

**ALONE**

Supporting older people  
to age at home

# No one should be on their own at Christmas

**Our Christmas campaign with former broadcaster Vincent Browne asks everyone to support the work of ALONE.**

At the launch of the campaign, Vincent urged the public to offer friendship and support to those living alone. "I have been an admirer of the work of ALONE for many years and I fully support their vision of a society where older people are included as valued and empowered members of the community. The need for supportive housing, befriending and other services for older people has grown exponentially in recent years and, with the number of over 65s set to increase dramatically in the next couple of decades, it's only going to get worse if we don't act fast!"

He continued, "This campaign is asking older people who need support to pick up the phone and get in touch with ALONE, it's asking families to talk to the older people in their lives about their needs and it's asking people who want to help to become an ALONE Befriending volunteer. ALONE's campaign is offering us the chance to connect with older people, provide them with the supports they need, and build a sense of community."

## **ALONE: The First 40 Years**

The book was launched in The National Library by Minister of State at the Department of Health Jim Daly T.D., who has special responsibility for Mental Health and Older People.



*L to R: Seán Moynihan, Patricia Larkin, Valerie Cox, Minister Jim Daly T.D., Eddie Matthews.*

Written by author and retired RTÉ journalist Valerie Cox, *ALONE: The First 40 Years* tells the inspiring story of the early years of ALONE - from Willie Birmingham's selfless dedication right through to the volunteers and staff who follow in his footsteps today.

The book is available from Easons and Veritas stores nationwide.



**ALONE**

Supporting older people  
to age at home

## Annual Report

At ALONE, we place transparency and accountability at the core of our values. We have published our 2016 Annual Report and some of the highlights made possible by our volunteers & supporters include:

- We had more than 350 volunteers in 2016 and we are delighted that number continues to grow!
- Volunteers provided over 46,800 hours of volunteer services, which equals an estimated value of €702,000.
- Because of our great volunteers, we were able to increase the number of people Befriended by 42%.
- 4,500 people were supported nationwide via Befriending Network Ireland.
- We helped 937 older people live as independently as possible at home.
- ALONE maintained the ISO 9001:2008 Quality Standard and gained the Quality in Befriending Award.
- We received the Investing in Volunteers award, which recognises the contribution made by all volunteers and our commitment to supporting them.



You can find the full Annual Report on our website. If you have any questions on the Annual Report, please contact [fundraising@alone.ie](mailto:fundraising@alone.ie).



I want to thank you so much for the hard work, volunteer hours, donations, and support you gave to ALONE throughout 2017.

The older people who use our services are an inspiration. Even though many face challenges big and small like loneliness, poor health, poor housing and poor finance, there is still joy and laughter. And in that, we see the best of ALONE: A combination of companionship to show we care paired with our ability to solve the problems so that older people can age at home.

At this time of year, and the end of our 40th year, we reflect and celebrate everything that has been achieved by so many through the decades.

As we look ahead to 2018 and beyond ALONE will respond to the increasing numbers of older people who need our support.

ALONE's aim is that no older person is isolated and lonely, no older person is left without the support they need, and no older person is homeless or at risk of homelessness.

This can be done, but not without your continued support and commitment. We must be willing to shape the future and write the next chapter.

Without the efforts of every single person, ALONE would not be able to do what we do. We cannot thank you enough.

Wishing you a very Happy Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year 2018.

Sincerely,

## 2017 highlights: ALONE expanding across Ireland



Carmel Bradley pictured with Anne  
(Coordinator – Good Morning Louth)

### ALONE's first regional hub – ALONE North East

In early 2017, four of DkIT Netwell's services in Co. Louth joined with ALONE to become our first regional hub: ALONE North East. The services which had been running for more than 10 years are now working in partnership with other community services to support all older people in the Louth area.

If you are based in Co. Louth and would like to join the services of ALONE, please contact ALONE North East on 042 9331828

Welcome to the older people and volunteers from Crosscare, who joined ALONE's Befriending services this year.

### Activity in the North East Hub

- Over 250 older people receiving daily and weekly Befriending phone calls.
- Over 22,000 calls made this year!
- 50 older people enjoying weekly visits with Befriending volunteers.
- Over 100 older people attending weekly social groups.
- Over 200 older people attending social events and dinner dances.
- Nearly 100 volunteers in ALONE North East.



Meet the team  
of ALONE North East

## How we help

Mary\* said ***"I look forward to my calls. It motivates me to get going in the morning"***.

Jane\* said ***"I find people don't have time to listen to me. I don't know what I would do without the calls from Good Morning Louth"***.

Mary, 78, said ***"There is nothing to beat someone rapping on the door or lifting the phone and saying 'how are you doing?'"***

\*name changed

## Tips for a safe and healthy winter

- **Visiting:** Christmas can be a time of loneliness and isolation. Please stay connected with family and friends.
- **Security:** Ensure all door locks, chains and bolts are secure.
- **Heating:** Make sure draughts are blocked and curtains are closed to retain the heat. Check that the heating system is easy to operate and that it is working properly.
- **Physical health:** Keeping active is a great way to maintain physical health and mental wellbeing. Try and get out for some light exercise, if possible.
- **Clothing:** Several thin layers will keep us warmer than one thick layer in chilly weather. If going outdoors, ensure you are well wrapped up to keep warm.
- **Medication:** Make sure that all prescriptions are filled and you've got your flu jab.
- **Food:** Make sure your diet includes plenty of fruit and vegetables, and that you have at least one hot meal each day during the winter months.
- **Have fun:** Listen, laugh and learn! Spending time together is a great chance to share stories and learn something new.

## Baz launches ALONE 'Do One Thing' campaign with ALONE

This Christmas, we have partnered with An Post for our 'Do One Thing' campaign. Baz Ashmawy launched the campaign which encourages members of the public to reach out to older people experiencing loneliness by sending them a personalised An Post card.

Speaking at the launch, Baz said, "Every card sent will raise money for ALONE, as well as making a huge difference to that older person's Christmas."

To learn more, visit [www.alone.ie/Christmas/](http://www.alone.ie/Christmas/).



*Baz Ashmawy pictured with Michael McCartyhy & Sheila Collins.*

## Christmas Cracker Run

ALONE have once again teamed up with the Clonliffe Harriers Athletics Club for the ERP 5km Christmas Cracker run taking place on the 31st December. The family-friendly fun run is open to everyone - from serious runners to costume wearing walkers and everyone in between. To register for the race, please visit [www.alone.ie](http://www.alone.ie).



## Regular giving

By making a planned monthly donation, you can help to ensure that ALONE can continue to help those older people most in need. Please consider a monthly donation to help the increasing numbers of older people who come to us for help, now and long into the future.

**ALONE**

Supporting older people  
to age at home