

Age Scotland

Annual Impact Report



2019

Age Scotland is the national charity for older people. **We work to improve the lives of everyone over the age of 50 so that they can love later life.**

Our vision

Our vision is a Scotland where everyone can love later life.

Our mission

Our mission is to inspire, involve and empower older people in Scotland, and influence others, so that people can make the most of later life.

Our three strategic aims



Helping older people to be as well as they can be



Promoting a positive view of ageing and later life



Tackling loneliness and isolation

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Introduction

2019

was an exciting year for Age Scotland.

We developed and delivered new services, increased the impact of our work by shaping legislation and highlighted a wide variety of issues that affect older people.

Our free, confidential helpline and our community development work lie at the heart of what we do. These frontline services tangibly improve the lives of older people with support, advice and information.

Tens of thousands of older people have benefitted from our services and hundreds of community groups are thriving across Scotland, thanks to our work.

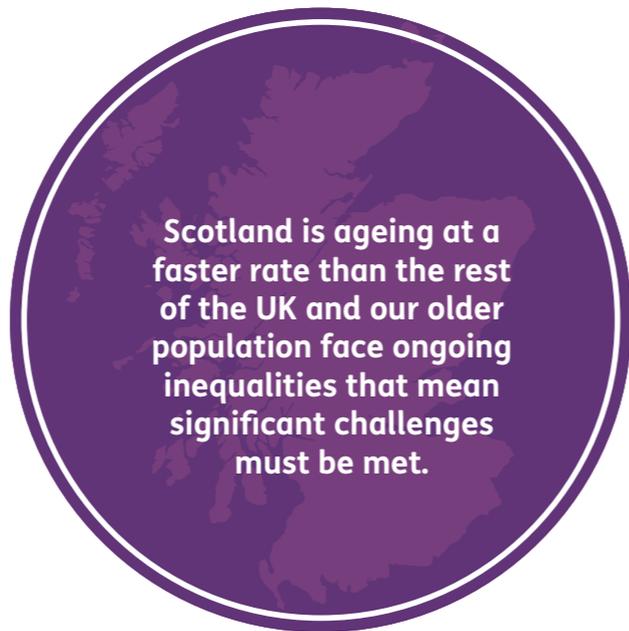
As a result of the free benefit and entitlement checks offered by our helpline, a record-breaking amount of money was identified for older people, which would otherwise have gone unclaimed.

Our media and political engagement focus sought to put the needs of older people first and drew on their 'lived experiences' when influencing change. We helped shape three major pieces of Scottish Parliament legislation and released a significant report about the long waits 4 in 10 older people face when accessing the social care to which they are entitled.

Pictured right: Cabinet Secretary for Social Security and Older People Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP with Age Scotland Chief Executive Brian Sloan



The challenges facing older people in Scotland



Progress is being made. People are living longer and generally remaining in good health until later in life. **But there is still much to do.**

43%

wait too long for the social care they need

Almost
500

people died in hospital waiting to be discharged

More than
150,000

Scottish pensioners live in poverty

6 in 10

single older people live in fuel poverty

4 in 10

older couples live in fuel poverty

4 in 10

don't claim the pension credit to which they are entitled

1 in 4

over-40s have experienced discrimination in the workplace

282,000

older people in Scotland feel lonely most or some of the time

106,000

older people in Scotland ate Christmas dinner alone



*Helping older people to
be as well as they can be*



Our helpline

Our free helpline is the only national service of its kind for older people in Scotland.

Often a lifeline for people who have no one else to turn to, our skilled advisers offer free and confidential information, friendship, advice and support to older people, their carers and their families.



Handled **more than**
20,000

calls from older people & their families

Identified a **record-breaking**
£719,212

in unclaimed benefits for older people

146%

increase in benefit & entitlement checks compared to 2018

99%

of callers **would recommend** Age Scotland to a friend

“It’s unbelievable where we were, to where we are now. We don’t have to think, can I afford steak this week or do I have to do with a mince pie? It’s taken all that away. **I just want to say thank you very much.**”

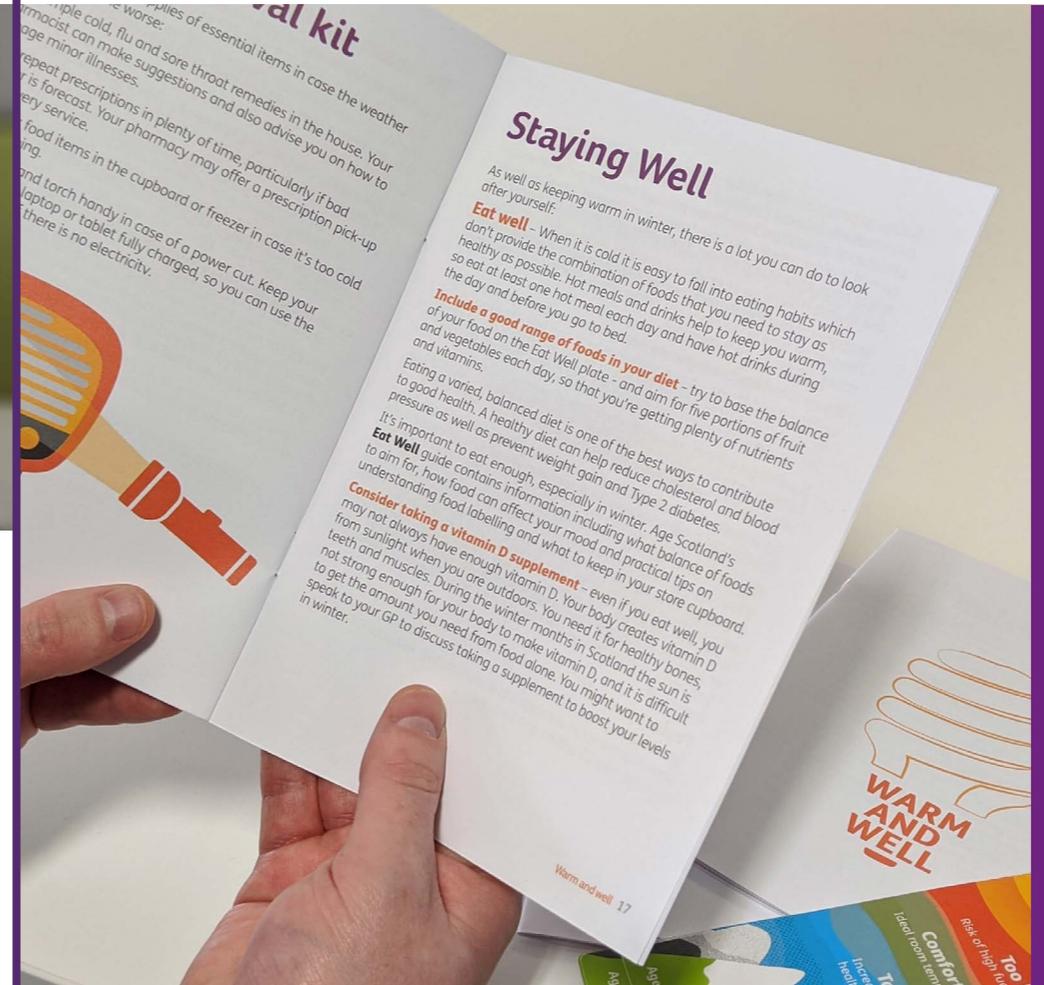
*70-year-old caller who had a benefits check carried out that showed she was **eligible** for an extra **£16,000** a year in benefits*



Offering information and advice

Growing older doesn't come with a manual and when challenges arise we assist older people to understand their rights so they can make informed choices and access appropriate support when they need it.

We produced **67 high quality information guides**, available for free in print or digital format for older people, their families and carers.



44,286
guides were distributed

Topics included:

- Social care
- Care home funding
- Housing
- Power of Attorney
- Money
- Benefits
- Housing and energy
- Dementia
- Veterans
- And many more...



Health and wellbeing

We want to enable older people to be as active as possible so that they can reap the benefits of physical activity and enjoy a better quality of life. To encourage this, we developed a new product called Body Boosting Bingo, which launched in April 2019.



Body Boosting Bingo is a fun way for older people to maintain and improve strength, balance and agility. The activity increases mobility and reduces the risk of trips and falls.

Available in a digital version and printed booklets, Body Boosting Bingo was enjoyed across the country with older people joining fun, tailored strength and balance exercises.

“Should call it mood-boosting bingo. I never thought I’d be able to do it but I did!”

“It lifted my spirit and my mood and I felt my pain a lot less. Made me glow.”

129 groups and partners took part in Body Boosting Bingo sessions

2,899 people participated

“We are so busy laughing we don’t notice it!”





Our walking sports vision for Scotland

We believe in the power of walking sports, a standard game but where the players walk instead of run. It's all about supporting and enabling people to keep active and engaged in sport regardless of their age and current fitness level.

There are now thousands of women and men playing a walking sport such as football, netball or rugby at least once a week across Scotland. The sport has had an important role in encouraging older people to be more active, helping those who are recovering from injury and building friendships among players.



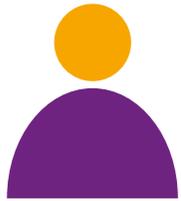
Our vision for walking sports is that regardless of what sport someone has been involved in, they should have the opportunity to remain an active participant throughout their life.

We are working with sports governing bodies to develop walking options throughout Scotland.





Supporting people living with dementia



Around **93,000** people in **Scotland** today are living with dementia



This number is forecast to **increase** over the next two decades by

50%

Early diagnosis of the condition is crucial and can help prolong the quality of life for people living with the condition.

Our new **dementia training service** was launched in 2019 with the intention of raising awareness of dementia, the early signs and symptoms and how to be more inclusive of people living with it.

Funded by the Life Changes Trust and The Robertson Trust, the service offers training and support for groups, organisations and employers.



About Dementia

Scotland's new policy and practice forum

With five-year funding from the Life Changes Trust, we launched the 'About Dementia' policy and practice forum, which works with a wide range of partners and people affected by dementia in Scotland to deliver positive change and improve quality of life.

In 2019 we facilitated:

- 4 full forum meetings
- 8 sub forum meetings on carers, prevention, transport and housing





Supporting veterans across Scotland

Our veterans' project is part of the Unforgotten Forces Consortium – a group of 16 leading organisations delivering an ambitious programme of new services and enhanced support for veterans in Scotland.

We worked to boost the health and wellbeing of older veterans by raising awareness of the additional support available to them.

There were seven information guides and leaflets produced for older veterans and their families including our guide to later life, housing for veterans, health and wellbeing, and handling sight and hearing loss.

We offered support to older veterans' groups so they could make links with local activity and training providers, setting up new physical activities, and hosted active games such as Body Boosting Bingo and the Power Quiz.



“Age Scotland’s presence and having a link with them is helpful. The partnership is great, **we know that you are there and we can come to you for wee bits of advice for members.**”

Erskine Reid Macewen Activity Centre

1,255

older military veterans were provided with advice & support.

3,000

special guides for older veterans were distributed.

C.O.V.E.R.T

Challenge for Older Veterans to Exercise Regularly Together was launched.

This is to encourage and support physically inactive older veterans to enjoy the mental and physical health benefits of regular activity.



Gathering the views of older people



The views and experiences of older people in Scotland are central to our influencing work. We regularly seek input from individuals and groups from across the country.



Pictured above: Carole Anderson, Community Development Officer, Age Scotland. Simon Ritchie, Policy Engagement and Campaigns Officer, Age Scotland. Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity and Penny Arnott of Scone and District Over 50s Club.

We conducted a nationwide consultation with hundreds of older people about their **transport needs** and views to help shape the Scottish Government's National Transport Strategy and Transport Bill.

We launched a new **National Housing Survey** to get the views and needs of over 55s in Scotland on housing and household energy which will help influence decision makers.





Researching and reporting on key issues facing older people

Our **Waiting for Care** Report made national headlines, highlighting that:

43%

of people assessed as having substantial or critical social care needs waited longer than the six week national guidelines to receive it.

The report was covered extensively by broadcast and print media, and the findings were raised with the First Minister by MSPs during Scottish Parliament question sessions. The First Minister said that the Scottish Government would study the report carefully and that they would “**listen carefully to all the recommendations that Age Scotland makes**”.

We published the findings of our **Orkney Housing Survey**:



- ∞ **1 in 5** people over the age of 55 in Orkney responded (**972 people**).
- ∞ It found that too few people are planning for their future housing needs and only responding to challenges when they reach crisis point.
- ∞ **More than half** of people said they were concerned about rising energy costs and **47%** said they turned heating down to reduce their bills.

We contributed to the Bank of England’s **Future of Finance** report which highlighted the need to adapt to changing demographics and an ageing population.

- ∞ It found that as our population ages, it is clear that policy changes will be needed to facilitate greater security in retirement.
- ∞ Finance will also need to support major changes in demographics and working patterns as well as the evolving needs of savers and borrowers.





Influencing change

Political leaders across all parties showed support for our campaign to end loneliness at a photo opportunity in the Scottish Parliament.

We participate in the Scottish Government's Older People's Strategic Action Forum and the National Implementation Group which monitors progress of its Social Isolation and Loneliness Strategy, both of which are chaired by the Minister for Older People and Equalities.

MSPs and MPs visited the Age Scotland helpline in 2019 to find out about its work and assist in its promotion. This included the Scottish Government Cabinet Secretary for Social Security and Older People and the Minister for Older People and Equalities.



The General Election in December provided an opportunity to make the case for the needs of older people in Scotland.

We published an election manifesto for older people with three key themes:



Knowing that winter weather can present extra challenges and affect voter turnout during an election, we campaigned to ensure older voters were aware of their option to use a postal vote and how they could sign up to ensure their voice would be heard.



Our national election hustings meeting in Glasgow had representatives from all the major political parties.

-  **75 older people attended.**
-  **We filmed the event and made it available online for those who couldn't attend.**



We produced:

16 briefings for Parliamentarians

On a wide range of issues such as:

TV Licences

Loneliness

Transport

**Pension Credit
for mixed age couples**

Our work was also mentioned by MSPs in the Holyrood chamber on dozens of occasions.

We gave expert evidence at:

4 Scottish Parliament committees

Covering issues affecting older people:

**Elder abuse
(Justice)**

**Pension
Credit, mixed
age couple
changes
(Social Security)**

**Scrutiny of
Equalities
Budget
(Human Rights
and Equalities)**

**Consumer
Scotland
Agency
(Economy Committee)**

We responded to:

13 Scottish Government and Parliamentary consultations feeding in the views and needs of older people in Scotland.

We worked on improving:

3 Bills in the Scottish Parliament on:

Planning **Transport** **Fuel Poverty**

making them stronger and more effective for older people.





Campaigning for the rights of older people

Through our **policy and campaign** work we highlight the issues that older people tell us are important to them.



Older people should influence and affect change and **we want their voices to be heard.**

Throughout 2019 we campaigned on numerous issues including:

The closure of public toilets

Delayed discharge

Bank branch closures

Reinstatement of cheaper tickets for over 65s at Scotland football matches

Alongside Age UK, Age Cymru and Age NI we campaigned against plans to **scrap the free TV licence for over 75s.**

Over 600,000 people signed a petition

which was handed to the Prime Minister.



We campaigned against UK Government changes to **Pension Credit for mixed age couples.**

This included information campaigns for older people in the media, online and through direct mail encouraging people to call our helpline for a free benefit and entitlement check.





***Promoting positive views
of ageing and later life***



Our national conference and awards

Our fifth national conference took place in Glasgow on the theme of “Homes, Health and Happiness – Matters for All Ages” bringing together Age Scotland members, guest speakers, workshop leaders and guests.

It was our largest conference ever with:

- ∞ **350 attendees.**
- ∞ **Three expert talks about building better housing, building an active community and intergenerational bonding.**
- ∞ **Five workshops for attendees on walking netball, housing in later life, music and dementia, the use of hens to boost wellbeing of older people and getting more older people physically active.**

Our annual awards ceremony took place at the national conference to celebrate the outstanding achievements of older people, volunteers and groups in eight categories. The awards were presented by TV host Anita Manning.



Meg Main - one of our Inspiration Award (Group) winners

Volunteer of the Year
Eva McKellar
(Alexandria, West Dumbartonshire)

Services for Older People
Active Seniors
(Glasgow North East)

Member Group of the Year
Sandbank Seniors
(Argyll)

Patrick Brooks Award for Best Working Partnership
Moray Over 60s

Jess Barrow Award for Campaigning & Influencing
Dundee Pensioners' Forum

Inspiration Award (individual)
David Gibson
(Glasgow and Lanarkshire)

Inspiration Award (group)
Renfrew Over 50's
Swimming Club

Young Volunteer of the Year
Hollie Nelson
(Dumfriesshire)



Keeping older people informed

Our membership magazine Advantage provides information and ideas to empower Scotland's older people, their families and carers.

It celebrates the contribution of older people, community groups and members, and promotes Age Scotland's work, services and partnerships.



3 editions were produced.

These editions covered topics such as the work of BAME older people's groups, celebrating the successes of member groups and winners of our 2019 awards, and the campaign to save the free TV licence for over 75s.

The magazine reaches more than 7,500 people.





Age inclusive workshops

Scotland's workplaces are changing.

- ∞ A third of our workforce is now over 50.
- ∞ Twice as many people aged 65 years and over are in employment in Scotland today compared to 10 years ago.

We help employers make the workplace more age inclusive so that staff of all ages feel supported to achieve their potential.



We also support people to plan for their future. Retirement can increase the risk of loneliness as people lose the support and social connection of their workplace.

We ran **37 workshops across Scotland** to help **527 soon-to-be retirees** make a smooth transition into retirement.

In 2019:

68

workshops were held

2,228

people were involved

98%

of attendees would recommend our workshops to a colleague

We launched the **Age at Work** employers' network with our partners Edinburgh University Business School, CIPD and Business In The Community.

We were successful in securing five-year funding from the National Lottery Community Fund for our Age Inclusive Matrix programme helping organisations be more age inclusive.



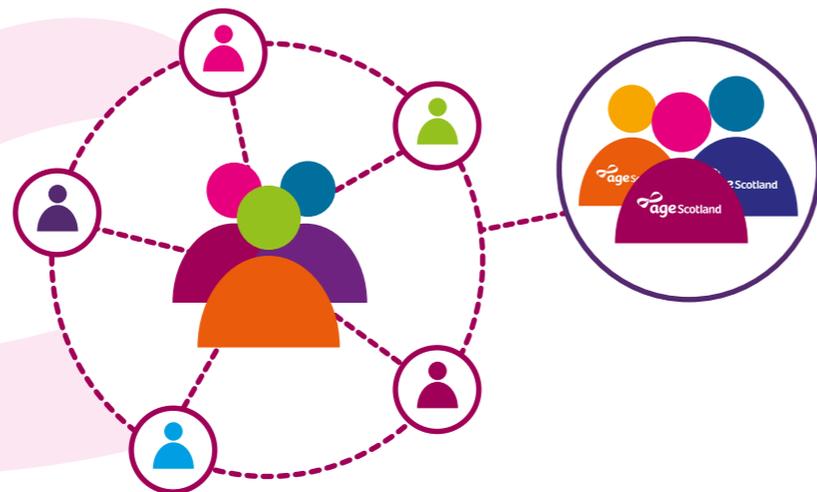


***Tackling loneliness
and isolation***

Community development

We work to ensure older people can feel part of society, be able to socialise, build friendships and share their interests with others.

Our community development team support older people's organisations throughout Scotland to develop and deliver their services. Whether it's a lunch club in Stornoway, a fitness class in Oban or a Men's Shed in Dalbeattie, we work to ensure these groups and services can grow and thrive, bringing people together.



In 2019 we held 25 regional network meetings and get together for older people's groups and organisations in urban, rural and island communities across Scotland

600 people representing 240 older people's groups and organisations took part in these meetings

There was a focus on island communities with visits to support groups on Skye, Shetland, Lewis and Tiree.

During 2019 the community development team made 239 visits to Age Scotland member groups and organisations across Scotland providing talks and information stalls, consulting on issues, attending members' events and offering tailored community development support.

Our membership is free and open to groups, organisations and individuals who support our vision and aims. We offer vital support services to our members who make up a fantastic network of groups, organisations and individuals across Scotland, all working to ensure everyone can love later life.

Membership types:

Community Group

for local, non-statutory and not-for-profit community groups and organisations providing activities, services and support for older people.

Associate

for larger charities, public sector organisations and social enterprises working to benefit the lives of older people.

Individual

for people who personally and/or professionally support the work of Age Scotland.

Supporting and enabling Men's Sheds

We support the development and expansion of Men's Sheds across Scotland. They help tackle loneliness, allow men a safe space to talk about health issues, share skills and give back to their community.

Age Scotland supports and facilitates a local Men's Sheds network in 12 local authority areas across the country - North Ayrshire, East Ayrshire, South Ayrshire, City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian, West Lothian, Argyll and Bute, Highland, Fife, and Perth and Kinross.



“The Shed brought back my father!”

In 2019 our Men's Sheds development officer supported and enabled:

70

existing Men's Sheds across Scotland

14

new sheds to be started-up

Age Scotland's small development grants assisted:

4 sheds

and supported an estimated

138 people

mostly older men.



Our Community Connecting service

The Age Scotland Community Connecting service helps older people make contact and engage with local groups and activities which are of interest to them.

The aim is to get more people connected with others and reduce levels of loneliness and isolation among older people in Scotland.



“Community Connecting has improved my social life as I have two classes on the go and already looking for another! I’m just glad I have my confidence back.”

Margaret, Glasgow

326

referrals to local groups and activities were made

872

friendship calls were made

100%

of callers said our volunteer was friendly and helpful

86%

said it made them more aware of the social activities around them

“I have been shown kindness and compassion and in return I feel more confident. It’s the only service I have felt I have been able to speak freely and just say how I feel.”

Muriel, Lanarkshire

Share What You Love

Our campaign to **cut levels of loneliness among older people in half by 2025** launched in September 2019. To achieve this we are asking people to pledge their time and make a regular commitment to do something with an older person they know which they both enjoy.

It was launched by Radio Clyde DJ Cassi Gillespie and STV News presenter Laura Boyd.



#ShareWhatYouLove



Cassi and her gran



We partnered with RZSS to offer free entry to Edinburgh Zoo and the Highland Wildlife Park for up to two over-65s in October 2019 when accompanied by one full price adult ticket. Hundreds of people took up this offer and it was covered on STV News.



Raising funds

Without the wonderful support of the public, companies, charitable trusts and the Scottish Government we simply would not be able to carry out our vital services supporting older people across Scotland.

From knitting tiny hats to doing bungee swings, we have been blown away by the efforts of our fantastic fundraisers.

We would like to thank each one of our supporters for their generous contributions. We are hugely grateful.



“I’m a keen runner and loved supporting Age Scotland for the work they do to try and combat loneliness. Many older people don’t have family or friends that they can rely on which is so upsetting.”

Grace - ran the Edinburgh Marathon

Raised £1650



“I decided to support Age Scotland as I feel older people are not supported enough in today’s society and can become so lonely and isolated.”

Elizabeth - ran the Edinburgh Half Marathon

Raised £509



The day centre that Sandra attends twice a week is supported by Age Scotland. Sandra enjoys knitting and was delighted to support Age Scotland doing something she loves!

Sandra - knitted 670 little hats as part of The Big Knit campaign with innocent smoothies

Retail

We are proud of the contribution made by the team of volunteers and staff.

The shop is not only raising vital funds but most importantly delivering an outstanding service to customers in West Lothian.



Our charity shop sits at the heart of the community in Broxburn



Our Volunteers



We are proud of the contribution made to older people's lives by those who volunteer with us.

Our dedicated volunteers support our work in a range of ways including:

- ∞ Raising vital funds in our Broxburn Charity Shop.
- ∞ Supporting our Information and Advice team to ensure older people are informed.
- ∞ Assisting callers accessing our Community Connecting service.
- ∞ Helping deliver workshops as part of our work on Age Inclusive Workplaces.
- ∞ Supporting our helpline team to deliver a vital service.
- ∞ Raising awareness and funds in local communities.

Looking ahead

Together with our teams, volunteers, members, supporters, funders and partners we have achieved so much. However, there is still much work to be done to ensure that Scotland is the best place in the world to grow older.

Everyone, whatever our age, has a stake in ensuring that later lives are rewarding, because this is the future each of us faces. We not only aspire to this but can contribute to achieving it for others. We believe life is for living, and everyone should have the opportunity to live happily and well, for as long as they can.

During 2020 and beyond we will:

Inspire

Inspire older people by encouraging them to realise the opportunities and overcome the challenges of later life.

Involve

Involve older people by connecting and engaging with them through our networks and enabling them to participate in groups and their communities.

Empower

Empower older people by helping them obtain valuable and accessible information and advice to help them understand their rights, make informed choices and access appropriate support.

Influence

Influence others by promoting understanding of older people's rights and interests, and shaping and building support for reforms to the law, policy and practice.

While we are already helping thousands of older people, sadly, there are many more who need our support and we are committed to raising awareness of our work so we can help those most in need.

We will continue our campaign to end loneliness and enable the most vulnerable and isolated to reconnect with others.

By listening to the views of older people we will campaign on improving financial inclusion, establishing a network of Older People's Champions in all local councils, boosting the uptake of available benefits and entitlements and many more issues that are important to older people in Scotland.

Our trustees



Lord George Foulkes
opening our new HQ

We are supported in our work by dedicated trustees. We are lucky to be able to call on their advice and expertise.

Our charity board:

Lord George Foulkes
Chair

Prof. Marion McMurdo
Vice Chair

Dorry McLaughlin

Tom O'Connell
Treasurer

Pennie Taylor

Prof. Brendan
McCormack

Dr Alasdair
Rutherford

Kenneth Nicholson

Alison Harrington

Malcom Brown

Graham Reece

Sir Geoff Palmer

We were also supported by our Finance and Risk Committee, Members Services Committee, Age Scotland Enterprises Board and Age Scotland Trading Ltd.

Thank you for your hard work in 2019

How to get involved

There are lots of ways to get involved with our work supporting older people.



Volunteer

You can volunteer with our popular community connecting service, which puts older people in touch with groups who share their interests around the country, boosting their social life and creating new friendships.



Fundraise

Get active and help raise vital funds to support our work. Participants can take part in all kinds of challenges such as the Forth Rail Bridge Abseil, the Edinburgh Marathon, knitting small hats for the Big Knit and much more.



Sign up to our newsletter

Our regular newsletters by email contain details of our campaigns, services and how you can support our work.

Sign up today at age.scot/roundup



Make a donation

No matter how small or large donations make a massive difference.



Follow us on social media

Our social media channels are a great way to keep up to date with our work and issues that affect older people.



@AgeScotland



/agescotland



@age_scotland



/AgeScotland

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**A Scotland where
everyone can
love later life.**

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 **Age Scotland**
Love later life