



NEW RESEARCH SHOWS THAT 3M OLDER PEOPLE HAVE THE TV OR RADIO AS THEIR MAIN SOURCE OF COMPANY

- ***Dunelm announces new £2m partnership with Age UK to combat loneliness.***
- ***Partnership will create communities that feel like home for older people whilst providing critical support.***
- ***Charity partnership with Age UK was voted for by Dunelm colleagues and customers.***

Dunelm, the UK's largest homewares retailer, has today announced the launch of a new three-year partnership with national charity Age UK, during which the retailer has pledged to raise a minimum of £2 million to help create communities that feel like home for older people. Dunelm's support will also help combat loneliness through providing practical support both over the phone and through local initiatives.

Loneliness has been declared a global health pandemic by the World Health Organisation and is a daily challenge for a huge proportion of older members of UK communities. As the Home of Homes, Dunelm's vision is to create a society in which older people feel at home in a supportive and welcoming community which offers a real respite from the sense of loneliness experienced by so many.

Concerning new statistics from Age UK reveal that:

- 3 million older people (almost a quarter of those aged over 65) say that the TV or radio is their main source of companyⁱ.
- 1.5 million say that they don't leave home for social events.
- 1.6 million say they don't have someone to talk to about their feelingsⁱⁱ.

This challenging situation for so many of the UK's elderly is highlighted by the experience of retired nurse, Val, from Warwickshire, who rediscovered her reason to live with the help of Age UK:

"When I lost my husband, my house felt very lonely, very unknown. I went from room to room and hated every single one because I was on my own, and it seemed pointless. When you feel that somebody like Age UK really cares about you, something inside you comes alive. You can start to live again. You can start to feel. What Age UK does is bring people back to life."

As part of Dunelm's stand against loneliness and isolation, every penny raised by their fundraising of at least £2m will go towards practical Age UK support to help older people in their homes and communities. This includes information, advice and friendship delivered over the phone, across the country, as well as frontline support in communities where Dunelm

colleagues and customers live across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, delivered by local Age UKs. Initiatives to be supported by Dunelm's fundraising will include:

- **Home Sweet Home** – delivering holistic information and advice to older people in their own homes.
- **Telephone Friendship Service** – providing friendship calls to older people who might be feeling lonely.
- **Information & Advice** – helping older people get advice and support over the phone and online.
- **Local Community Fund** – providing services and activities for older people in communities through local Age UKs.

Nick Wilkinson, CEO, at Dunelm, commented: *“It is no surprise to me that so many of our colleagues and customers voted for Age UK to be the new Dunelm national charity. As the Home of Homes, we have a natural role to play in building communities that feel like home for older people and everyone for now and generations to come. We have a fantastic opportunity, both nationally and locally, to make a real difference in combatting loneliness and we are really excited by the partnership.”*

Paul Farmer, Chief Executive, Age UK said: *“We're proud to be partnering with Dunelm, raising vital funds to help support Age UK's ongoing work, nationally and locally, to help older people in their homes and communities. 'Home' means so much more than bricks and mortar, it's a sense of belonging, of feeling safe, welcome and appreciated. Sadly, more and more older people are telling us that this simply isn't their reality.*

“Together with Dunelm, we are on a mission to redefine the concept of home for those who are struggling to find warmth, companionship and practical help to do more than simply survive. Whether that's through advice and friendship delivered over the phone, or via frontline support, this partnership will prove pivotal in expanding our support network to more older service users up and down the country.”

Dunelm will raise funds for Age UK in a number of ways – revenue will be generated by the retailer donating a proportion of the sales of hot beverages and seasonal menu items from their popular Pausa instore cafes, plus revenue from carrier bag sales, charitable initiatives driven by Dunelm store, depot and office-based colleagues, plus customer online donations. Every penny raised will go towards practical Age UK support to help older people in their homes and communities.

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Notes to Editors:

About Dunelm

Dunelm is the UK's market leader in homewares with a purpose 'to help create the joy of truly feeling at home, now and for generations to come'. Its specialist customer proposition offers value, quality, choice and style across an extensive range of products, spanning multiple homewares and furniture categories and including services such as Made to Measure window treatments.

The business was founded in 1979 by the Adderley family, beginning as a curtains stall on Leicester market before expanding its store footprint. The business has grown to 183 stores

across the UK and has developed a successful online offer through dunelm.com which includes home delivery and Click & Collect options. Most stores include Pausa coffee shops, where customers can enjoy a range of hot and cold food and drinks.

From its textiles heritage in areas such as bedding, curtains, cushions, quilts and pillows, Dunelm has built a comprehensive offer as 'The Home of Homes' including furniture, kitchenware, dining, lighting, outdoor, decoration and DIY. The business predominantly sells specialist own-brand products sourced from long-term, committed suppliers.

Dunelm is headquartered in Leicester and employs over 11,000 colleagues.

About Age UK

Age UK is a national charity that works with a network of partners, including Age Scotland, Age Cymru, Age NI and local Age UKs across England, to help everyone make the most of later life, whatever their circumstances.

In the UK, the Charity helps more than seven million older people each year by providing advice and support. It also researches and campaigns on the issues that matter most to older people. Its work focuses on ensuring that older people: have enough money; enjoy life and feel well; receive high quality health and care; are comfortable, safe and secure at home; and feel valued and able to participate.

Age UK and over 100 local Age UKs across the country work to combat loneliness through a range of services and activities, such as befriending, home visits and lunch clubs as well as advice and support when there's no one else to turn to. The Charity relies on donations from the public so it can continue to be there for older people and their families & friends.

Older people and their families or friends can also call Age UK's Advice Line for free on 0800 169 65 65, visit www.ageuk.org.uk or contact their local Age UK to find out what help is available in their local area. The Advice Line is open 365 days a year 8am to 7pm.

Age UK's subsidiary charity, Age International, supports older people globally in over 30 developing countries by funding programmes such as vital emergency relief and healthcare and campaigning to raise awareness and change policies.

Age UK is a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England (registered charity number 1128267 and registered company number 6825798). Charitable services are provided through Age UK and commercial products are offered by the Charity's Community Interest Company (CiC) (registered company number 1102972) which donates its net profits to Age UK (the Charity).

ⁱ Age UK calculation based on data (weighted to be representative of the UK population) from Yonder online and telephone omnibus research polling for Age UK, November 2023 (weighted sample of 2632 people aged 65+ in the UK, between 14th and 27th October 2023) and ONS mid-year 2021 population estimates (published 21st December 2022). 24.11% of people aged 65 & over in the UK 'slightly agree' or 'strongly agree' with the statement 'The TV/radio is my main source of company' which equates to 3,024,702 people (24.11% multiplied by 12,537,031). Figures may differ due to rounding.

ⁱⁱ Age UK calculation based on data (weighted to be representative of the UK population) from Yonder online and telephone omnibus research polling for Age UK, November 2023 (weighted sample of 2632 people aged 65+ in the UK, between 14th and 27th October 2023) and ONS mid-year 2021 population estimates (published 21st December 2022). 12.59% of people aged 65 & over in the UK 'slightly agree' or 'strongly agree' with the statement 'I don't have anyone to talk to about my feelings' which equates to 1,576,655 people (12.59% multiplied by 12,537,031). Figures may differ due to rounding.