

## News & Campaigning

### Age Concern<sup>\*</sup> urges action following the announcement that there were 24,000 excess deaths during the winter of 2002/2003

Age Concern announces that it is appalled at the news that there were 24,000 excess deaths over the winter of 2002/2003<sup>1</sup> The vast majority of these will be vulnerable older people who die in England and Wales in the winter because of the cold<sup>2</sup>

Director General of Age Concern England, Gordon Lishman said: "Age Concern is very distressed at the news that there have been over 20,000 excess deaths last winter. It is shocking that in 2003 we can live in a society where people can die of cold related illnesses. Many of these deaths are older people who are most at risk during the winter months.

"In spite of the Government's initiatives to fight fuel poverty amongst older people, many of them still cannot afford sufficient heating or live in housing with inadequate insulation."

Age Concern provides vital winter services for the most vulnerable pensioners, such as face to face benefits advice, befriending services, emergency heater loans, insulation grants and advice on repairs.

This year, to raise the much needed funds to keep its vital winter services running, Age Concern is launching Wear a Hat Day. The charity is asking people to wear a hat on December 5th and donate £1 to its winter fundraising appeal to make a difference to the lives of older people this winter.

[www.ace.org.uk/AgeConcern/news\\_1542.htm](http://www.ace.org.uk/AgeConcern/news_1542.htm)

\* Age Concern: a British charity group.