and supporters took on all kinds of sponsored activities for our Challenge 150 fundraising campaign, from skydiving to trekking through Epping Forest in the dead of night.

We are also incredibly grateful to the thousands of new direct debit supporters from London, Southampton, Leeds, Liverpool, Belfast and Edinburgh who have joined us since last September.

We hope you will continue to support us in 2014, whether you donate regularly by direct debit or make one-off donations.

## And there are lots of other ways you can support our work:

- host a Big Tea or a Dinner4Good
- get fit - run, walk or cycle in aid of Independent Age
- take part in our annual raffle
- donate in memory of a loved one
- remember Independent Age in your will
- get involved in our campaigns to secure a fairer deal for older people
- become a volunteer and befriend an isolated older person.

**If you would like to donate, raise money or volunteer in aid of Independent Age, please visit our website, email [supporters@independentage.org](mailto:supporters@independentage.org) or call our fundraising team on 020 7605 4288. We look forward to hearing from you.**

# I support Independent Age because...

"Independent Age recently helped my 83-year-old uncle by supporting his claim to get a mobility scooter, so I would like to repay their generosity by raising money by running the London marathon."

**Ricky, Virgin London Marathon runner for Independent Age**

"Independent Age organised for a volunteer to visit my aunt every week when she became bedbound. It took a lot of stress off my shoulders, knowing I wasn't the only one looking out for her, as I have my hands full with the kids as well. I was incredibly grateful for the support."

**Rebecca, Independent Age direct debit donor**

"It's heartbreaking to know that there are so many older people out there who are struggling alone and really need more support and human contact. I think the advice and befriending services that Independent Age provides are so crucial. It makes me feel proud to raise money for such a good cause."

**Megan, Superhero Fun Run runner for Independent Age**



advice and support for older age

**Independent  
Age**

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London  
W14 8RL

T 020 7605 4200  
E [charity@independentage.org](mailto:charity@independentage.org)  
[www.independentage.org](http://www.independentage.org)  
**Advice line 0800 319 6789**

Independent Age is the operating  
name of the Royal United Kingdom  
Beneficent Association  
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