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PRESS RELEASE

Dame Esther Rantzen praises ‘amazing work’ of pioneering grandma-inspired technology company

NATIONAL treasure Dame Esther Rantzen has sung the praises of a pioneering technology company for the ‘amazing work’ it does to help tens of thousands of older people across the UK access life changing daily contact after the company was honoured with a “Queen’s Award For Enterprise” for Innovation.

The famous charity founder, TV presenter and journalist spoke of her delight that Alertacall was recognised today (Thursday, April 21) as a recipient of the Queen’s Award which is considered the highest accolade and most prestigious business award in the country.

James Batchelor founded Alertacall in 2004 when he created technology to keep his 86-year-old grandmother Eveline and others like her independent by allowing them to easily confirm they are safe each day or otherwise receive a call from a friendly, specially trained person.

The company’s technologies have since helped tens of thousands of older people to retain their independence, saved many lives, and are also now used to modernise sheltered housing schemes nationwide with features that include video-messaging.

Dame Esther, a long-time supporter of Alertacall, said: “It is wonderful to see Alertacall win the top business award, the prestigious Queen’s Award.

“I have seen this company in action and I am hugely impressed by the sensitive and professional way they support older people, enabling them to stay safe, stay independent and provide their families with the reassurance that all is well.

“I have known the founder CEO, James Batchelor, for many years, and have always admired the way he and his team are focused on creating technology that increases human contact for people who need it and they perfectly understand their role in using technology for good. Amazing work, and genuinely award-winning!”

Alertacall, which was founded in 2004 by James Batchelor, has teams in Windermere, Cumbria, and Warrington, Cheshire. It works across the UK with housing associations and other organisations that house and support older people, and it also supports private customers.

Among the services provided is the award-winning OKEachDay button which allows control over daily contact, easy messaging and video calling through a touchscreen device.

James said: "Alertacall was inspired by a desire to help my grandmother be as independent as she wanted to be, while balancing that with our need as a family to ensure she was safe.

"It's a joy to see those ideas I created for her go on to help thousands of other people - and now for our team to have been honoured with the most prestigious award any business could wish to receive, the Queen's Award for Enterprise. Receiving this is the icing on the cake.

"Thank you to all our amazing team members, all our private customers and all the housing providers that use our services, because we couldn't have done this without you."

James has been invited to Buckingham Palace to pick up the award and meet HRH The Prince of Wales in July along with other recipients as part of the celebrations, and Alertacall is granted permission to fly a Queen's Award flag and use official Queen's Award emblems for the next five years.

To find out more about Alertacall, visit www.alertacall.com.

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Photos:

Dame Esther Rantzen with Alertacall Chief Executive and founder James Batchelor.

Alertacall Chief Executive and founder James Batchelor with his grandmother, Eveline, who inspired the creation of the pioneering technology company.

Alertacall Chief Executive and founder James Batchelor.

Editors notes

Founded in 2004 Alertacall helps as many people as possible feel safe, connected and informed using ingenious technology and contact with people who care.

Alertacall employs around 100 people and was founded by James Batchelor, the original inventor of the "I am okay" button. He was inspired by Eveline, his own staunchly independent grandmother and her desire to remain in her own home for as long as possible.

The company now improves the lives of tens of thousands of people and has won many awards. It works in partnership with dozens of organisations in housing, health and social care and has many private customers.

Eveline, James' grandmother – who inspired his creation of Alertacall was a village shop keeper for much of her life, and a B+B operator up until her early eighties. After the death of 2 husbands – the first of whom was detained as a Prisoner of War in WW2, she learned to drive in her late 50s, travelled the world on her own and was an inspiration to many with her grit and determination to live on her own, and under her own terms for as long as possible.

This press release is sent on behalf of Alertacall by 32West Ltd. For more information or to arrange an interview please contact David Coulter on david@32west.co.uk