



Over the last few months, **intouch** has highlighted the work Help the Aged is doing to tackle future challenges facing older people. As Director of the recently re-named Policy, research and international department, let me take this opportunity to tell you what we are doing to meet these challenges.

'Policy' is a dry and remote-sounding word. But we are passionate about the everyday reality of being older and the challenges – from painful feet to patronising behaviour – that older people confront.

Through listening to older people and conducting research, we put together a blueprint of how everyone from government ministers to bus drivers should serve older people better.

To strengthen our research work, we have created a new role of Head of Research, and I am very pleased to announce the appointment of Dr James Goodwin, who took up his post on 1 July. Based at Pentonville Road, James will be driving forward the role of Help the Aged as a significant player in the field of ageing research.

Research and policy will continue to inform the Charity's campaigning work. You can read about how the department is putting our new focus into practice on page 12. In future issues of **intouch**, we will bring you other news of how we are helping to improve the lives of older people – not only in the UK but across the world.

Paul Cann

# inbrief

## A right royal do



Charlie Dimmock rubs shoulders with royalty

Royalty past and present visited the Help the Aged Golden Jubilee Garden at this year's Chelsea Flower Show.

HM the Queen, pictured on this month's cover with Director General Mike Lake, commented that it was 'quite fitting' that she was wearing yellow for the occasion, given the garden's 200 yellow roses.

TV celebrity gardener, Charlie Dimmock, joined another royal figure – an actor dressed as Queen Elizabeth I – in the Golden Jubilee Garden, which was created as a tribute to the achievements of the nation over the last 50 years. Other famous faces paying a visit included Gloria Hunniford, Lawrence Llewelyn-Bowen and Danni Minogue.

Our PR department secured record coverage for the event this year, with 52,705,538 opportunities to see.

### Cash for old cartridges

Did you know that four million used toner cartridges, with a potential value of £12 million to charities, are thrown away each year?

We're hoping to encourage more people to recycle through the relaunch of our Toner Donor scheme, which currently raises over £15,000 a year. Our new recycling partner, Environmental Business Products, can recycle both inkjet

and laser jet cartridges from printers, photocopiers and fax machines. Each inkjet cartridge is worth £1 to Help the Aged; laser jet cartridges can be worth up to £5.

You can send your inkjet cartridge from home by Freepost in the envelope in this issue. Freepost stickers for laser jet cartridges are available from EBP on 0800 435 576.



### inside

Introduction Paul Cann	2
Inbrief	3
Campaign news MPs targeted in Fair Rate for Care campaign	4
Your views Calls for flexible working	5
News focus Meet the women who are leading national development	6
Hot topic On the streets with our face-to-face fundraisers	8
Day in the life Legacy adviser Phil Rosser on wills and weird requests	10
Our new focus Turning words into action	12
People matter Our new pension scheme	13
Staff profile Stock collector Steve Anderson has bags of enthusiasm for his job	14
Question time Keeping fit is the key, says Edinburgh packer Ethel Brown	15
Gallery From Blackpool Tower to the Tower of London, via a few clubs...	16

**Cover:** The Queen visits our Golden Jubilee Garden at this year's Chelsea Flower Show.

**intouch** is produced by the communications division. Next issue, September 2002. Copy deadline: 10 August 2002. Address for all correspondence: Editor, **intouch**, Help the Aged, 207-221 Pentonville Road, London N1 9UZ. Email: [intouch@helptheaged.org.uk](mailto:intouch@helptheaged.org.uk)

For distribution, contact Alan Sadler on 020 7239 1947

Editor: Liza Ramrayka, Proseworks Design: Solutions Design Consultants, SW20

### Blue Peter passes million mark



Our Wheel Help Appeal team in the Blue Peter garden.

Our Wheel Help Appeal with Blue Peter viewers has now raised over £1m for older people – that's double its original target!

Thanks to the hard work of thousands of Blue Peter viewers around the country – and staff at Help the Aged – who organised bring-and-buy sales, we've raised funds to help us combat the isolation felt by many older people.

Grants are now being spent on minibuses, adapted cars and mobility scooters through the Help the Aged SeniorMobility scheme. The scheme is also funding activities to enable older people to stay active and involved in their local community.

Blue Peter Editor Steve Hocking praised the Blue Peter Appeal team at Help the Aged for their part in this huge success.

### New pension scheme

Following a two-year review, the new Group Personal Pension (GPP) scheme opens on 1 August. See page 13 for full details.

## Scrap it! update

Our Scrap it! age discrimination campaign launched in March has generated numerous examples of ageism from around the country, all showing how the skill and experience of older people is wasted.

The campaign seeks to raise awareness of age discrimination and is calling for anti-discrimination legislation with a commission to back it up.

The campaign team is planning further work around the review of evidence it compiled earlier this year. Signatures are being collected on a petition for age discrimination legislation, which will be presented to the Government later this year – you'll find a copy in this issue of *intouch*. Get involved and support the campaign by getting as many people as you can to sign. For further copies, contact Sue Christoforou, the Campaign Administrator on 020 7239 7596.



For the latest news about Scrap it!, check out our campaigns newsletter, Age Equality Now!

## Government urged to plan care

The Fair Rate for Care campaign is targeting MPs and Treasury officials in a bid to secure proper planning and funding of long-term care.

A coalition representing voluntary and commercial organisations, including Help the Aged, has published a campaign pack to highlight the consequences of under-funding, such as the closure of residential homes and the distress this causes the older people who live in them.

The coalition hopes the pack, part of a wider campaign launched in March 2002, will promote debate about funding long-term care.

### More cash for care?

Extra money for social care is among the outcomes Help the Aged hopes to see from the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review, expected in mid July.

The review gives details of the Government's spending plans for the next three years. Working as part of the SPAIN group (Social Policy Ageing Information Network) Help the Aged will be reinforcing their successful work this year with a letter to key policy makers highlighting the continuing need for more money for social care.

For more information about our campaigns, contact Debbie Smith, Campaign Manager, at [debbie.smith@helptheaged.org.uk](mailto:debbie.smith@helptheaged.org.uk) or telephone 020 7843 9422.

## Scot free

Older people in Scotland are now entitled to free personal and nursing care, following the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Long-term Care, which came into force on 1 July.

Help the Aged is continuing to campaign for free personal care for all older people across the UK. As well as working with the Right to Care coalition, we will keep on pressing the Government to give older people the same rights to care in all four nations.



Many thanks to all who completed the feedback cards with suggestions for *intouch* and the charity as a whole. We'll try to take up as many suggestions as we can.

Here are a few from the postbag...

### Hue choose?

We asked you whether we should keep the magazine in full colour, or reduce costs by printing some pages in black and white:

44%  
of you went for black and white

56%  
said keep the colour

So for now, *intouch* will remain as colourful as we can make it. Let us know what you think of the current issue and remember to send us suggestions for future ones.

### Spot our sun!

Cath Simpson wrote:

*'I'm just back from a fantastic holiday in North West Scotland and the Hebrides. Whilst away, I was amazed to find Help the Aged leaflets on Stepping Out displayed in the Tourist Information Offices in Mallaig (look it up on the map!) and also in the TIO office at Lochmaddy.'*



Cath suggested we offer prizes to staff who spot the most remote or unlikely location for Help the Aged leaflets or material over the summer holiday period.

No sooner said than done, Cath – you're our first winner! A bottle of Champagne is on its way to you.

If you've seen or heard us mentioned in unlikely places, *intouch* wants to know. You can email us at [intouch@helptheaged.co.uk](mailto:intouch@helptheaged.co.uk) or write to us at the address on page 2.

### Flexible working

Several of you suggested the charity introduce a flexitime system. A similar proposal was also submitted by a member of staff to the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC). The HR team says it is keen to start investigating how a flexitime policy might be implemented across the organisation. We'll keep you posted.

And as requested, *intouch* will also give more coverage to topics discussed through the JCC in future issues.

## Winners

The first three postcards drawn from the hat last month came from:

**J Robinson**,  
Welwyn Garden City shop, Herts.

**Joyce Davies**, Volunteer;  
Lancaster shop, Lancs.

**Kate Shanley**,  
Individual Marketing,  
Pentonville Road.

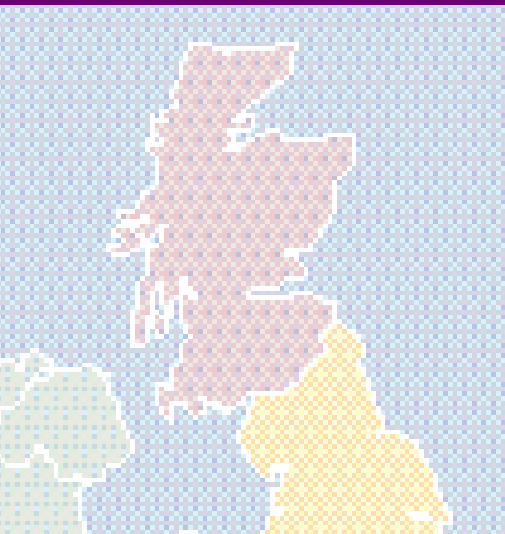
Prizes are on their way to you...

Your comments are valuable and help us to improve *intouch*. Please keep them coming – you'll find a feedback postcard inside this issue.

# Talking heads

As Help the Aged gets to grips with the challenge of representing the UK's older people, staff at all levels across the four nations are working to make it happen.

## Scotland



## Elizabeth Duncan



Elizabeth Duncan joined Help the Aged 15 years ago as a development officer. For the last five, she has headed a team of front-line staff in Scotland and is responsible for the Edinburgh office, which services a number of other Help the Aged departments.

- Scotland's five million population includes one million pensioners
- The Scottish Parliament legislates on most issues concerning older people and recently agreed free personal care for older people in need. Westminster still has the remit for taxation, pensions and benefits
- Services from our Edinburgh office include Press, Policy, Administration, Regional Development and support to several other departments
- The Packing Section carries out all fulfilment work for the Collections operation in England, Scotland and Wales
- SeniorLine has five advice workers based in Scotland, answering around 15,000 calls a year

### Elizabeth Duncan Scotland executive

Elizabeth came to Help the Aged from Strathclyde Social Work department. 'It struck me as an organisation that would welcome a bit of initiative and imagination and I felt that it could really make a difference,' she explains.

A typical day starts with a clear list of priorities – which Elizabeth says are out of the door by 11.30am due to a breaking news story. She describes her team as 'imaginative, supportive, humorous and humbling' and gets great satisfaction from knowing that, every day, one of them makes a positive difference to older people in Scotland.

Tenacity, opportunism and communication skills are the key abilities she says are needed for her job. Her goal for Help the Aged is for the Charity to be seen as 'the most open, helpful and constructive organisation working with and for

older people in the UK'. Achieving this will depend on meeting challenges such as understanding the implications of devolution. 'We in Scotland are now much closer to the legislators and policy formers and are beginning to use that strongly to make our mark.'

The biggest frustration, she says, is the sheer size of Scotland: 'It might only have five million people but it is a vast distance to cover with a limited staff.' Next on the agenda is securing a Scottish Parliament Equal Opportunities investigation into ageism in public sector employment.

Elizabeth would like to be remembered as the person who developed Help the Aged into the most relevant organisation for older people in Scotland. And her advice to newcomers? 'Speak up – your idea might just be the one we are looking for.'

## England



## Anne Molyneux



Anne Molyneux has been in her current post for nearly two years, moving to head office in London after spending nine years working in other parts of the Charity.

### Anne Molyneux, Head of Regional Development, England

- The 20 Regional Development Officers (RDOs) in England co-ordinate all Help the Aged activity in their area, providing a 'one-stop shop' to Help the Aged services, grants and project development
- The England RDO Team consists of two unified teams, one in the North and one in the South, each managed by a Regional Executive. Four people make up the Distribution Team and another four the Citizens Millennium Award Team.
- The team is supported by Anne's assistant Sue Jess - 'who keeps me sane', says Anne

Two years ago, after nearly a decade with Help the Aged, Anne decided to put her talents to regional development. 'I'd worked in the service delivery side with older people but wanted to try out the other side – fundraising and development,' she explains.

Five staff report directly to Anne and she has responsibility for 31 in total. A typical day begins with responding to emails and correspondence, prioritising tasks and reading reports from field staff. This is followed by meetings – sometimes up to six in a day.

'Dedicated, utterly professional people' is how Anne describes her team, who are working with her to bring more emphasis and investment in the local face of Help the Aged as well as the national. She describes her 20

Regional Development Officers as 'the multi-functional foot soldiers' of the charity.

Anne believes the Charity's biggest challenge is 'trying to sustain its lead in this area because there are so many other organisations now doing similar work'. Seeing projects come to fruition, such as Cornwall's Hayle Day Centre, motivates her. 'It was a real community project and the most wonderful feeling when the centre was finished.'

Anne says tenacity, motivation and a sense of humour are needed in her job – as well as patience with her PC (she's a bit of a technophobe!). She'd like to see communications across the Charity improved and her long-term aim is to ensure that Help the Aged maintains its 'first place' in the charity field representing older people.

# Streets of gold



Team E prepare for battle

## City slickers

Face-to-face fundraising is the latest way for Help the Aged to recruit committed givers. **intouch** looks at how it works.

**W**alk down any busy street on a week day lunchtime and there's a good chance you'll see a face-to-face fundraiser trying to sign up potential charity donors. In recent years this new way of fundraising has bucked the trend of falling donations, prompting big name charities, including Help the Aged, to ensure there are paid professionals on the streets raising money for them.

Since June 2001, face-to-face fundraisers working for Help the Aged have recruited 8,000 committed givers – more than double the number recruited in the previous year. In the current financial year, the teams are set to recruit 12,000 givers. This will raise a total of £720,000 in the first year and, over five years, be worth a staggering £3.6m to the Charity. In addition, fundraisers will have found 1,700 people willing to adopt a granny overseas.

Face-to-face fundraisers work for external agencies, which supply trained professionals to work for Help the Aged and a range of other charities including RNID, ActionAid and the Samaritans. Teams of fundraisers will target a certain area – often a busy shopping street or transport link – and approach passers by to tell them about the charity's work and, hopefully, sign them up as donors.

Although some people do drop out, once signed up, we can expect these donors to become long term Help the Aged supporters. It's also a successful way to recruit younger supporters, who seem to prefer the direct approach to other fundraising techniques.

Of course, face-to-face fundraising is not without its critics. The idea of paying a professional fundraising outfit to help us raise money is hard to swallow for some people. Others feel uncomfortable that the teams also work for other charities, so aren't close enough to the aim of the charity, be that saving rainforests, protecting children or defeating ageism.

The major objection comes from people who find the presence of these fundraisers on the streets irritating or feel that, despite the efforts of the Public Fundraising Regulatory Association,



Jason turns on the charm



Kofi finds a friendly Londoner

some patches in our towns and cities are overworked by fundraisers representing different charities.

While charities decide how best to deal with these critics, the fact remains that face-to-face fundraising can bring us valuable income and new supporters. And if the public are happy to stop on a wet Saturday afternoon to hear about our work, that can only be a good thing.

### Your view

What's your opinion on face to face fundraising – innovative technique or public nuisance? Let **intouch** know what you think. Email [intouch@helptheaged.org.uk](mailto:intouch@helptheaged.org.uk) or write to us at the address on page 2.

### Why we support face-to-face fundraising

OVER **8,000** committed givers recruited since June 2001, more than double the number recruited in the previous year.

In the first year, support is worth over **£500,000**  
In 5 years, worth over **£2,500,000!**

OVER **1,800** people are now experiencing a better quality of life thanks to the Adopt a Granny scheme

### intouch joined Team E on the streets of London to find out more....



We wanted to hear exactly what face-to-face fundraisers have to say about Help the Aged so let them approach us at their spot outside Holborn underground station in central London.

We were impressed by the pitch we heard. Fundraiser Kofi Mills-Bampo asked us for a few minutes of our time. In return we were treated to a punchy, well-informed account of the problems older people overseas face and how the Adopt a Granny scheme makes a huge difference to their lives. Kofi really knew his stuff and had an enviable grasp of the range of activities we fund for older people, both in the UK and overseas.

Kofi is a member of a six-strong team led by Mary Mangan, who says she's always impressed by the commitment of her fundraisers. 'They put so much effort in and get so many knockbacks each day' she says, 'That's tough to take, especially when it's raining, and people won't give you the time of day, let alone adopt a granny!'

Kofi finds Londoners particularly tricky. 'I've been sworn at and spat at in London before, but out of town it's much easier – some people actually approach us to find out what we're doing, and older people out shopping stop for a chat.'

'It's different strokes for different folks,' says fellow team member Jason. 'The men in suits are always in the biggest hurry, so when they stop, I cut straight to the chase and tell them how much of their time I'll need and what it'll cost them each month to adopt a granny.'

Kofi adds: 'People don't want to hear a rehearsed pitch, so you've got to be natural or they won't be interested. My approach is quite laid back and sincere, whereas Jason's a big smiler – he's a pure flirt!'

# Willing to help



The life of a legacy advisor is full of surprises. Phil Rosser gives *intouch* an insight...

**D**iscussing death each day may not sound like a bundle of laughs but Legacy Advisor Phil Rosser has nothing but enthusiasm for his job.

As our legacies representative for Hampshire, Berkshire and part of Surrey, Phil generated £420,000 in potential legacies for the charity last year by speaking to hundreds of older people in their homes, clubs and local libraries.

Together with the other 12 legacy advisors who cover England and Wales (Scotland and Northern Ireland have different laws), Phil helped to earn a whopping £12.3m for Help the Aged last year and set up new legacies worth an estimated £3.3m.

'When you consider that the legacy operation brings in around a third of the Charity's expenditure, you realise what a significant role the team has,' explains Phil, who joined Help the Aged two and a half years ago after over 25 years in the insurance and financial services industry.

Like his fellow advisors, Phil works from home, with most of his time taken up with visits (30-40 each month) to older people. Leads are generated through requests for our will information pack, which is advertised in specialist publications such as *Yours* and *Saga*. Other contacts are picked up through

the legacy department's *Heritage* magazine, which is mailed to around 300,000 older people each year.

'People are very up front about their later years and we offer a mutually beneficial service,' he explains.

There's no such thing as a typical day, says Phil. However most will involve him making appointments or visits to discuss will writing, inheritance tax and other legal issues. He also needs to be an expert on the work of the Charity and often, people leave a larger donation as a result of hearing more about our activities.

'I will talk about their family circumstances, the size of their estate, where they want it to go and the type of legacy they may want to make. Then I go away and prepare a letter explaining what Help the Aged can do,' Phil explains.

*'As you're in regular contact with these people, it's like losing a close relative,..... but you move on and know that what counts is that they trusted a Help the Aged advisor to sort out their affairs in a sympathetic and personal manner.'*

On his next visit, the client may instruct Phil and make any special requests – type and location of funeral, arrangements for pets and so on. An external solicitor then prepares the will for Phil to deliver to his client.

While this is a free advice service, Help the Aged also offers an executorship service for people who may not have surviving relatives. The Charity will sort out their funeral, arrange for assets to be sold and organise house clearance if needed. In return, the client will leave a legacy to the Charity; the amount will depend on the size of their estate but will cover costs and a donation to Help the Aged.

The Charity has around 3,000 pledges on its books, including one 91-year-old woman in Bognor who Phil sees every three months. When two of his clients died

recently, Phil's daughter asked him how he could do such a depressing job. 'As you're in regular contact with these people, it's like losing a close relative,' he says. 'But you move on and know that what counts is that they trusted a Help the Aged advisor to sort out their affairs in a sympathetic and personal manner.'

And some people have some very specific requests... One man insisted that his ashes be scattered from a boat in Portsmouth harbour. 'Fortunately the Royal Navy conduct a regular service at sea, so we could fulfil that wish!' says Phil.

When he's not out on visits, Phil gives talks about the Charity and will making to WI and other community groups, local church organisations and pre-retirement courses. Libraries and Citizens Advice Bureaux provide other outlets to give presentations and organise displays on the Charity's work and services.

Phil says legacy advisors have a unique position within Help the Aged because of the number of older people – around 300 on average – they see each month. He would like to see the Charity make more use of this regular contact.

And all staff can help support legacy promotion, he says. 'Everyone here, young or old, can help the team to get more business by telling shop volunteers, colleagues, friends and parents about us.'

## Legacy advisors

■ 13 legacy advisors cover England and Wales

■ supported by seven-strong legacy administration team at head office, including a solicitor

■ £12.3m in legacy income brought in last year

■ most advisors have a background in the financial services industry and specialist knowledge of wills, inheritance tax and probate



Our legacy advisors... licensed to will

# Values into actions

*Paul Cann, Director of the recently re-named Policy, research and international department (PRID), continues our series on how each part of Help the Aged is turning our new focus into a reality.*



The PRIDe of Help the Aged

**A** year or so ago, Help the Aged made some big statements about our vision, values and direction. Like other parts of the charity, PRID's task has been to identify actions that we can take in our daily work that enable us to live out our values. Here are some examples...

### Combating poverty

The 75p increase in the weekly pension became £5 because we all shouted loudly. Now, amidst the confusion of the Government's current policies, we are campaigning for a pension that enables people to live, not just exist; for a system that will last; and above all for one that we can all understand and trust.

Meanwhile in countries like Tanzania, we are working to combat the desperation that comes with extreme poverty. Through the

HelpAge International collaboration, we aim to get governments focused on the needs of older people.

### Promoting good-quality care

We are steadily improving the rights of older people. The £16 'pocket money' given each week to older people living in care is not a lot but it's even less when it gets used for basic costs that older people shouldn't have to pay for. We have persuaded the government to take action to stop such practices.

The Research into Ageing team is leading key projects that will one day unlock the solutions to some of the biggest blights on the quality of later life, such as dementia or osteoporosis. We are putting a lot more money into biomedical research to achieve this, and a lot of effort into communicating the results of such research, so that the understanding of scientists is shared with the practitioners.

### Reducing isolation

Isolation comes in many forms: a neighbourhood you don't feel safe in; living in a care home and not seeing the friends you used to; or being alienated by the latest communication technologies. Working with the Community Services team, and using research, we are pushing hard at the policies and services that exclude older people. At the same time, we are promoting and supporting projects in the community that offer some solutions.

### Defeating ageism and celebrating age

After the eye-catching stunt of older people in rubbish skips comes the long hard slog of wearing down the Government on absurd rules and barriers related to health screening, access to mobility benefits, transport costs, funding of care and so on. The good news is that, somewhere in the UK, there is usually one country that is ahead of the game. We are working across the four nations to mirror the success of Northern Ireland in moving forward on age discrimination, Scotland on free personal care and Wales on transport.

# Fit for the future?

**From 1 August all employees may join the new Group Personal Pension (GPP) scheme.**

The final salary scheme, which continues for those who've joined, closed to new members on 31 July. Employees who haven't joined the final salary scheme may now sign up for the new GPP money purchase scheme.

You can join the new scheme by contributing as little as 3% of your salary each month. An employee earning £10,000 a year and choosing to make a 3% contribution would pay in £19.50 a month. Help the Aged tops this up to make a total contribution of £91.66 each month.

Help the Aged is all about ensuring a good-quality later life so we're big fans of pensions. If you haven't joined a scheme, now's the time!

*To find out more about joining the GPP scheme, contact Diane Maiden on 020 7239 1855, or call the Standard Life helpline on xxxxx*

### First class

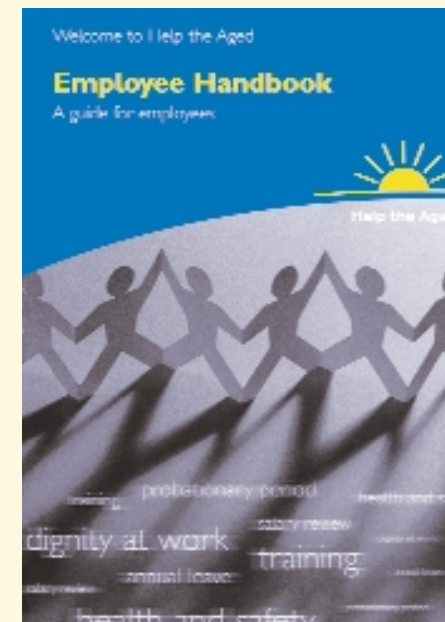


'The first across the finishing line' was how Doug Parkin, Training and Development Manager, described the excellent achievement of Richard Caton, Andrew Timms and Tom Owen in being the first to complete our new Introductory Management Training Scheme.

In completing the scheme the trio also achieved the NEBS Introductory Certificate in Management, a nationally and internationally recognised qualification.

Since the first intake last August, we now have over 50 managers enrolled on the scheme. Completion involves attending four management development workshops, maintaining a learning plan and development log and submitting a work-based assignment.

The scheme is now mandatory for most of our newly recruited or promoted line managers and Help the Aged is now an accredited NEBS Management Centre.



### New handbook for all

Want to apply for a season ticket loan? Need advice on paternity leave? The new *Employee Handbook* gives information on these and many other employment issues.

By now, you should all have received this comprehensive and user-friendly reference guide which we hope will prove an invaluable source of information about working with Help the Aged. In addition to policy information, details of the latest employment legislation are also included. The handbook's loose-leaf format means we can easily update it as new information becomes available, and you will receive new pages as and when appropriate.

As we will be adding to this handbook on an ongoing basis, we are very keen to know what you think. Is it useful? Is there other information that you would like to see included? Is there enough detail? Let us know by writing to the editor at **intouch**, or filling in the card in your handbook. A selection of your comments will be published in future issues of **intouch**.

*If you have any questions you would like to ask Human Resources regarding your employment, please email: [hr@helptheaged.org.uk](mailto:hr@helptheaged.org.uk) or write to us at head office.*

# profile

## Never off duty

Rounding up donated goods for Help the Aged shops is a true labour of love for stock collector Steve Anderson



Name:  
**Steve Anderson**

Occupation:  
**Stock collector**

Location:  
**Dunstable**

*'Not getting bags filled is the most soul-destroying thing I know, but on a good day I can collect 90 filled bags'*

The generous folk of Amersham and Dunstable are very fond of Steve Anderson. They even ring him at home at weekends and, like the trouper he is, Steve will drive his van to their houses – to pick up another bag of donated items destined for a Help the Aged shop.

Steve, 51, has worked as a full-time stock collector for the Charity for seven years and picks up goods for five shops in the Dunstable area. Every three or four months, Steve and his two colleagues visit each area. They leave empty bags and return for them two days later – by which time they are hopefully full of goodies. 'I put out about 360 bags a day, five days a week, and get back an average of 60 or 70 filled ones a day. On a good day it could be up to 90,' he says.

This high rate of success is due to Steve's attitude. 'If you only get 20 bags back it is so soul destroying it's unbelievable,' he admits. 'I feel I've really let down the Charity.' So Steve treats every day as a challenge: if it's raining he dons his waterproofs to keep out the elements and to motivate his team, he devises league tables.

Over the years, Steve has built up a relationship with his 30 or so regular donors. 'They will tell me if another charity has been round recently and if so, I leave it a couple of weeks before going back,' Steve explains, adding that older women are the most generous donors.

Most of the bags contain clothes, bric-a-brac and books but on one occasion, Steve discovered an unpleasant surprise: 'There was a dead hedgehog wrapped in some clothing in the sealed bag. I thought 'Crikey, what's that smell?' and, of course, I had to throw the whole lot out. That was weird.'

As well as collecting, Steve is currently acting team leader, which means filling in mileage and activity sheets – usually done at home in the evenings. But the additional paperwork hasn't put Steve off his next challenge – to break his record of collecting 150 bags in one day!

# question time



*'My generation are more conscientious. My last appraisal showed I had taken no time off sick'*

## Ethel Brown

Ethel Brown is 73 and has worked for Help the Aged in Edinburgh since she retired from her job as a ward clerk at an Edinburgh maternity hospital eight years ago.

She works three days a week in the packing section of the Collections department, now a part of Individual Marketing. Teams in London and Canterbury handle the planning and recruitment, then forward collectors' details to Edinburgh. Here, the team of eight send out bespoke packs to 130,000 households a year, plus thousands of raffle tickets, donation letters and around 1,000 will packs each week.

Most of the team are aged between 63 and 75. Collections Operations Manager Ann Hanson says: 'I have a wonderful team and I'm very proud of them.'

### What do you enjoy about your job?

The social side is great. We have a lovely team. And the money is very acceptable because I only get the state pension. I enjoy the challenge of getting it right.

### So you don't plan to retire?

Oh no, not while I'm coping and enjoying it. I'm fit and active and would miss it very much if I had to give up. I'm from a conscientious age group and my last appraisal showed I had nil sick leave. I just love it and feel privileged to be doing my job.

### If you were in charge of Help the Aged, what would be your priority?

Making society more aware that older people still have a lot to offer. I fully back the Age Discrimination campaign. I'm glad I am living in a time when things are starting to improve for older people. I'm pleased that Help the Aged is becoming more known in Scotland. There are more shops and we've benefited from the Blue Peter appeal, which provided a minibus in Pilton not far from here.

### What keeps you busy in your leisure time?

I have five grandchildren aged between seven and 12. I swim once a week, I'm a member of a choir and I like to go to the theatre. I have a big garden so that keeps me busy and I've given up the car so I do a lot of walking. My big interest is the Fitness League – it used to be known as the Women's League of Health and Beauty and I've been a member for 40 years. I used to go down to the Royal Albert Hall in London to take part in the big annual displays. It's great and keeps me supple.

# GALLERY

## Pensioner power

A record 3,000 delegates from across the UK gathered in Blackpool for this year's Pensioners Parliament, the annual event organised by the National Pensioners Convention (NPC).



Delegates on Blackpool promenade

Now in its 10th year, the event is a unique opportunity for older people to debate burning issues such as pensions, transport, social care and age discrimination.



Flying the flag for older people

Keynote speakers included Rodney Bickerstaffe and Jack Jones of the NPC; agony aunt and broadcaster, Claire Rayner; and our own Paul Cann, Director of Policy and International Affairs.



Actress Honor Blackman was sent to the Tower of London for the launch of Stepping Out, the British Gas Help the Aged Partnership event aimed at getting older people out and about this summer.

A range of visitor attractions, hotels and travel companies offered discounts and special offers this year. Around 100,000 older people were expected to take part in the event.

Do you have any great fundraising or events photos which you'd like to see in print? Send them to Gallery at the address on page 2.



The Help the Aged golf society played its first round together at the Stage for Age Mad March Hares golf tournament at Kingswood Golf & Country Club in Surrey. Pictured (from l-r) are team members Guy Patterson, Local Committees Manager; Head of Communications Nikki Hill; Terry Thirdborough, Religious Networks Manager and Glen Rodgers, Facilities and Services Manager.

The society is now looking for new recruits. Contact Guy Patterson on 020 7239 1487.

## Fair cop in Calderdale



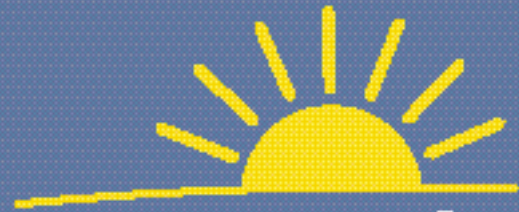
Barbara Burnley, Regional Development Officer for South and West Yorkshire (far left) joins WPC Lesley Ormerod and IT volunteer Graham Bentley to launch a new multi-cultural centre in Calderdale which is supported by Help the Aged.

Registered Charity No. 272786

# intouch

the magazine for employees and volunteers

no4 August 2002



**Royalty and roses**  
Queen visits our Jubilee garden

**Streets of gold**  
Focus on face-to-face fundraisers

**Pensions update**  
New scheme opens