

# Ageing without Children Newsletter

FEBRUARY 18, 2016

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 1

## Launch of Our Voices report

**On 26<sup>th</sup> January AWOC launched "our Voices" a report based on the thoughts, ideas and feelings of people ageing without children.**

The report is based on focus groups, interviews and stories from people Ageing without Children and was funded by the Beth Johnson Foundation. It identifies 6 key themes affecting people ageing without children

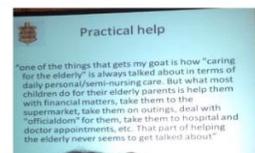
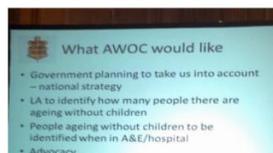
- Invisibility
- Being judged
- "Who will tell my story?"
- Being a carer is a trigger point
- Practical support
- Disconnect from other generations

And recommends a number of solutions to tackle the issue including

- A national strategy
- Investment in advocacy and intergenerational projects
- Better access to advice to help plan for later life
- More education and social awareness

*"When people talk about children caring for elderly parents, it is all the small pieces of support that are so important, not whether they end up living together with the child caring for the parent."*

*"I don't think people at the government have the faintest idea how many of us there are. If they did, I think they'd be worried!"*



The launch hosted by Leeds City Council was attended by 52 people who heard Cllr Christine Macniven launch the report. Those attending heard from John and Lindsay Allen and from Louise Barton both of whose stories feature in the report as well as from Kirsty Woodard, founder of AWOC. Afterwards people worked in groups to think about what they or their organisations could do to help make the solutions suggested in the report a reality.



The report can be found on our website here [Our Voices](#) or, if you would like a hard copy, please email us at [ageingwithoutchildren@gmail.com](mailto:ageingwithoutchildren@gmail.com)

The report is currently being redesigned and there will be another event to mark its production in London

### Local AWOC groups

There is now an AWOC group in York which meets next on 9th March 2-4pm at the Cross Keys Pub on Goodramgate in York. For more information contact Sue Lister on 01904 488870

The Leeds group is planning an event on legal matters for people ageing without children to be held sometime in April. Please contact Jean Bassoon on [awoc.leeds@gmail.com](mailto:awoc.leeds@gmail.com) to be added to the mailing list

Stockport area – 3 people have expressed a willingness to set up a group in this area so if you are interested, please contact John & Lindsay Allen on [johnlinds69@gmail.com](mailto:johnlinds69@gmail.com)

London – we would like to start an AWOC group to meet in London. Can anyone interested please email [mds.awoc@gmail.com](mailto:mds.awoc@gmail.com) to be added to a circulation list for when we start to look at dates and venues

We've also had people ask for groups in Leicestershire,

The image shows a flyer for a public meeting. At the top left is the AWOC logo. To its right is the text "Phone Sue Lister 01904 488870". Below the logo is the text "AGEING WITHOUT CHILDREN". Underneath that is "PUBLIC MEETING" and "Wednesday 9 March 16, 2-4 pm Cross Keys Pub, Goodramgate, York". Below the text is a photograph of a group of people sitting around a table in a pub. At the bottom of the flyer is a quote: "Who will speak up for me and lend a hand when I can no longer cope on my own?" followed by the text "Is the state the answer, charities, self-help? Share ideas, take action, have a snack."

For all those who have never been able to have children, whose children have died or moved away, who never wanted children, who are estranged from their children...the question is

"Who will speak up for me and lend a hand when I can no longer cope on my own?"

Is the state the answer, charities, self-help?  
Share ideas, take action, have a snack.

Nottinghamshire, Eastbourne, Bristol and Wales so if any people are interested in having groups in these areas, please email us at [ageingwithoutchildren@gmail.com](mailto:ageingwithoutchildren@gmail.com) marking it "local group" and the town/county you are interested in.

### **Pencil it in! - AWOC festival 27<sup>th</sup> June**

We are replacing the plans we had for a conference with an AWOC festival bringing together people Ageing without Children to talk, socialize and discuss a range of issues affecting them. Further details will be announced shortly.

### **"Transitions in retirement" – helping people improve mental well being in retirement**

The change from work to retirement can be challenging for many people particularly people ageing without children. As well as the sudden hours of free time, there is often a reduction in income. Retirement can mean people become more isolated as they lose the social interaction from work and contact with people from other generations.

AWOC is working with the Beth Johnson Foundation funded by the Gulbenkian Foundation to look at how people coming up to retirement age can be better prepared to make the most of it and overcome any challenges. We will be running 2 groups, 1 in London and 1 targeted at men and will be sending out more information about how people can get involved very soon.

### **The untold grief of childless men**

Men's perspective on being without children is still rare so it's great to see this piece featuring our own Dr Robin Hadley

"CHILDLESS blokes may have trouble expressing their unmet yearning for kids – but the pain is real. This is the conclusion British sociologist Dr Robin Hadley has come to after studying more than 100 involuntarily childless men, including himself, over nearly a decade"

<http://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/parenting/kids/the-untold-grief-of-childless-men/news-story/afd12390a8e450d5b9c04e7db6e9d88b>

### **Ageing without Children is now a Community Interest Company**

We've been working very hard on sorting g out the governance and legal status of AWOC. AWOC is now a registered community interested company; community interest companies are a form of not for profit organization that enables us to have a simple structure

*"There was very little about men's experience and the desire for fatherhood but there's an awful lot of research around women and motherhood, and it seemed incredible to me," Dr Robin Hadley*

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@AWOCUK

with minimal bureaucracy. The Directors of AWOC are:

Kirsty Woodard  
Jody Day  
Mervyn Eastman  
Janice Leeming  
Advisor to the Board: Robin Hadley

We are looking for a 5th person to join the Board who has expertise in finance to help us manage the accounts as (hopefully!) we attract more funding to AWOC. If you are interested, please email [mds.awoc@gmail.com](mailto:mds.awoc@gmail.com).

### **Financing AWOC**

So far AWOC has survived on membership fees, donations and voluntary help but in order to achieve all the things we want for people ageing without children, we need to apply for some funding and will be focused on that over the next few months.

### **Invitation to London Mayoral Election Hustings on February 25th 2016**

Please find attached a flyer for Age UK London's Mayoral Election Hustings and we hope you will be able to pass this on to many older people giving them a chance to directly question the mayoral candidates. You can book your place by

- Registering on the event website <http://mayor2016manifesto.eventbrite.co.uk>
- Or emailing Danny Elliott on [delliott@ageuklondon.org.uk](mailto:delliott@ageuklondon.org.uk)
- Or calling Danny Elliott on 020 7820 6778

### **Next newsletter May 16**

If you have information you would like included in the newsletter, please email it to [Ageingwithoutchildren@gmail.com](mailto:Ageingwithoutchildren@gmail.com) marked "newsletter"