



# Dr Michael Josephson MBE

## Charity Ball 2019 Impact Report:

# The Silver Line Helpline

**The Silver Line**  
helpline for older people

Run by  Age UK

# Thank you, Dr Michael Josephson MBE, for your incredible donation of £104,102.46 from your Charity Ball in 2019 to The Silver Line Helpline.

The Silver Line Helpline is the UK's only free, confidential, 24-hour helpline providing friendship and comfort to older people when they need it most.

## A message our founder and president Dame Esther Rantzen DBE

*I first admitted I was lonely in 2011 when I found myself living alone for the first time aged 71 and hating it.*

*As journalist Felicity Green said, "I have plenty of people to do something with, but nobody to do nothing with." So, I stopped cooking, I stopped taking exercise, I fell asleep on the sofa and lived on bread and cheese.*

*No wonder health experts say loneliness is so bad for our mental and physical health.*

*I will never forget meeting a lady who told me, "Every morning I wake up, get dressed and sit on my bed, waiting for death." She was one of my inspirations for the creation of The Silver Line Helpline.*

*We know that having someone to talk to can make all the difference.*

*One of our Silver Callers wrote to me about the anguish she had felt when her beloved husband died. She had not felt able to confide her pain to her family, but this was when she told me things changed...*

*"I saw The Silver Line number in a magazine and thought I wonder what would happen if I rang? What happened was I found myself pouring my heart out to a lovely woman and that night for the first time since John died, I had a good night's sleep. John would thank you, and so do I."*



**So, to Dr Michael Josephson MBE and all involved in the Charity Ball 2019 – thank you once again for your support!**

## The difference you helped The Silver Line Helpline make in 2019

In 2019, 287,000 calls were answered by our dedicated team of staff and volunteers. Each call from someone with no one else to turn to for friendship, or support: an older person seeking reassurance, a listening ear, or simply someone to say, “Good morning!”

As well as friendship we were gave vital practical support too – for many this was life-changing, for some it was life-saving!

**10,000** older people received advice and information to solve pressing problems.

**2,500** callers were signposted to essential services.

**400** urgent cases were referred to emergency services.

**Our Silver Line Friends scheme** matched volunteers were matched with like-minded older people for regular weekly calls—creating over 1,800 active friendships and delivering 7,200 calls every month. As Terry told us...

*“I’m really pleased with my Silver Line Friend. He gives me something to look forward to, and I know I’m not alone. Absolutely fantastic.”*

### Our Silver Connects service

went even further, helping older people navigate complex systems and access vital support. In 2019, 10 volunteers supported 819 older people including through:

**85** referrals to social services for care needs assessments.

**72** cases of homecare support.

**60** financial issues resolved.

**10** older people with no food, helped to access food banks - immediately.



**Our Silver Circles** also brought communities together with over 250 group calls, helping older people connect with each other to feel less alone. As Susan said...

*“It is lovely talking to other older people. We’re all in the same boat. I think it’s a wonderful idea.”*

**The donation from Dr Michael Josephson MBE Charity Ball in 2019 didn't just fund a service - it gave hope, friendship and security to thousands of older people – just like Tom...**

*I'll never forget Tom. He was a wonderful man who called The Silver Line Helpline regularly in 2019. Tom had spent over 50 years living in rural Northumberland with his wife, and together they shared a love for walking through the countryside, spotting birds, and enjoying the beauty of wildlife. It kept them fit, active, and happy.*

*But life changed for Tom when his wife passed away. About a year later, he started calling us. During one conversation, he shared his passion for birdwatching and how much joy it used to bring him.*

*Then he said something heart-breaking, without his wife to share those moments with, it had lost its magic. For Tom, the real joy was in talking about the rare birds he'd spotted, and now he had no one to share that with.*



*It was gently suggested that Tom could call us whenever he saw something special, and we promised that we'd love to hear all about it. And that's exactly what he did. Every time Tom spotted an interesting bird, he picked up the phone and called The Silver Line Helpline. We had the most wonderful conversations and could hear the spark returning to his voice.*

*Over time, Tom regained his confidence. After a couple of years, he even joined a local birdwatching club. He didn't call as often after that, but every now and then, he'd update us on his adventures. Hearing about his progress, and the birds he'd seen, was truly heartwarming.*

**Lesley Carberry - The Silver Line Helpline Head of Befriending, 2019**

**Towards the end of 2019 The Silver Line Helpline became part of the charity Age UK to secure its long-term future. Since then, it has continued to be a lifeline to thousands more older people, never more than during the Covid 19 pandemic when older people were so disproportionately impacted and so very socially isolated.**

**So we are also grateful to Dr Michael Josephson MBE for his leadership as a trustee of The Silver Line Helpline in 2019 - enabling this successful transition to support more older people in future.**

**Thank you once again for this incredible donation – a priceless gift of friendship!**

# The Silver Line

helpline for older people

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