



advice and support for older age

**Independent
Age**

Independent Age

What we do for older people
and how you can help



Welcome to Independent Age

Over the following pages you can read all about who we are, what we do and how our volunteers support us. We hope you enjoy the read. To find out more about our work, download our information guides and support our campaigns, please visit www.independentage.org



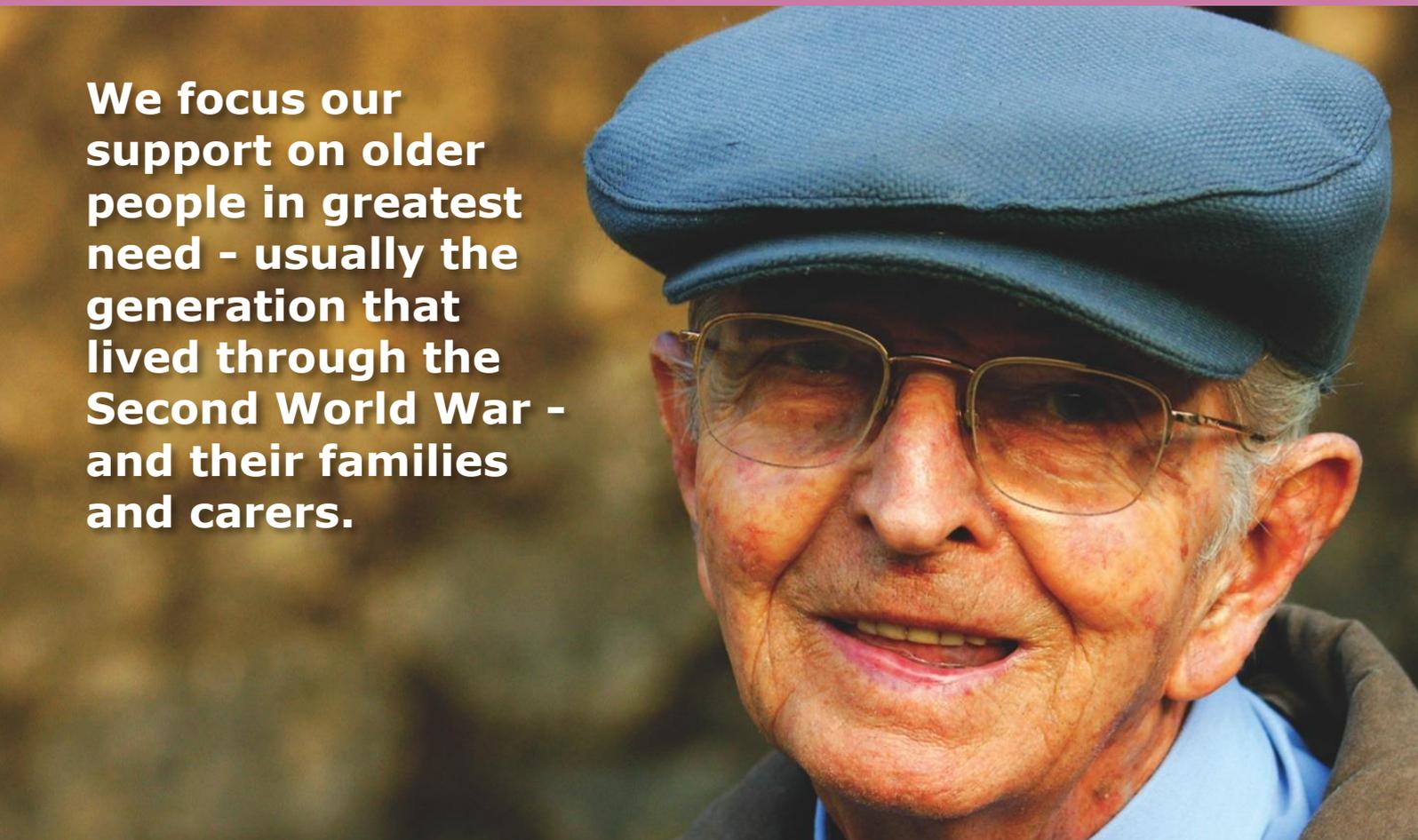
Who we are

We are a growing UK-wide charity with older people at the heart of everything we do.



Who we help

We focus our support on older people in greatest need - usually the generation that lived through the Second World War - and their families and carers.



We are growing

In 2016,
over 1 million
people accessed
support from
Independent Age

We expect this number to increase over the coming years

A major expansion in our reach and impact

Overall service interactions:

2020:
1,500,000



2015:
479,714



2014:
221,291

Helpline enquiries:

2020:
100,000



2015:
15,903



2014:
8,700

Information resources distributed:

2020:
1,300,000



2015:
434,587



2014:
323,000

Telephone calls and visits received by older people:

2020:
50,000



2015:
29,224



2014:
28,409

Our vision

Our vision is to create a society where older people lead the lives to which they aspire.



Our mission

Our mission is to enable older people to stay independent and live well with dignity, choice and control.



Our history

We were founded in 1863 as a benevolent trust providing financial support to older people in poverty.

We changed direction in the 1990s to evolve with the times and significantly expand the number of older people we help.



What makes us different?

We're independent, so older people can be.

Our information and advice is completely impartial - we don't sell or recommend products - and our campaigning is fiercely independent and based on the needs of older people.



What are the main issues older people face?

Over 1 million older people in the UK say they often or always feel lonely.

Meanwhile, as many as 1.9m older people in the UK are living in poverty. Yet at the same time, a staggering £3.7 billion worth of benefits for older people – Pension Credit and housing benefits – go unclaimed every year, often because older people simply don't know they are entitled to them.

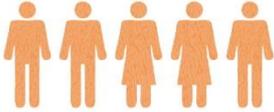
Over **1m**
older people say
they often or
always feel lonely



1.2m
older people in
England have at
least one unmet
care need



POVERTY

1.9m 
pensioners live below the
poverty line

In 2016
2 in 5 
nursing homes
in England were under par

Another major issue is that it can be enormously challenging for older people to get the care they need. Our social care system is very complex and difficult to navigate, and also extremely underfunded.

In fact, 1.2 million older people in England are currently living with at least one unmet care need and, in 2016, 2 in 5 nursing homes in England were rated 'in need of improvement' or 'inadequate'.

The UK's population is ageing. By 2031 more than a quarter of us will be over 60 years old.

Unless we, as a country, are prepared for this change, it could bring real challenges, particular for our already overburdened health and care services.

What we do

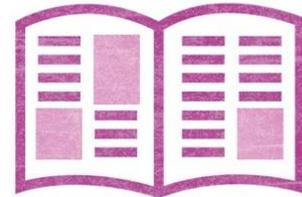
**Making a measureable difference
to the lives of older people.**



**Information
and advice**



**Regular social
contact**



**Research-based
campaigns**

We help thousands of older people each year to remain as independent as possible through free, confidential information and advice and providing regular social contact to older people who are lonely.

We also use the knowledge and experience gained from these frontline services to tackle and raise awareness of the difficulties older people face through our campaigning activities.

We provide



Information and Advice in
England



Telephone Friendship Services
in England, Scotland, Wales
and Northern Ireland



Face-to-Face Services in some
areas of England, Scotland
and Wales



Our information resources



We give free, confidential information and advice on the issues that affect older people such as: money and benefits, care and support, and health and mobility. This is through a free Helpline **0800 319 6789** and online and printed information resources such as guides and factsheets.

Our online and printed information resources help older people to boost their income, find the care they need, remain independent, choose the right place to live, stay connected with others, and more.

As these topics can be quite complex, we strive to make sure our information is as accessible and user-friendly as possible. We were delighted to be awarded a Plain English award from the Plain English Campaign last year and regularly receive very positive feedback from older people about our guides and factsheets.

In 2016 we increased the reach of our award-winning information resources by over 1 million.

We are continuing to expand our range of information resources, and last year grew our distribution by well over 1 million. So more and more people are viewing our information online or ordering print copies, which is fantastic.

You can order our information directly from the website at www.independentage.org/information or by calling us on **0800 319 6789**.

Our Helpline – 0800 319 6789



“Your advice resulted in my mother-in-law being able to stay in the home that she was happy in. All of the family members’ minds are at rest.”

Helpline caller

We have expert advisers who give advice over the phone on issues such as getting help at home, adaptations, care assessments, paying for care, staying in touch with other people and welfare benefits.

Often people who phone our Helpline are in the middle of a crisis – they could be desperately trying to find a care home for an elderly parent; they might be an older person who’s struggling to cope financially and can’t pay the bills... So it’s a great relief to them to be able to talk it through and be given clear, professional, confidential advice.

If the older person you support needs information and/or advice, please direct them to our Helpline on **0800 319 6789**. Our experts will be able to give them all the information and advice they need.

Our Friendship Services



Regular social contact

The second strand of our work, which many volunteers are involved in, is providing regular social contact to older people who are lonely. With the help of our committed volunteers, we provide Friendship Services to relieve loneliness.

These are delivered through:

- Face-to-Face and Telephone Friendship Services
- discussion groups.

We have also started piloting short-term social reconnections services – helping people to engage with their community – and a step by step service helping people reconnect after going through a difficult time, like a prolonged hospital stay or bereavement.

Many of the older people we help through these services have very few people in their lives, yet 65% say our service makes them feel less lonely.

Janet and Tessa's story



One of the older people we've helped through our Friendship Services is Janet, who lives in the South West.

For years, Janet, now 76, used to run a hotel with her husband. When he died she very bravely "put a pin in a map" and moved to a cottage on her own in the South West, near to an animal rescue centre she had started volunteering with.

Janet loves dogs and she threw herself into her voluntary work. But, sadly, she suffered a TIA – a mini stroke – which left her extremely emotional and unable to carry on as before. Forced to give up her beloved volunteering, Janet found herself stuck indoors, sometimes going for days without speaking to anyone.

She was referred to our Telephone Service so that she could receive regular phone calls from one of our volunteers. We quickly found her the perfect match – Tessa, who dog-sits for a living. They started speaking over the phone and found they had lots to talk about – namely dogs! Three years on, they still speak once a week and have become very good friends.

A simple phone call can make all the difference to an older person who has very few people to call on.

As Janet told us recently, "I don't know if it's because I live on my own but sometimes I think, 'Oh, it's Tuesday today and Tessa's going to ring tomorrow,' and I get really excited about it. It gives me a real lift."

To view a [short film about Janet and Tessa](#) please visit our [YouTube channel](#)

Get support

You can use our free services – our Helpline, the information on our website and our printed guides and factsheets and, for older people that need more company, our Friendship Services. Just call our Helpline on **0800 319 6789** or visit www.independentage.org

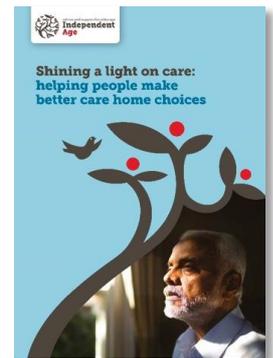
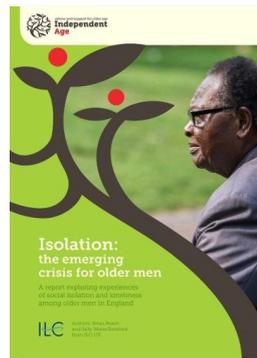
Our campaigns

The third strand of our work is Research Based Campaigning

We campaign because we believe older people are entitled to a fair deal, a reasonable standard of living, fair access to information and an opportunity to contribute to their communities.

We research and campaign on the issues that prevent this such as poverty, the growing problem of loneliness and inadequate health and care services.

Below you can see a few examples of our recent research reports.



You can find our reports on our website www.independentage.org

We pass our research and recommendations on to MPs, other organisations and the media in order to raise awareness and create change.

Taking action for change

One of the issues we are currently campaigning about is the growing strain on our health and social care services, which particularly affects older and disabled people.

The campaign has received support from thousands of members of the public and gained extensive media coverage.

The photo shows our Chief Executive, Janet Morrison, and one of the older people we support, Reg, delivering an open letter to the prime minister with our recommendations.



Reg, who is 86, was very keen to support this campaign. He told us:

"The NHS is overburdened now... They're run off their feet. If I just went up to No 10 on my own they'd just ignore me but when you've got Independent Age and others behind you, you've got a chance."

To find out more about our campaigns, visit: www.independentage.org/campaigning

Volunteering with us



We know what a huge difference it makes to the older people we support knowing someone cares, so we can't thank you enough for giving up your time to support our work.

As you might be aware we offer a range of volunteering opportunities, from making regular calls or visits to older people who are lonely to fundraising, events, and admin roles in our offices. Check our website for the latest opportunities:

www.independentage.org



86% of our volunteers say their role gives them a sense of achievement and pride.

Our commitment to our volunteers



Independent Age is committed to ensuring that volunteers have a positive volunteering experience whilst volunteering with us and that they feel fulfilled and valued.

Independent Age will:

- treat volunteers with respect, consideration and appreciation
- provide volunteers with a clear written description of their role and responsibilities
- provide volunteers with a named Independent Age contact
- ensure roles are meaningful and appropriate
- provide training and regular support
- keep volunteers up to date about organisational policies and procedures
- provide opportunities to keep in touch with the charity and meet fellow volunteers
- involve volunteers in the development of our strategy and service delivery
- reimburse any agreed expenses incurred whilst volunteering
- provide references after six months of volunteering
- listen to your feedback and views.

What we expect from our volunteers



We ask volunteers to:

- represent Independent Age positively and in a professional way
- treat others with respect and consideration
- undertake the volunteering role to the best of their ability including being aware of the boundaries of their role
- be reliable and engaged in their role and provide as much notice as possible if they are unable to fulfil their volunteering commitment
- maintain confidentiality, protecting any personal data they hold about other people
- adhere to our organisational aims, policies and procedures
- enable us to measure the impact of their volunteering by completing monthly diary sheets
- keep in regular contact with their Independent Age contact
- provide us with feedback and suggestions about our work and working practice.

Other ways of getting involved



Besides your volunteering, there are lots of ways you can get involved.

Campaign for us

You can also get involved by signing up to our online petitions. All the information about this, and all our campaigning activities, is on our website www.independentage.org/campaigning

Make a donation

We couldn't do any of the great work we do without our fantastic supporters. We welcome one-off donations, regular direct debits or a gift in your will. You can also choose to donate back your volunteering expenses to us.

Fundraise for us

We also have some amazing fundraising opportunities. There's something for everyone, from trekking mountains, running marathons, jumping out of a plane or hosting a Big Tea.

Information about all our fundraising and donating opportunities, is on our website www.independentage.org/support-us/how-you-can-get-involved

Thank you for reading!



And remember, the Volunteering Team and your Independent Age contact are here to support you. Together we can help improve the lives of older people.

If you want to get in touch with the Volunteering Team, you can reach them by calling **020 7605 4255** or emailing volunteering@independentage.org

We really hope you found this useful. Thank you very much for reading!



We currently have three offices across the UK:

London

18 Avonmore Road
London
W14 8RR

Glasgow

The Centrum Business
Centre
The Centrum
38 Queen Street
Glasgow
G1 3BX

Newcastle

Suite 4
The Grainger Suite
Dobson house
Regent Centre
Newcastle
NE3 3PF