



advice and support for older age

**Independent  
Age**

# Support Matters

September 2019



*“The atmosphere  
was amazing!”*

**One runner's experience of the  
London Landmarks Half Marathon**



# Welcome

“A huge thank you to those of you who completed our supporter survey in February. We were delighted to find that, overall, you feel you receive the right amount of communications from us and are thanked properly for your generous support. We were also heartened by your main reasons for supporting us, which for 66% is to help combat loneliness and, for 73%, is to help older people maintain their independence.

Most of all, we were thrilled that an overwhelming majority of you said you plan to continue supporting us. This really is incredibly encouraging.

In this issue of Support Matters, you can read about some of our highlights from 2018; how more and more people are using our services and getting involved in our work. We also share exciting news about our campaign for free personal care, and look to the future with an article from our Innovation Lead, Simon, on why his work has never been so crucial.

We hope you enjoy the read. ”

**Sally Sheehy**  
**Head of Individual Giving & Legacies**

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

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*With Sponsor a Friend you can directly help those who are lonely.*



*Our Innovation Lead, Simon Tucker, explains how, with your help, we can revolutionise old age.*

“At Independent Age, we want older people to be able to thrive; to be as independent, active, healthy, well connected and happy as possible.

The problem is, society isn't currently set up to support an ageing population and has an out-of-date view of what it means to be older. For example, when the pension age was set at 65, lots of people didn't reach 65. Today, 65 seems young!



“Society has an out-of-date view of what it means to be older.”

These days, people are living longer but with more years of ill health. Incredibly, an English woman can now expect to live for 19 years in ill health. There's also a loneliness epidemic, which can lead to depression and increase the risk of dementia. And all this at a time when statutory budgets are being cut.

Our vision is to revolutionise what it means to grow older. Society has been slow at taking advantage of new technologies and the myriad opportunities that can arise from an ageing population. For example, many older people have the health, wealth, wisdom and a desire to make a difference, and we could be supporting them to be innovators themselves. We're determined to be at the forefront of change, pushing forward for a better future.

One example of our work so far is a new programme to re-integrate older people into their communities and so reduce their loneliness. We're also exploring the use of technology to support people around retirement before they become lonely and cut off. Preventative measures like this could be more valuable than simply stepping in at the point of crisis.

Change needs to happen, and it needs to happen now. The opportunity to live more healthily, more comfortably, more securely, more enjoyably is there. It's not impossible to create a better future. We just have to think and act differently. All of us.”

# The atmosphere was amazing

*As we recruit runners for the iconic London Landmarks Half Marathon 2020, Graham Hutton, our Head of Services Development, shares his experience of taking part in March.*

“ Apart from playing football with friends, I hadn't done much running when I signed up for London Landmarks and really wasn't sure I could run all the way from Pall Mall to the Tower of London and back to Downing Street. I didn't need to worry though – I felt so supported by everyone involved.

The atmosphere was amazing on the day. There were 150 of us running for Independent Age, raising an incredible £38,000 between us. After three miles, there was a group of Independent Age staff and their families cheering us on. Then, a few miles on, there they were again! It made such a huge psychological difference to have so many people rooting for me.

It was just a brilliant day. I felt I'd been really looked after every step of the way. I'm not the only one - the other Independent Age runners told me the support they received was the best they'd ever experienced.

And now I can't stop running. I run three or four times a week. It's made such a difference - physically I'm fitter than ever - but mentally and emotionally too.

Would I recommend it? 100%! ”

*Join our team at London Landmarks Half Marathon on 29 March 2020 by registering through [www.independentage.org/london-landmarks-half-marathon](http://www.independentage.org/london-landmarks-half-marathon) or emailing [events@independentage.org](mailto:events@independentage.org). We ask our participants to pay a £10 registration fee and commit to fundraising £250 for Independent Age.*



## SIGN UP FOR Great Wall of China Trek

To find out more about our events, please visit [www.independentage.org/events](http://www.independentage.org/events), email [events@independentage.org](mailto:events@independentage.org) or call 020 7605 4466



GRAHAM



advice and support for older people  
**Independence Age**

GRAHAM  
**9453**  
LONDON MARATHON WAVE 5



Andrew Griffiths MP & Gillian



Shelley and Brendan O'Hara MP

“I pledge to support Free Personal Care for older people in my constituency”

Liz McInnes MP

“I will work to bring Free Personal Care to older people”

Kevin Brennan MP

# Thousands join our call for Free Personal Care

With the UK's care system in crisis, our campaign for free personal care for over-65s is gathering pace.

*More than a million people are struggling without the basic care they desperately need in their older age because they simply can't afford it.*

We believe every older person should be entitled to help with the day-to-day basics, like getting out of bed, washing and dressing. We're calling on the government to make personal care free for all over-65s to put an end to this scandal.

Pamela, who's 77, told us, "I have osteoporosis, osteoarthritis and fibromyalgia. I'm a wreck. Nowadays, I find it so hard to shower or even to lean over to wash my hair in the sink but I can't afford to pay for help. There are times you want to reach out to people and say, 'Please can you help me,' but it feels like begging."

During the recent elections we called on local representatives to back our campaign. More than 8,000 members of the public contacted their local councillors, and politicians across the country are now pledging their support.

We've also published new evidence to show how free personal care could put an end to the astronomical costs families face when their loved ones need care.

For example, Gillian, 74, who cared for her husband at home for many years, is struggling to cover a monthly bill of £4,600 now that he's moved into a care home.

*She says, "The situation is very stressful and the financial situation just adds to the stress. We've saved all our life for our old age and that money is all going to disappear. The government needs to wake up about what's happening to the older generation."*

Our Policy and Influencing team took their new research to Westminster in May to make the case for free personal care. They met with 50 Parliamentarians who were incredibly enthusiastic about our campaign.

We're now looking for more people to join our movement. If you're interested in becoming an Independent Age Campaign Correspondent and writing to your MP twice a year in support of our campaigns, please do get in touch. It's a fantastic opportunity to learn more about our policy work, influence key decision-makers and help improve older people's lives.

*To find out more, call us on 020 7605 4478 or visit [www.independentage.org/become-a-campaign-correspondent](http://www.independentage.org/become-a-campaign-correspondent)*

# Thanks to you, we're helping more people than ever

*Independent Age is growing. Thanks to your generous support, we helped 1.2 million people in 2018.*

Here are just some of the highlights from the year:

- 50% more helpline enquiries than in 2017 and 69% of callers satisfied they had a better understanding of their benefits entitlements and how to make a claim.
- 3.6 million free information guide orders, where our ever popular Moneywise guide resulted in 83% saying it helped with financial decisions, and a further 28% saying it helped them apply for benefits.
- Our 'We need to talk about death' campaign, inspired by our own research on the realities of bereavement in later life, encouraged thousands of polite Brits to open up about bereavement and to plan and prepare for the end of life.
- Our acclaimed blog series, Ageism+, revealed the negative impact ageism has on other long-term prejudices such as disability, race and sexuality. It's the topic of our time and well worth a read. Go to [independentage.org/ageism-plus](http://independentage.org/ageism-plus)

Thanks to you, 2018 was a great year. We've no doubt that, with your continued support, the next few years will be even bigger.

Thank you.

We recruited and trained  
**1,500**  
more brilliant  
volunteers

Our friendship  
services grew to  
**43,187**  
calls and visits  
overall, compared to  
31,500 in 2017

Of the older people who  
use these services  
**77%**  
said they feel less lonely

**71%**  
said they have improved  
their emotional and  
mental wellbeing

**70%**  
feel less worried



*“As soon as Elaine started visiting it was the highlight of my week. We’re more than compatible – we’re on the same wavelength. Since her visits started, I’ve been told that the difference to me and my outlook is quite remarkable.”*

James, 87

# HELP

## US END LONELINESS TODAY

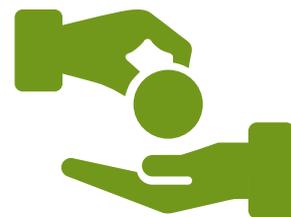
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More than 1 million older people in the UK are chronically lonely.

*Many of us will experience loneliness at some point in our lives. But as we get older, it becomes far more likely. Losing a partner, declining health and loss of mobility can all make you feel very lonely.*

At Independent Age, we believe in the power of a good chat. We have a UK-wide network of volunteers who provide life-changing social contact to older people. When our volunteers visit or call, they listen, talk, laugh and encourage, improving the health and wellbeing of the people they support.

With Sponsor a Friend you can help us give more lonely older people the company they desperately need. Your sponsorship will help us train our wonderful volunteers and allow many more new friendships to blossom.



**Sponsor a Friend**

To find out more about

Sponsor a Friend, visit [www.independentage.org/sponsor-a-friend](http://www.independentage.org/sponsor-a-friend)

# £1 could turn into £20,000 every Friday!

Having a little flutter in the **Friday Flutter Independent Age Lottery** can be incredibly rewarding.

Not only could you win up to **£20,000** every Friday, you'll also be helping to transform the lives of older people across the UK.

**It's definitely worth a flutter!**

**Play now at**

**[www.weeklylottery.org.uk/independentage](http://www.weeklylottery.org.uk/independentage)**  
or call our Lottery Helpline on **0330 002 0057**

For full terms and conditions, please visit: [www.weeklylottery.org.uk/independentage](http://www.weeklylottery.org.uk/independentage) or call the Lottery Helpline 0330 002 0057.

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**£20,000**  
if you match 6 numbers

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10 guaranteed prizes of a  
**£25**  
M&S voucher



We will be collaborating with Advent of Change, who have chosen to support Independent Age with their fantastic advent calendar range this Christmas. The calendar will be available at a major high street retailer – more details to be revealed soon. To find out more about Advent of Change's work, visit [www.adventofchange.com](http://www.adventofchange.com).

ADVENT } OF { CHANGE

