

awwoc

ageing well without children

Running groups for people
ageing without children

www.awwoc.org

 @awocuk



Contents

Introduction	page 3
Background and purpose	page 4
About Ageing Well Without Children	page 5
Context	page 8
Local groups	page 11
Role of organisation	page 12
Relationship with AWwoC	page 13
Practicalities of running groups	page 14
Appendix 1 Training	page 23
Appendix 2 Agreement with AWwoC	page 24
Appendix 3 Draft press release	page 26
Appendix 4 Volunteer JD	page 28

2

Photo credits: Shutterstock (SS) Diego Cervo; SS Raw Pixel; Unsplash Raw Pixel; Unsplash Akshar Dave; Unsplash Natasha Brazil; Unsplash Kahar Saidyhalam; Unsplash Kayla Farmer; SS Yulia Grigoryeva; SS Monkey Business Images.

Illustrations and design: Berenice Smith, MA, Hello Lovely



Introduction

“Who will do all the things I currently do for my ageing parents, from helping them overcome the terror of dementia, to buying their clothes to standing up for them when they are being ignored in hospital. And who will hold my hand and tell me they love me when I’m dying?” (Response to AWwoC survey)

There are now over 1 million people aged over 65 in the UK who have never been parents and this will double to 2 million by 2030. Additionally, increasing numbers of people live further away, or may be estranged, from their children if they have them.

Understanding what it means to be ageing without children and how it affects people in later life is crucial for organisations who plan and commission services for or who provide care, support and companionship to older people.

Ageing Well Without Children (AWwoC) is a grassroots organisation led by people ageing without children. All our work is co-designed and co-produced with people ageing without children.

“Having friends and on-line friendships with people who are ageing without children means that we can totally be ourselves and always say what we feel without having to monitor ourselves constantly.” (AWwoC online group member)

People ageing without children report that they can feel marginalised, disconnected and excluded from their community and wider society.

“I felt excluded because I wasn’t a mum and now I feel excluded because I don’t have grandchildren.” (Our Voices focus group)

From being unable to join in with conversations about being a parent or grandparent, dealing with thoughtless or tactless comments about childless and childfree people, to feeling unable to talk about their own circumstances because it is too painful for example, they have outlived their children or because they are part of a community that can already face social isolation e.g. LGBT. People ageing without children do not always feel comfortable sharing their experiences in mainstream groups for older people.

Connecting with other people in a similar situation or with similar experiences can help reduce these feelings of isolation. *AWwoC* groups give people ageing without children the opportunity to get together to form friendships and connections as well as raising awareness of the issues that affect them locally and nationally

Of course, needing a separate space does not mean that people ageing without children are without social connections or support, but it is an acknowledgement that ageing without children brings challenges that people who are able to rely on help and support from their adult children in later life may not experience.

Background and Purpose

In 2018, *Ageing Well Without Children* and PRAMA [www.pramacare.org.uk] worked together on a project to help people ageing without children establish local *AWwoC* groups in Poole and Bournemouth. One of the key learning points from this work was the importance of having the support of a local organisation who really understand the issues affecting people ageing without children, in order to be successful.

The purpose of this Guide, which was co-produced by individuals ageing without children, is to help local organisations run groups for people ageing without children. We recommend that organisations planning to use this pack ensure that staff and volunteers have first attended an *Introduction to Ageing Without Children* session. Further details are attached in Appendix 1.

If you are an individual who wants to set up your own group for people ageing without children, please get in touch with us at info@awwoc.org

This guide would not have been possible without the help and support of PRAMA, in particular Steve Robinson and Sue Warr, and funding from the Transform Ageing programme.



About Ageing Well Without Children (AWWOC)

Ageing Well Without Children (AWWOC) is a community interest company (CiC) founded and led by people ageing without children. It was established in response to the invisibility of people ageing without children in discussions, policy and planning on ageing.

AWwoC focuses on the growing number of people over the age of 50 who are ageing without children which is defined as people who have:

- No children at all through infertility, choice or other circumstances e.g. they have outlived their children.
- Children who are unable to offer help or support – for example, they live a great distance away, or may have care needs of their own.
- Children who are unwilling to offer help and support – they may have become estranged and/or have no contact.

This group of older people has been almost entirely overlooked by policymakers, service providers and organisations focused on later life. In 2014, the Ready for Ageing Alliance published *Getting Ready for Ageing: A manifesto for action*, which said that ‘policy must adapt to the future challenges of demographic change’, but did not mention the increasing numbers of people ageing without children.

The Ageing in the UK – Trends and Foresight report prepared for the Big Lottery Fund was published in June 2015 with the aim of ‘exploring issues and emerging needs related to ageing in the UK’. The report similarly makes reference to changing family structures, and cites a British Social Attitudes Survey from 2012, which showed that 46.4 per cent of people agreed that adult children were an important source of help for elderly parents, and only 13.3 per cent disagreed. The report says that ‘having adult children is considered a vital source of help in old age’, and goes on to say that ‘adult children have long played a role in caring for their elders’, and that ‘it seems clear that with more and more people living into their 80s and beyond, the role of adult child carer may extend into the 40s, 50s or even 60s’. However, it then makes no mention of older people without adult children, or of the potential impact of ageing policy on this group.

Ageing: the silver lining - The opportunities and challenges of an ageing society for local government, prepared for the Local Government Association, sought to ‘explore the challenges and opportunities that an ageing population presents for local government and local communities, now and over the next 20–30 years’. The report highlights that LGBT people over 55 are more likely to live alone, not to have children and not to be in regular contact with their family, and are therefore more likely to age alone. It also mentions changing family structures, and that the number of women without children will mean fewer informal carers to provide support to people with care and health needs. The report recommends that local authorities apply an ‘ageing lens’ to policy and practice, which we completely

support. However, to our knowledge, no local authority has any current plans in place to address the specific needs of people ageing without children.

The Government have repeatedly talked of the need for families to do more to support their elderly parents for example

“We need to start thinking as a society about how we deal with care of our own parents. One of the things that has struck me as I’ve been doing this role is that nobody ever questions the fact that we look after our children, that’s just obvious. Nobody ever says it is a caring responsibility, it’s just what you do. I think some of that logic and some of way we think about that, in terms of the sort of volume of numbers that we are seeing coming down the track, will have to impinge on the way we start thinking about how we look after our parents. In a way, it is a responsibility in terms of our life cycle that is similar.” David Mowat Minister for Care January 2017

“Family planning must be as much about care for older generations as planning for younger ones. A wholesale repairing of the social contract so that children see their parents giving wonderful care to grandparents – and recognise that in time that will be their responsibility too” Jeremy Hunt Secretary of State for Health 2015 but do not acknowledge that some people may not have children or family at all, or that some people have family who are not in a position to help.



What we do

AWwoC focuses on:

- 1. Policy and Campaigning:** AWwoC raises awareness and understanding of the issues affecting people ageing without children, and advocates for the inclusion of people ageing without children in mainstream discussions on ageing.
- 2. Research:** We research the needs of people ageing without children to ensure our knowledge of the issues affecting them is evolving and growing. We share our research findings on our website www.awwoc.org, and also link to research into the issue carried out by others.
- 3. Connecting People:** AWwoC brings together people ageing without children online through its Facebook group, which has over 1,800 members, and through local groups such as the one in York which meets on a monthly basis with speakers and social events.

www.awwoc.org

 @awocuk

20% of people over the age of 50 are currently not parents
(Source; ONS census 2011)

By 2030, 2 million people over the age of 65 will not be parents
(Source; IPPR The Generation Strain)

1.2 million people over the age of 65 are not parents
(Source; IPPR The Generation Strain)

Older people with disabilities who live alone and have no children will increase by 80% to 860,000 by 2032
(Source; Pickard, Linda et al Mapping the future of family care social policy and society)

awwoc
ageing well without children



Context

The numbers of people over 65 without adult children are set to double from 1.2 million at the present time to 2 million by 2030. At the moment 92 per cent of informal care is provided by family and 80 per cent of older people with disabilities are cared for by either their spouse/partner or adult children. The older a person is, the more likely they are to be cared for by their adult child. In 2017 for the first time, more older people needed care than there was family available to provide it.

8

“As the baby-boomer generation ages, a growing ‘family care gap’ will develop as the number of older people in need of care outstrips the number of adult children able to provide it. This is expected to occur for the first time in 2017,” The Generation Strain, Institute of Public Policy Research 2014

- The number of women who have not become mothers has more than doubled in a generation, from 9 per cent to 19 per cent .
- Although the Office of National Statistics does not record data on how many men become fathers is estimated that around 23 per cent of men over 45 are without children.
- 90 per cent of LGBT people are estimated to be ageing without children.
- An estimated 85 per cent of people with disabilities have no children.
- The number of older people with disabilities who live alone and have no child is projected to increase rapidly, rising by nearly 80 per cent between 2007 and 2032.
- People ageing without children are up to 30 per cent more likely to be carers for elderly parents .
- People ageing without children are 25 per cent more likely to go into residential care, and at an earlier age and lower level of dependency.

Why Does it Matter?

Health and social care services are predicated upon the implicit assumption that families fill the gaps in service provision and, in the case of older people, that the people supporting them are largely their adult children. Adult children may carry out low-level support tasks such as accompanying their parent to medical appointments, helping with cleaning and shopping and reminding their parent to take medication. They may even be involved in personal care tasks such as changing dressings. Health and care systems do not operate in a way that effectively supports people without family to help them. At the same time, reductions in public spending in adult social care over recent years means that there has been a reduction in the type of services which provide lower level support and a raising of the eligibility threshold, reducing access to statutory support for many older people unless their needs are deemed critical or substantial. Many voluntary organisations have lost funding for help-at-home services and advocacy services, which are particularly crucial for people without family, are under severe pressure financially, often only funded to deliver advocacy required by law.

Consequently, people ageing without children can be left without support and help at a time when they need it most.



The role of family carers

The role of family carers is critical in helping older people to live independently for as long as possible. 92 per cent of all unpaid care is provided by family; the 'oldest old' are predominantly cared for by their children, whereas married older people predominantly receive spousal care. More than 80 per cent of disabled older people receiving informal care and living in private homes are being cared for either by their adult children, by their spouse or by both of them together. Here it needs to be remembered that not only are more people ageing without children, but the numbers of people living alone is also increasing: 28 per cent of UK households are single-person households, and over half (51 per cent) of all people aged 75 and over live alone. Single people ageing without children will be hit by a double whammy in terms of access to informal care.

NHS research published in 2010 reported the most common tasks for carers:

- 82 per cent provide practical help such as preparing meals, doing laundry or shopping.
- 76 per cent keep an eye on the person they care for.
- 68 per cent keep them company.
- 62 per cent take the person they care for out.
- 49 per cent help the person they care for with financial matters.
- 47 per cent help the person they care for deal with care services and benefits.
- 38 per cent help with aspects of personal care.
- 38 per cent provide physical help.

It is important to remember that it is often the little things that keep people independent and that it is exactly this kind of low level support which is becoming harder to access.



Local Groups

Local groups give people ageing without children an opportunity to meet together with their peers; to have fun, find out information and support each other. The model for the local groups; purpose, who they are open to, how they operate, what they do was developed over a 6 month consultation period including focus groups with people ageing without children in London, Leeds, Brighton, Poole Bournemouth, York and Cambridge as well as discussions on the **AWwoC** facebook group

Purpose

1. To be a safe place where people ageing without children can come to share experiences and ideas.
2. Peer support and understanding for people ageing without children from others in a similar situation.
3. To influence local planning and policy on ageing so that people ageing without children are taken into account.
4. To identify solutions/services that could help people ageing without children work with local organisations, with the support of **AWwoC** to help make them happen.

Different groups will want to focus on different things at different times and groups should not feel they need to focus on all four of the above points.

All groups are:

- Open to men and women.
- For people in relationships and those who are not.
- Inclusive of all and sensitive to inequalities.
- Aimed at people over the age of 50, but no-one will be turned away.
- Only open to people ageing without children or organisations seeking to work with them.

Can people who don't identify as ageing without children attend groups?

We have been asked if people who have children can attend meetings to listen to speakers of interest. We would suggest not, at least not at first. This is because people ageing without children tell us that they are more reticent to talk about their situation and issues if there are people who are not ageing without children attending. People not ageing without children can, often without meaning to, 'shut down' difficult but necessary conversations by for example talking about what they don't expect or want in relation to support from their children, for example "I didn't have my children so they could look after me" which can make people ageing without children feel they are being selfish for worrying about who will help them in later life even though 92 per cent of all unpaid care does come from family. Later the group may decide differently but that should be entirely their choice and not something they must or should do.

Role of Organisation

Ideally your staff and /or volunteers involved in supporting **AWwoC** local groups will be ageing without children themselves, but if that is not possible they will need to undergo training to ensure they understand the issues facing people ageing without children in more depth (see Appendix 1). They will also need to be experienced group facilitators.

Their main role will be:

- To create and maintain a safe space where people ageing without children feel free to discuss their feelings and ideas openly.
- To arrange speakers for meetings.
- To advertise meetings.
- To facilitate discussion at meetings.
- To carry out any follow-up tasks.
- To identify potential volunteer group leaders to take on leadership of the group after 6–9 months.
- To support volunteer group leaders on an ongoing basis.

12

It is very important that people leave the group meeting feeling positive and that they have enjoyed themselves, despite the challenging nature of the issues that can be raised.

Volunteer group leaders

We have put together a job description for group leaders attached appendix 4

Volunteer group leaders are key to the ongoing success of the group and will need ongoing support. Volunteer group leaders will be expected to abide by your organisational policies.

Relationship Between AWwoC Nationally and Local AWwoC Groups

We are very keen to hear from local groups and find out what they're doing so that we can publicise it and feed it into discussions around ageing without children at a strategic level.

AWwoC is not often in a position to directly fund groups but is able to offer some advice on where to get help.

Organisations setting up **AWwoC** groups will sign a simple agreement with **AWwoC** to enable them to use the **AWwoC** logo, access the local group's space on the website and clarify how issues such as media enquiries should be handled.



Practicalities of running groups

Publicity

AWwoC can promote the group through its website and networks, but also try and contact some of the following:

- Local media, especially the press and radio. We have attached an example press release in Appendix 3.
- Local Age UK.
- Sheltered housing.
- Community centres.
- Community Voluntary Services and similar umbrella bodies for local voluntary organisations.
- Libraries.
- Places of worship.
- Local council offices.
- Healthwatch.
- Local carers' groups.
- Older people's forums/groups.

AWwoC groups will be given guidelines around using the **AWwoC** logo and brand.

How to Run a Local Group

Communicating with the Group

- Establishing and maintaining communication is vitally important to keep the group together, keep up momentum and keep new people involved. If possible, agree the dates of meetings in advance so that you can send out a programme of dates for people to put in their diaries.
- Taking notes about the meeting and distributing them is also useful to help people keep up to date with what is happening if they can't attend.
- An important issue to consider is how to involve and keep in touch with people who don't have email. Of those over the age of 75, 61 per cent have never used the internet and will be harder to reach if you are only or mainly using digital communication. This is where partnerships with local organisations working with older people can be especially useful.

Methods of Communication

Digital

- Email: a straightforward way of keeping in touch with your members who are IT users.
- Facebook: closed communities on Facebook can be a quick and easy way to keep in touch.
- Meet Up: an online tool where you can set up and publicise your group to a wide range of people.
- Next Door <https://nextdoor.co.uk>: a locally focused social network where local events can be publicised and issues discussed.
- WhatsApp: a simple smartphone-based messaging service.

Non-Digital

- Post: to keep in touch with those who do not use email or social media.
- Telephone: groups may want to get a pay-as-you-go mobile to use purely for people to contact them about the group.
- Community notice boards.
- Adverts or articles in local newsletters.



Venues

It is useful to think beyond hiring rooms in community centres or libraries. Some **AWwoC** groups have met in pubs or cafés that have a private space they can use. This has the advantage of being social spaces which can lead to more relaxed meetings, for example people can come earlier/stay later to have lunch or dinner or tea together but be aware that some members may be on limited incomes.

Day/Time of Meetings

We suggest rotating the times of meetings so that people who may have commitments during the day can attend in the evenings or vice versa. **AWwoC York**, for example, meets alternately in the afternoon and evening on a monthly basis. Meetings usually last around 2 hours.



Outline programme for meetings

Below is a suggested programme for the first few meetings. It is important for the group to work that people feel comfortable with each other and that they can share information and experiences safely. The first two meetings are designed to help people get to know each other better, the meetings after that can be done in any topic order.

Meeting 1: Getting to Know You

- Purpose: to help people feel welcome, comfortable with each other and share stories about why they have come that day.
- Everyone introduces themselves and says a bit about why they are there.
- Introduction to **AWwoC** and what it does.
- Give everyone a copy of 'Our Voices' Report on the experiences of people ageing without children. This will be supplied by **AWwoC**.
- Discuss what people would like to get from the group.

Meeting 2: Continue Getting to Know Each Other

- Watch **AWwoC** video from the Victoria Derbyshire show and discuss points raised.
- Agree a programme for the next 5/6 meetings.

Topics for Group Meetings

There are a wide range of topics that groups can discuss. In the table below are the topics most commonly by people ageing without children raised with suggestions for speakers and useful resources. These topics can take place in an order the group prefers and to fit with availability of local speakers. Local authorities are a good source for speakers either directly or in terms of local knowledge and networks.

Legal Affairs

Power of attorney, wills and advance planning

“Only just put in place the new POA for my mother, on advice of a trusted solicitor. I Am thinking of putting my own in place as single and no children, but no one I feel I can ask in the extended family so I have asked close friends who I trust although that may change as we all age and maybe less able so I will have to keep assessing my own situation at a cost that's if I am able” (AWwoC facebook group member)

People ageing without children are concerned about how they will manage their affairs especially if they lose capacity and who they can appoint to act on their behalf.

Speakers

A local solicitor who understands the issue that people have no children and may have no other family either and worry about who will act on their behalf and ensure their wishes are carried out.

Resources

- Independent age guides: <https://www.independentage.org/information/future-planning>
- Age UK factsheets: https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/information-guides/ageukig21_powers_of_attorney_inf.pdf
- Court of Protection: Makes decisions on financial or welfare matters for people who can't make decisions at the time they need to be made (they 'lack mental capacity'), <https://www.gov.uk/courts-tribunals/court-of-protection>
- Compassion in Dying: An organisation which aims to help you understand your rights to make decisions about your health and care, including how to make treatment and care decisions if you have the capacity to do so, and what happens if you can no longer make decisions for yourself. It also includes information about how to plan ahead to ensure your wishes for treatment and care are followed at the end of life, <https://compassionindying.org.uk/making-decisions-and-planning-your-care/>

18

Contacts

- Solicitors for the elderly, <https://sfe.legal/>



Co-housing

For people ageing without children, co-housing is one of the most popular solutions to concerns about later life. People are interested to know how they can get involved in starting one or join in with an existing development.

Co-housing is an intentional community of private homes clustered around shared space. Each home has traditional amenities, including a private kitchen. Shared spaces typically feature a common house, which may include a large kitchen and dining area, laundry, and recreational spaces. Shared outdoor space may include parking, open space, and gardens. Neighbours also share resources such

Speakers

From a local co-housing project if possible, if not show the following video on older women's co-housing and discuss, <https://cohousingwoodside.co.uk/2016/02/06/bbc-story-of-owch-3-february-2016/>

Resources

- UK Co-housing Network: <https://cohousing.org.uk/>
- Housing LIN: <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/Housing/HousingforOlderPeople/Cohousing/>

Local Services

“the utilization of public care services by the elderly is strongly mediated by the presence of children, who act as advocates on behalf of their parents.” *Childlessness and support networks in later life: a new public welfare demand? Evidence from Italy*
Marco Albertini Letizia Mencarini 2011

Research shows that people ageing without children can struggle more to find out about and access local services because they lack someone to help them navigate the system.

People are often unaware of all the help they can receive locally. A speaker from a local information and advice service or signposting service will be able to provide an overview of where to start when people are looking for help.

Speakers

Local providers or an Information & Advice service, for example from a local Age UK branch or Citizens Advice.

Resources

Local directory: These will be dependent on your locality.

Carers Ageing Without Children

‘I cared for all my elderly relatives, including my mother, until I was 70, and until they had all died. I know from this how awful it is to be old and dying – the lack of services and the struggle to access what is available.’ (our Voices focus group)

People ageing without children are between 20 per cent and 40 per cent more likely to be carers for their parents. It is this experience of caring that is often the trigger point for them to contact **AWwoC**. People Ageing without children who are carers face all the difficulties carers face whilst knowing that they themselves do not have an adult child to take on the role that they have taken on for their parents. **AWwoC** has dubbed them “tight rope carers” people who care without a safety net

Speakers

From local carers’ organisation.

Resources

- CarersUK: <https://www.carersuk.org/>
- CarersTrust: <https://carers.org/>
- Tide: For carers of people with dementia, <http://tide.uk.net/>

20

Dementia

‘If I get dementia, who is going to tell the carers I don’t like sprouts and hate ‘Eastenders’? No-one is going to know, are they? And I won’t be able to tell them.’ (Our Voices focus group)

Dementia is a particularly strong fear for people ageing without children. Fears around a loss of capacity and dignity are a key issue as well as worries around abuse and being scammed

Speakers

From the Alzheimer’s Society or local Dementia Action Alliance.

Resources

- Alzheimer’s Society: <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/>
- Dementia UK: <https://www.dementiauk.org/>
- Dementia Action Alliance: <https://www.dementiaaction.org.uk/>
- Dementia Engagement and Empowerment Project (DEEP): <http://dementivoices.org.uk/>

Scams

“I am a power of attorney for my mother and this takes time and research to ensure her money is well invested; who will do this for me. How will I know when I am old if I am being scammed?” (response to AWwoC survey)

Many older people worry about falling victim to scams. Research to date shows that it is invariably the adult children of people who notice money disappearing or new items appearing in the house.

Speakers

From local trading standards or a bank.

Resources

- Trading Standards UK: <https://www.tradingstandards.uk/media/documents/policy/research/scam-booklet-final-draft.pdf>
- Age UK: https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/safe-at-home/rb_oct17_scams_party_conference_paper_nocrops.pdf
- Reassura: A subscription phone line that gives you expert advice and guidance on scams and fraud, <https://reassura.com/>

Other topics to consider

- Planning for the later life you want
- End of life
- Benefits
- Dating over the age of 50
- Decluttering
- Hospital discharge
- Choosing a care home
- Finding advocacy support

Activities

- Local groups may want to do more than have speakers, for example they may want to research more about people ageing without children locally or to raise awareness of the issues affecting people ageing without children.
- Run a local survey to find out more about how the issues of ageing without children affect people in your area (**AWwoC** has a template you can use – get in touch for a copy).
- Raise the profile of the issue by contacting local councillors, local council officers and local media.
- Form partnerships with local organisations to ensure that future projects take into account the issues of **AWwoC**.

Click Guides

The Click Guide to Ageing Well is a digital directory of more than 100 resources, including organisations, initiatives and individuals across different themes and areas related to ageing. It is a not all encompassing but gives a brief description of indicative good and interesting activities. It is available as an e-book (or printed version) that will be updated periodically. There are additional Click Guides on Dementia and also Adults and Social Care, and others are in development

<http://clickguide.co.uk/ageing/ageing.php>

Age UK have a wide range of information guides and face sheets, for more information see <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/services/information-advice/guides-and-factsheets/>

Independent Age publish a number of facheets, guides and leaflets on different topics, for more information see <https://www.independentage.org/information/advice-guides-factsheets-leaflets>

22



Appendix 1

Introducing Ageing Well Without Children

A half day workshop

“Who will do all the things I currently do for my ageing parents, from helping them overcome the terror of dementia, to buying their clothes to standing up for them when they are being ignored in hospital. And who will hold my hand and tell me they love me when I’m dying?”

There are now over 1 million people aged over 65 in the UK who have never been parents and this will double to 2 million by 2030.

Understanding what it means to be ageing without children and how it affects people in later life is going to be crucial for organisations who plan and commission services or who provide care, support and companionship to older people.

This short workshop will introduce your organisation to the topic of ageing without children, considering the different aspects of the issue, the impact it has on individuals, services and the community and what changes need to be made.

Appendix 2

Agreement between **AWwoC** nationally and local organisation

AWwoC is a national organisation which focuses on

1. Policy and Campaigning: **AWwoC** raises awareness and understanding of the issues affecting people ageing without children, and advocates for the inclusion of people ageing without children in mainstream discussions on ageing.
2. Research: We research the needs of people ageing without children to ensure our knowledge of the issues affecting them is evolving and growing. We share our research findings on our website www.awwoc.org, and also link to research into the issue carried out by others.
3. Connecting People: **AWwoC** brings together people ageing without children online through its Facebook group, which has over 1,800 members, and through local groups such as the one in York which meets on a monthly basis with speakers and social events

As part of our work, we encourage organisations to set up local groups for people ageing without children. The purpose of these groups is

1. To be a safe place where people ageing without children can come to share experiences and ideas.
2. Peer support and understanding for people ageing without children from others in a similar situation.
3. To influence local planning and policy on ageing so that people ageing without children are taken into account.
4. To identify solutions/services that could help people ageing without children work with local organisations, with the support of **AWwoC** to help make them happen.

Support from **AWwoC**

We are extremely committed to ensuring all Local Groups have sufficient support and guidance from us in order to help groups provide the best support to people ageing without children. As an **AWwoC** Local Group, you will have:

- The right to use the **AWwoC** name and logo to enable you to benefit from the organisation's reputation and reach.
- Access to a training programme which will empower you to increase your group's membership, fundraise and campaign more effectively and improve the support you offer to people ageing without children.
- Access to an online resources that will give you quick and easy access to relevant Policies and Procedures, Information/ Guidance Sheets, latest news and updates from the organisation,

forms and templates and other helpful administrative tools. Hard copies of resources can be made available for Groups without online access.

- Support, guidance and resources from us, including free promotional posters and leaflets.
- The opportunity to attend networking sessions where you will be able to meet other Local Group members.
- The opportunity to attend the **AWwoC** conference. The ability to advertise your Local Group on the **AWwoC** website

Code of conduct

The following Code of Conduct applies to all **AWwoC** Local Groups.

1. Each Local Group is an integral part of **AWwoC** and as such is bound at all times by the organisations Vision and Mission and decisions of its Board.
2. The name of the Local Group should be **AWwoC** and then the geographical location so that Local Groups are known and recognised in the same consistent manner by the general public.
3. Local Groups should complete a report once a year to update **AWwoC** on their activities. The report will be short and concise following a simple template. These reports will help us demonstrate our impact and celebrate and better promote the work that you deliver.
4. Local group leaders should commit to attend at least one networking or training session a year with **AWwoC** nationally
5. Local Groups must not commit **AWwoC** to any partnership, funding agreements or other contracts with other organisations or individuals without prior agreement. You must discuss any potential **AWwoC** partnership with **AWwoC** to ensure it is aligned to the priorities of the local work and organisation objectives of **AWwoC**.
6. Your Group should use the **AWwoC** logo and co-brand documents with that of the organisation.
7. Local groups will need to have appropriate insurance cover.
8. Any money raised in the form of subscriptions is the property of the local group. Formal funding applications to support the activities of the group should be carried out jointly with **AWwoC** nationally.
9. **AWwoC** reserves the right to disaffiliate any Local Group in the event of a severe or irreparable breach of this Code of Conduct or following notification by a Local Group that it can no longer meet the requirements of the Code of Conduct, or where it is considered reasonably and proportionally that the activities of the Local Group are damaging to the work or reputation of **AWwoC**.

Appendix 3 sample press releases

Setting up a group

Date:

New group for people Ageing Well Without Children (**AWwoC**)

“Having friends and on-line friendships with people who are ageing without children means that we can be free to be ourselves and connect with people in the same / similar circumstances as ourselves means that friendships can deepen and grow.”

1.2 million people over 65 in the UK are not parents and thousands more have lost contact with their children or have children living abroad. **AWwoC** groups give people in this position the opportunity to meet with each other and socialise, share experiences and make plans for their own later life.

(insert name of local organisation spokesperson) “We know that many older people have to rely on family for support and that those without children, or indeed any other family, are at risk of finding themselves isolated and without help. In (xxxxx area) we know there are (xxxxx) people ageing without children. We want to set up a number of support groups where we can have somewhere to come and talk about our concerns and meet other people in a similar situation.”

The first meeting is on (date/time) at (venue). Please come along and hear more about the work of **AWwoC** and give us your thoughts about what you would like our local group to do.

For more information contact (insert contact details).

ENDS

Notes to Editors

- 1.2 million people over 65 are not parents.
- By 2030 2 million people over 65 will not be parents.
- 20 per cent of people over 50 are currently not parents.
- Older people with disabilities who live alone and have no children will increase by 80 per cent to 860,000 by 2032.

Ageing Well Without Children CIC (**AWwoC**) is a groundbreaking social enterprise dedicated to supporting and campaigning on behalf of people over 50 without children through choice, circumstance, infertility, bereavement, estrangement, distance or any other reason.

Xxxx organisation is

Looking for volunteer group leaders

Date:

New project is looking for volunteers to lead groups for older people without children.

In the UK there are over one million people aged over 65 who don't have any children to support them in their old age, over xxxx of them live in xxxx. By 2032 there is expected to be an 80 per cent rise in the number of single, childless older people needing support.

Finding ways to help older people ageing without support from family is the subject of a partnership between xxxx and **Ageing Well Without Children (AWwoC)**.

Ageing Well Without Children works to support and campaign for older people without children through choice circumstance, infertility, bereavement, estrangement, distance or any other reason. As part of this work, **Ageing Without Children** are recruiting volunteer group leaders to help set up and run local groups, with the support of a worker from xxx. Volunteers must be ageing without children themselves, but there are no other requirements.

Kirsty Woodard, Chief Executive of **AWwoC** said "Local groups are a great way for people ageing without children to get together to support each other, raise the profile of the issue and to try and bring about changes that will improve their lives."

Volunteers will need to be able to dedicate 5-6 hours a month with expenses paid and will be supported by the local development worker.

For more information contact xxxxxx

Ends

For more information about this press release contact (local organisation)

Appendix 4

Job Description

Job Title: **AWwoC** Group Leader (Volunteer Role)

Supported by:

Hours: Approx. 5/6 per month

Location:

Main purpose of job:

The purpose of the group, supported by the group leader is to:

- To be a safe place where people ageing without children can come to share experiences and thoughts.
- To influence local planning and policy on ageing so that people ageing without children are taken into account.
- To identify solutions/services that could help people ageing without children and work with local organisations with the support of **AWOC** centrally to try and make them happen.

28

Key Responsibilities

- To recruit members for the group via flyers, social media, newspapers.
- Organise a time and place for the group to run.
- Facilitate meetings according to group guidelines.
- To send information and communicate with the group and advising them of meeting dates using a variety of different methods.
- Communicating regularly with group members to keep them updated on **AWwoC** developments.
- To arrange speakers for group meetings,

Person Specification

- Being organised.
- Being able to communicate well.
- Friendly.
- Empathetic.
- Patient.
- Understanding of how to build local links and networks.
- Social media skills would be helpful.