



FORGET THEM NOT

THE Bright Side

VITAL HELP FOR ELDERLY PEOPLE IN FINANCIAL NEED



**1 in 4 (2.9 million)
people aged 65 and over
feel they have no one to
go to for help and support.**

**Source: Age UK and The
Campaign to End Loneliness. 2015**

A message from the AFTAID Board of Trustees

It's great to be writing to you again after such a long break!

It is always a pleasure to be able to pass on some of the good news we are able to provide, through your support, to those who need vital support.

You will probably have noticed that we haven't sent an Appeal letter since 2010 and the last *Bright Side* was sent in early 2012. We explained then that the gap in communicating was due to us respecting the pressures of economic uncertainty for our supporters. We have continued that policy and hope you all appreciate our approach. As I write, the country is at last seeing some encouraging signs but also some that are worrying too.

During the past few years AFTAID has not stood still however. We have been able to continue our vital role in providing swift solutions to what often seem insurmountable problems encountered by many of our oldest citizens.

The road to recovery has been, and is, hard for nearly every section of the community but particularly tough for the elderly. According to the website poverty.org.uk, "1.2 million pensioners have no income other than the state

retirement pension and other state benefits. This is around 18% of single pensioners and 6% of pensioner couples. (It is a similar number to a decade ago.)" Neither source of income is keeping up with inflation.

Our older people are particularly hard hit with the costs of food and energy compared to five years ago. When a crisis hits them it hits them hard. A need to replace a washing machine for instance is likely to result in hand washing being the only option if we are not available to help with a replacement. Such things mean so much yet actually cost relatively little. The sheer relief of such a simple grant is a joy to behold, a privilege to provide. It is you and people like you that provide this comfort in desperate times and those who benefit always heap thanks upon you, through us.

Now we hope that this issue of *The Bright Side* may reach you at a time you can afford to lend us your support. AFTAID is run by a Board of Trustees all of whom are volunteers and we have no direct employees. We are

completely committed to providing the maximum benefit for those in need from the voluntary donations we receive. Your generosity will not be wasted.

Another serious subject

AFTAID has been able to weather the storm these economically difficult years because of the foresight of some of our supporters. They chose to include a legacy gift within their Will. They did so in the knowledge that the gift would provide lasting comfort to those much less able in society as themselves.

**Local authority
spending on care for
people aged 65 and
over has fallen by a
fifth in England over
the last 10 years.**

Source: BBC Research, Office for
National Statistics and Health
and Social Care Information Centre.

continued on page 3

The incredible kindness of Britons...

These days we are almost bombarded by a whole host of charity appeals. Natural and man-made disasters, specialised health support, animal rescue and support for young and old who are in some way disadvantaged in (and even by) this modern world.

Even the most pessimistic must be heartened, as we are, to see how truly marvellous the response can be. Annually, national high profile campaigns seem to consistently break records year on year and those in need are shown that complete strangers will care, do care, for folk they have never met.

This country has in recent years seen the 'Food Bank' come to the fore, even David Cameron has paid a visit to at least one. We hope he made a donation and joined the thousands of men, women and businesses who make donations from their weekly shop on a regular basis. It is reminiscent of the Harvest Festival but all year round.

Businesses are also supporting these and other charitable ventures and long may they do so. It would be remiss for us not to acknowledge, at a time when commercial concerns seem to hit the headlines for all the wrong reasons, that many are quietly contributing in a most positive way to the well being and development of communities.

Although the nature of a Food Bank means data is difficult to harness, anecdotal evidence suggests that the older sections of the community are reluctant to seek the help that is offered there. The proud generation who have given so much, seemingly invisible to many, see things from a different viewpoint. **This is why AFTAID are so often contacted to help by other agencies who are already doing all they can, Social Services or other charities whose remit nor resources can cover all of the acute needs they encounter.**

There have been some startling revelations earlier this year, showing the enormous rise in death rates during Winter. There were an estimated 31,100 excess winter deaths in England and Wales last year – up by almost a third on the previous winter, according to the Office for National Statistics. The figures for 2012-13 showed people aged over 75 accounted for 25,600 of the total, and excess mortality was higher in women (18,000) than in men (13,100).

Those shocking official figures highlight how our oldest and longest serving members of the community have seemingly faded into the background of social and political consciousness.

Whilst AFTAID do not supply grants to supplement heating bills we have contributed to replacing heating systems either overall or in part such as Boiler or radiator replacement where these essentials have failed – as well as help towards measures to ensure homes are more efficient in keeping the heat in. We also gratefully acknowledge the donations made by those who are better off who chose to redistribute their own Winter Fuel Payment to help others through this and other charities.

There are clearly many ways to help many different humanitarian needs. How the individual chooses which to help, when or where, is always a matter of personal choice and perhaps connection. It is unscientific and no one really knows. But the outstanding responses we see in this country are testament to the 'other side of the coin' from the negative news that gets the majority of media coverage.



Who put the smile on this ladies face?

Why, you did of course!

...and how some of that kindness makes a difference.

In past months AFTAID have responded to applications from individuals and case workers of organisations acting on behalf of older people who are struggling. Here are a few examples from our files which give a 'flavour' of the value an AFTAID grant can provide for day to day assistance.

The case worker from Care & Repair in the Rhondda helped Mrs Young (93) gain a small grant to make alterations to her downstairs shower so that she could bathe.

Lifeline Community Action in County Durham helped Mr Wheldon with a grant application as he was without a washing machine. Hand washing is particularly tough for older folk!

Mr Whitely (79) was assisted by the Hanover Housing Association in London to obtain a grant from AFTAID to replace his broken bed and mattress.

We also helped Mr and Mrs Hart (83 and 77) with their leaking drains and render of the outside walls which were causing damp. They were brought to our attention with help from the Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation (CISWO) in County Durham.

Age UK in Nottingham assisted Mr Davidson (80) with his application to AFTAID for a grant to replace a failed cooker as they do not fund individual emergency needs like that.

We were also very pleased to be able to help Mrs Smith in Northamptonshire, who suffers from chronic lung disease, to obtain a riser/recliner chair.

Mrs Angel (84) of Sussex also wrote us a lovely note with "a thousand thanks you's!" following help to apply by the case worker from Health Through Warmth at nPower. A new boiler has enabled Mrs Angel to have proper heating again.

The central heating system for Mr Tomlinson broke down 3 years before Lancashire's Care and Repair case worker gave him the referral to AFTAID. We were very pleased to contribute towards the cost of repair and received a heartfelt thank you note in return.

We also hope that Mrs Gibson in Cornwall enjoys her new spectacles for many years to come!

Passing thoughts are a great help

We are extremely grateful to the family of the late Phyllis Tutt who offered mourners the choice of sending flowers or a donation to AFTAID in memory of Phyllis.

Nearly sixty pounds was raised which will help provide comfort in one form or another.

Thank you to all concerned and to anyone who feels similarly disposed at a time of great sorrow to 'reinvest' in joy.

**Donate
at our website,
www.aftaid.org.uk
Thank you**

continued from page 1

No matter how difficult it may feel to address the subject of what happens after we die, it is even more difficult for our nearest and dearest if our wishes are not made clear before hand. The fruits of our life's work could even be claimed by the Government of the day.

So, whether or not you choose to leave a bequest to a favoured charitable cause, if you have not made a Will yet please give it some serious consideration. Most people actually feel better for doing so!

Thank you for reading *The Bright Side* we hope you can respond generously but even if you can't, we wish you all the very best for the years ahead.

Pressures on the public purse continue to bring about real cuts in all kinds of support services. For the elderly, on fixed income and little, or nothing in the way of a savings cushion, AFTAID is among a very few organisations where help can be obtained quickly to enable continued independence, a basic standard of living conditions or relief from unnecessary suffering. It is good and vital work even today, *perhaps particularly today!*

Remembering the very special people of special times

There has been a wealth of media coverage of the commemorative events held during 2014/15 for the 100th anniversary of the First World War and the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain. The Trustees of AFTAID also wish to acknowledge the tremendous debt we all owe to the generation who gave so much in "the war to end all wars" and the brave airmen and ground crews who thwarted an invasion in 1940.

Although nearly all the men and women who lived through those trying times are now gone, we at AFTAID during our 30+ years history have had the privilege to help many of those servicemen, women and civilians in later life. Those who saw action in the forces or kept the home front safe and productive.

Those generations inspired so many people in so many ways, indeed it was the plight of some that inspired our founder, Brian St Clair Burke, to start the charity that has become AFTAID as we know it today.

All the while AFTAID is needed, we can never forget.

We never have and never will sell or pass on our supporters contact information to any third party

It is a clear responsibility for all charities to raise funds and deliver as much of the money raised as possible to those in need through whichever service the individual charity provides. How the many charitable organisations in the UK carry out that responsibility can differ widely, in keeping with the governance, size and operational structures of the charities concerned.

We at AFTAID feel it is timely to make clear that our funds come solely and directly from our supporters by way of donation and legacy giving. We do not trade with our supporters information. We never have and never will.

Charities will always find they have some common interests and in some cases, aims. AFTAID for instance will occasionally share the funding of a grant for an elderly person with another charity willing to contribute to the provision of an expensive piece of vital equipment. We are also indebted to larger charities whose resources enable them to engage in research projects that provide hard data to support the case for helping the age group we serve. Quite often other charities refer to us when they cannot provide the help that AFTAID can – AgeUK, The Royal British Legion, SSAFA, to name but a few.

But we do not share nor sell our supporter list.

AFTAID Trustees come from varied walks of life – law, military, finance, education, welfare etc., – they stand out purely because they now give some of their time for the relief and benefit of those members of the older community who find themselves in need of help, often desperate need. Our Trustees would not want their own details sold or passed on and therefore would not consider such actions with yours.

We acknowledge the generous support and understanding you, our supporters, give and are truly grateful to you all. The men and women we are then able to help in time of need are also sincerely thankful to you. You really do make a difference to the quality of life for a large number of our older community.

It is important work that you enable us to carry out, we hold your trust and support in very high regard and will honour that by keeping your trust in our minds and actions, always.

Growing old in the 21st century...

- 1 in 6 pensioners (1.8 million or 16% of pensioners in the UK) live in poverty, defined as 60% of median income after housing costs
- Pensioners are also the biggest group of people on the brink of poverty with 1.2 million on the edge
- Low income in retirement is often linked to earlier low pay, or time out of employment - for example, due to caring responsibilities, disability or unemployment
- Women, those age 80 to 84, single people living alone and private tenants are at greater risk of pensioner poverty

Source: AgeUK, 2015

You can find out more
AND make a difference at www.aftaid.org.uk

A valued addition to the Trustees

Please join us in a very warm welcome to our newest Trustee, Wynne Creasy MBE, who joined us about a year ago and has added to our relatively small number on the Board. Wynne has increased our 'in-house' expertise and has been contributing from the moment of joining.

Wynne 'retired' in 2009 after a career in local government specialising in education governance. Her MBE was awarded for services to education.

Could you be an AFTAID Trustee?

AFTAID are always hoping to hear from people who wish to help with our work.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction – developing and supervising all aspects of the organisation. Ensuring all the while that it is acting within the framework of the original trust document as well as legal and regulatory guidelines.

As a Trustee you would take part and share in overseeing the management of the Charity to ensure the highest levels of efficiency and that its aims and obligations are met.

The Board meets on average 4 times a year in central London. Being a Trustee is a voluntary position but out of pocket expenses can be reimbursed.

If you believe you have the interest and appropriate skills to help AFTAID, and would like to know more please contact us through email or post, details are on this page. A member of the Board of Trustees will respond as soon as possible.

**Who put
the smile
on this
ladies
face?**

**Why, you
did of
course!**



GRANT APPLICATIONS

The applications we receive continue to increase, but we are nonetheless determined to help even more. We all know there are increasing numbers of elderly people many of whom live on very limited incomes.

If you learn of an elderly person in times of hardship please put them in touch with AFTAID.



Wynne Creasy MBE

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2015

POSTAL DONATION FORM

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Your Email Address:

Please accept my cheque/postal order for: (do not send cash)

£100 £50 £40 £30 £20 £10

Other £

Please send me a form for a standing order mandate in the sum of £ _____ per month.

Please debit my: CAF Charity Card MasterCard Visa

Card no.

Card Expiry Date:

Signature:

Date:

On behalf of all those elderly people your donation will help in times of vital need - THANK YOU.

MAKE YOUR DONATION WORTH EVEN MORE

If you are a UK tax payer, Gift Aid allows the Charity to reclaim the Income Tax you have paid from the Inland Revenue. .

The charity will reclaim tax totalling 28p on every £1 you gave between 6 April 2009 and 5 April 2011. After that date the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 donated.

Please treat all gifts of money that I have made in the past 6 years, this current gift, and all future gifts of money that I make from the date of this declaration as Gift Aid donations. (Please sign below.)

Signature:

Date:

If you have signed the Gift Aid declaration before, please tick this box instead

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