



# NEWS

5 December 2016

## **DAME ESTHER RANTZEN OPENS HELPLINE'S NEW 'HOME'**

The Silver Line's founder, Dame Esther Rantzen has officially opened our new helpline centre.

Dame Esther, Silver Line's Chief Executive Sophie Andrews, and the helpline team were joined by representatives of local organisations, as well as the Mayor of Blackpool, Coun Kath Rowson, for our big day.

The Silver Line is the only free, national, confidential helpline open every day and night, offering information, friendship and advice to older people.

The helpline has received more than one million calls since its launch in November 2013. Over two-thirds of these calls – around 700,000 – were made overnight or at weekends when no other helpline is available for older people who may be lonely, isolated or confused.

With over 10,000 calls received every a week, the helpline needed to move to the new base in Blackpool to enable it to cope with the continued year-on-year growth in calls from older people.

The Silver Line's Chief Executive, Sophie Andrews, said:

“The move to a new base is an important part of ensuring our future sustainability. It helps reduce the running costs of the helpline, while also allowing us to move faster to equip and train staff with any new skills required.

“Our new office will also allow the development of a ‘hub and spoke’ model for the helpline. This will involve greater use of volunteers in regional bases so that we can continue to handle increasing call volumes while carefully managing costs.”

The Silver Line relies entirely on donations and needs to raise £5million every year to ensure its helpline and friendship services can keep going. There is no cost to the older person, or to the volunteer, for any of its services, which are paid for by donations to The Silver Line.

Pictured

- Silver Line founder Dame Esther Rantzen with the Mayor of Blackpool, Councillor Kath Rowson.

### **For more information or interviews contact**

Kevin Mochrie  
Head of Communications  
kevin.mochrie@TheSilverLine.org.uk

Hannah Rogers  
Media & Information Officer  
hannah.rogers@TheSilverLine.org.uk

Tel: 0748 301 5955

Tel: 020 3794 7902

**The Silver Line**

- The Silver Line (0800 4 70 80 90) is the only free, national, confidential helpline open every day and night, offering information, friendship and advice to older people.
- The cost of calls to the helpline, and The Silver Line's other friendship services, are paid for by the voluntary donations it receives.
- 68% of callers contact the helpline because they are lonely or isolated, 90% live alone, and 54% say they have no one else to speak to.
- More details on The Silver Line website: [www.thesilverline.org.uk](http://www.thesilverline.org.uk)