

McCarthy & Stone Unveils National Study Revealing 21st Century Retirement Lifestyles

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McCarthy & Stone, the UK's leading retirement housebuilder, has launched a report aimed at busting myths and negative stereotypes around retirement.

More than 2,500 retirees from across the UK participated in 'The Colour Report', a study which explores how retirement is evolving and individuals are moving away from traditional retirement habits.

The report delves into the differing opinions of three key retirement age demographics - 65-70, 70-74 and 75+ - to demonstrate that age is just a number. Researchers have unveiled many reassuring findings for people who are approaching retirement, highlighting that, in the main, retirees today are embracing new experiences and continuing lifestyle choices made pre-retirement. It also provides some vital insights into why three quarters of retirees feel younger than their true age.

The Colour Report examines this new demographic of later-lifers as people who are ageless, with young-at-heart dreams and ambitions, who are embracing independent and active lives for as long as possible.

Kim Caldwell, from McCarthy & Stone, comments: "We commissioned *The Colour Report* to bust the myths around retirement and to highlight the shifting attitudes and growing independence of today's retirees. We want to encourage society to move away from stereotypical views about chronological age.

"Retirees are starting to rewrite the definition of growing old. They experienced the birth of the information age and at every life stage have fought to challenge the norm; it's futile to expect them to change now just because they're classed as pensioners.

"*The Colour Report* makes for fascinating reading and we hope it goes some way to challenging ageism. No seismic change happens once we retire; we remain the same colourful individuals we always were. Only with a brighter, more exciting, journey ahead of us!"

The Colour Report highlights that the older generations shop in the same shops as their grandchildren, (21% at Primark, 14% at H&M and TopShop), listen to the same music (35% listen to pop music, rock music is number one for a quarter of respondents and R&B is top of the pops for 15%), and watch the same TV channels (47% watch BBC Three, 27% E4, and almost 1 in 20 had a TV subscription service). In fact, no matter what society is doing - sampling the latest cuisines, getting on board with new social media trends or breaking up and making up - retirees are right there - only with the time, and means, to do it properly!

What's more, pensioners don't believe old age starts until their mid to late 70s, feel up to 20 years younger than their biological age, and consider living life to the full more important than leaving an inheritance for their children.

It's certainly reassuring for people who are approaching retirement and may be concerned about this major life change. It highlights that retirees are making the most of their twilight years by fulfilling lifelong dreams and ambitions. Their list of things to tick off over the next few years included going on a round-the-world trip (19%), writing a book (12%), learn to dance (6%) and getting a degree (4%).

The study also uncovered that instead of the beginning of the end, retirement is now seen as the start of the next phase of their life, and is leading to retirees reassessing who they choose to spend it with; almost half are divorced or separated and a number of those who do want to find love in later life are joining online dating agencies in the hope of meeting their perfect match. In fact, 24% of these aged 75+ said that they had been successful and met someone special.

Retirees living in McCarthy & Stone developments were asked to be involved in the project, highlighting how they are living ageless, active and independent lives. A number of homeowners have been chosen to feature in the report as examples of people who are embracing old age. These include a 93-year-old man who has recently completed a zip wire challenge to raise money for his local church, a fashion conscious 70-year-old and a couple who are approaching 70 and plan to run a marathon when they reach that milestone.

McCarthy & Stone is also working with choreographer and TV personality Arlene Phillips to launch the report, along with academic, Patricia O'Neill from the University of Oxford, who provided a foreword to the report and concludes: "Those who are nearing, or at, the traditional "retirement age" do not want to disappear into the background or be isolated from the community at large. These people are interested in all aspects of life. They want to participate in it. Moreover, they still have a lot to offer. Either get on board with them, or get out of the way. They have paved the way in the past and will continue to pioneer the future."

The Colour Report is available to download at www.mccarthyandstone.co.uk from 27 July, 2015.

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The research was conducted in March 2015 with 2,503 retirees aged 55+ from across the UK. The main focus of the report is based on responses from those aged 65+, a sample size of 1,673.

Notes to editors:

McCarthy and Stone is the UK's leading retirement housebuilder, pioneering the concept of purpose-built, privately-owned accommodation for older people. With the largest share of the owner-occupied retirement housing market, the Company has built c50,000 apartments in over 1,000 different locations, and currently has around 160 developments under construction or for sale in the UK. In 2014, its development at Kirkby Lonsdale, Queen Elizabeth Court, won 'Best Retirement Development UK' at the UK Property Awards.

McCarthy and Stone's Retirement Living and Assisted Living developments offer one and two bedroom apartments across the country in a wide variety of locations, from city centres to rural villages and coastal locations. Retirement Living developments offer the independence of retaining home ownership while living in an apartment specifically for the over-60s, as well as greater peace of mind and companionship. Assisted Living developments for the over-70s offer all of this, plus a helping hand through flexible care and support packages that make life that little bit easier.

In early 2015, McCarthy and Stone launched its Ortus Homes offering. Exclusively for over-55s, these bespoke properties are intelligently designed for downsizing to enhance a homeowner's leisure years.

McCarthy and Stone's commitment to quality and customer service continues to be recognised by homeowners. For the tenth year running, the Company has been awarded five stars for customer satisfaction in an independent survey conducted by the Home Builders Federation (HBF).

For further information, visit www.mccarthyandstone.co.uk

Company Contact:

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E. [support\[@\]pressat.co.uk](mailto:support[@]pressat.co.uk)

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