



## VINTAGE VIBES

GOOD COMPANY NEVER GETS OLD

# INTERVIEW:

Christina McKelvie

Minister for Older  
People and Equalities

## Why is Loneliness such an important issue to tackle in older people in Scotland?

I'm Christina McKelvie and I'm the Minister for Older Peoples and Equalities in the Scottish Government. One of the reasons why we need to tackle social isolation and loneliness is because Scotland is an ageing population and we're having more older people in our communities. There's two aspects to this, the aspect of preventing loneliness and isolation, and the aspect of supporting people who are experiencing social isolation and loneliness. Opportunities like this befriending service (Vintage Vibes) allow us do to both, preventing and supporting.

## How have you found your visit to Vintage Vibes today?

I found it incredibly inspiring. It's great to see all of the policy work that goes on in this area, but for me I needed to see how it operates in the front line. Being about to sit down and talk to the volunteers and the older people involved in the project at Vintage Vibes has been incredibly important. It's allowed me to see exactly the difference that it makes and that's what's important to me - the outcomes. We can have great strategies and great policies but we need to know the actual work in the front line and to speak with the older people here today.

# What are your hopes for Scottish older people in the future?

My hopes for older people in Scotland for the future, because there are going to be more of us, is to ensure that we remain active: physically, culturally and socially - and dealing with social isolation and loneliness is a key element of that.

If we can give people a much better quality of life by being involved in their local communities, doing the things that they like to do, then you maintain that level of independence. So, when we get older, we stay in the mindset of being an independent person, being part of a community and being valuable to that community.

THANK YOU  
CHRISTINA!



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