

## **Age UK London says many older Londoners are feeling hopeless by their situation**

- Over a fifth of older Londoners are living in poverty
- Pensioner poverty has remained at the same level for 10 years
- 78% of pensioners in London will no longer receive Winter Fuel Payments

During [London Challenge Poverty Week](#) (14-20 October) Age UK London is highlighting the pressing issue of poverty amongst older Londoners. With 2.5 million people over 50 residing in London (30% of the population), well over a fifth are living in poverty (22%\*). The charity says that the financial challenges faced by older people in London are significant and require immediate attention.

The number of pensioners in poverty has remained the same for the last 10 years (19%). The hardest hit is the over 80's with almost a quarter of this age group currently living in poverty (24%). Single pensioners are much more likely to live in poverty (29%) compared with pensioner couples.

With the announcement that Winter Fuel Payments will be means tested this year, the situation could potentially get worse says Age UK London. New analysis released by Age UK last week showed that 78% (0.2m) of pensioners in London, in poverty or just above the poverty line, will no longer receive the payments.

It is estimated that 127,000 London pensioners are eligible for Pension Credit but are not currently receiving it. This group will need to apply for Pension Credit before the December deadline to retain their Winter Fuel Payments.

Research carried out by Age UK London, including meeting with older people face-to-face and through a survey for its poverty campaign, On the Edge, has provided shocking insight into the challenges faced by older Londoners.

One 79-year women said "I worry but there is nothing I can do about it. I sold all the jewellery of any value that I had. I got £127 for a Hatton Garden made bracelet with a diamond in it, my diamond engagement ring and a plain gold ring. I now have nothing else to sell."

**John McGeachy, Campaigns Manager at Age UK London said:** “It’s 2024 and we should not be hearing from older people telling us that they will not be putting on their heating this winter or that they are having to make extremely hard choices every single day.

“The poverty rate for older Londoners is unacceptable with well over a fifth of over 50’s in London living in poverty. London continues to have the highest poverty rate for both pensioners (aged 66 and over) and all over 50s in the UK. The changes to Winter Fuel Payment eligibility will make things significantly worse as we head into the winter months.”

Age UK London is urging all London pensioners struggling to meet costs to check if they are eligible for Pension Credit to ensure they receive the support they are entitled to.

McGeachy concluded, “It is vital that decision makers across London work together to address and alleviate the financial hardships faced by older Londoners – we all need to work together to ensure that no older Londoner is left behind this winter.”

**End**

For more information, please contact Dee Byrne, Age UK London, call 07986 378358 or email: [dbyrne@ageuklondon.org.uk](mailto:dbyrne@ageuklondon.org.uk)

\*All data presented by Trust for London in their London Poverty Profile and Age UK analysis of Department for Work and Pensions data.: [Poverty by age | Trust for London](#)

#### **Editors Notes:**

#### **Key Statistics:**

- There are nearly 1 million London pensioners (979,000)
- Within a **population of 8,799,700 Londoners**, there are around 2,545,700 people aged 50 or over (29 per cent). Of these, 1,050,500 (12 per cent of all Londoners) are 65 or over; and 137,600 (1.6 per cent) or 85 or over.
- **215,000 pensioners** are currently receiving benefits such as Pension Credit and Universal Credit, qualifying them for Winter Fuel Payments under the proposed arrangements. These pensioners will retain their Winter Fuel Payments.
- **763,000 pensioners** are at risk of losing their Winter Fuel Payments under the new arrangements.
- Age UK estimate that, within that 763,000, there are 127,000 pensioners in London who are eligible for Pension Credit but not receiving it - these people need to claim Pension Credit before the December deadline to retain their Winter Fuel Payments

- If eligible pensioners do not claim the Pension Credit they are entitled to, it is estimated that **17% of the London pensioners** who would lose their Winter Fuel Payments would be those who were entitled to keep it.