

Still Soldiering On? Citizens Advice Bureau Survey - The impact of the Recession on the Older Generation in Warwickshire

CAB surveys completed by 182 people have revealed the impact of the recession on the over 60's in Warwickshire – a group of people under the radar of the news coverage about the financial downturn. The over 60's are struggling financially and their situation is becoming more acute because of a hidden factor - they are giving financial help to other members of their family.

Headline findings

59% have **financial strains** - dwindling savings because of low interest rates and higher costs of living

80% have **difficulty paying fuel bills**.

An increasing number have **problems paying for food**.

Some are **making choices day to day between paying for food or paying for heating**.

Home maintenance expenses are being postponed, storing up problems for later.

60% are worried about the **effects of the downturn on their family**.

38% are **supporting family members**, with financial help, unpaid child care or accommodation.

41% say financial problems have impacted on their health.

Isolation is an increasing problem. In the county there are large rural areas and a lack of public transport. This group now has little cash for things like taxis, or running cars. Not having a social life in turn has an **impact on health**.

Conclusion - Are they still Soldiering On?

People are feeling the impact more and more. They just keep cutting back, with the older generation's stoicism. But there is a creeping problem of hidden poverty and debt, and some are heading for a financial crisis with no obvious way out.

Our recommendations

Increased partnership working between agencies

Improved access to services – contact points

Training for all frontline workers on the challenges faced by older people

Campaign on keeping public transport.

Make older people a priority – they will not be the ones shouting loudest

Help them to feel *part* of the Big Society, rather than living on its margins.

If you would like to work with us to see how things can be improved, please email susan.green@stratforduponavoncab.org.uk