

Age UK Teesside

Press release

October 2015

8,000 older Teesside people in jeopardy from care cuts

A leading charity says that over 8,000 people in Teesside could be at risk because of cuts to spending on care for older people at home.

Age UK Teesside, which provides support to over-50s in Hartlepool, Stockton, Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland, says the cuts have been brought about by the government's severe cuts to local authority social services departments.

Anne Sykes, the recently appointed Chief Executive of Age UK Teesside, said: "Day to day tasks such as going to the toilet, getting dressed, making a meal or shopping can be almost impossible for older people without help.

"This is a silent disgrace which is being repeated in towns across the North East and elsewhere in the country. Many older people are sacrificing their dignity because they can't get the support they need."

Age UK says that more than 1 million older people nationally are left to struggle by each day without support, and the number is growing all the time. Over £1 billion has been cut from services such as home carers, meals on wheels and day care.

"The Tees local authorities, NHS and charities are all working very hard to deal with this huge and growing problem, but their hands are tied by funding cuts," said Anne Sykes.

She said the problem can also have a knock-on effect on the NHS, where older people are trapped in hospital for days because there isn't enough support available in their communities.

Hannah Bows, the newly-appointed Chair of Age UK Teesside, urged local people to support a petition calling on the Government to stop further cuts to funding in the coming five years, a decision which is due to be made in the near future.

She said: "With an aging population, this problem can only get worse unless we – and the Government – act to change things. I'd urge people to sign the petition, which is available at www.ageuk.org."

Anne Sykes, previously Deputy CEO, recently took over as Chief Executive at Age UK Teesside. The charity provides a wide range of services to older people across the four boroughs, helping them to improve their health, finances, wellbeing and social interaction.

Hannah Bows is Chair of a board of voluntary trustees committed to supporting the work of Age UK Teesside's 25 staff and over 100 volunteer workers. She is a researcher at Durham University.

Ends

Further information from Anne Sykes, Chief Executive, at Age UK Teesside. Telephone 01642 805500.