

## NEARLY THREE MILLION OLDER PEOPLE STRUGGLING FINANCIALLY DESPITE £BILLIONS GOING UNCLAIMED

Nearly three million over-65s – that’s one in four – are struggling financially, according to new research for Age UK,<sup>[ii]</sup> despite an estimated £3.5 billion in Pension Credit and Housing Benefit alone going unclaimed each year.<sup>[iii]</sup>

With the latest government figures showing that pensioner poverty is on the rise – with 1.9 million pensioners now living below the poverty line<sup>[iiii]</sup> – the Charity is urging older people to get in touch to find out if they’re entitled to some extra financial support.

The government’s latest figures show that one in 10 people aged 65+ would not be able to pay an unexpected expense of £200, to replace a broken washing machine for example.<sup>[iv]</sup> Yet millions of older people who are struggling to survive on a low income could be entitled to benefits such as Pension Credit, which has slightly increased this month and could provide a much-needed boost to their weekly income if claimed. In fact, if people who are eligible for Pension Credit make a claim, it could **increase their income by an average of £42 a week – that’s £2,184 a year.**<sup>[v]</sup>

The Charity publishes a range of free guides to help people navigate the benefits system and has trained advisers on hand all year round to offer support. The Charity has just updated its ***More money in your pocket*** guide to reflect benefit changes which came into effect earlier this month<sup>[vi]</sup>; the guide is specifically designed to help older people claim the benefits to which they are entitled, including Pension Credit, Housing Benefit, and help towards paying council tax. In addition many older disabled people could receive extra support by claiming the non-means-tested Attendance Allowance. The Charity also publishes mini-guides including *Pension Credit*, *Attendance Allowance* *Carers Allowance* and *Council Tax* – all available free of charge by calling **Age UK Advice on 0800 169 65 65.**

**Caroline Abrahams, Charity Director at Age UK, said:** “Managing on a low, fixed income is really tough, and many people face a daily struggle just to afford the basics. That’s why it

so important that every older person who is entitled to claim benefits does so. Every day Age UK helps people to claim what they are entitled to, and every day we hear how much of a difference the money makes, how surprised people are by how straightforward the process is with the help of an adviser, and how much less they have to worry about everyday bills.

“It is shameful that despite millions of older people struggling financially, around £3.5 billion in money benefits remains unclaimed every year when this extra income could make a huge difference to their lives. We would urge anyone who is worried about their finances, or an older family member or friend, to get in touch with us for free, impartial information and advice.”

To order a free copy of any of Age UK’s guides, or for further information and advice on any issue, people should call Age UK Advice free of charge on 0800 169 65 65, contact their local Age UK, or visit [www.ageuk.org.uk/letstalkmoney](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/letstalkmoney), where there is also an online personalised benefits calculator to help people find out exactly what they are owed, quickly and easily.

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