



## Policy & Research Update

### February 2019

British politics is in very choppy waters at the moment but as you can see from this month's Bulletin, Age UK is pressing the Government to keep moving on vital aspects of UK social policy such as plans for the sustainable funding of social care. It is now over two years since the Government promised to bring forward a social care Green Paper and whilst waiting for a plan, the adult care system continues to deteriorate. The daily impact on older people, their families and carers is unacceptable. You can see some of Age UK's recent media work to draw attention to this situation in this month's 'News' section.

*Acting editors for Jane Vass this month are jobsharers Angela Kitching and Hannah Pearce, Head of External Affairs*

## News

[More than 50, 000 older people have died waiting for care since the Government first promised a Social Care Green Paper.](#) Charity Director Caroline Abrahams explains why this is significant: "These tragic new figures demonstrate just how many older people are now suffering from the Government's failure to act decisively on social care. No one can say whether some of those who have died might have lived longer had they received care, but at the very least their final weeks and months might have been more comfortable and their families' lives made easier,

had they been given more support." [Click here](#) to read about what has been promised, and the impact this has on older people.

## How well do you know your brain?

Think you know how your thinking skills might change as they get older? Dr Alan Gow from Heriot-Watt University, who's one of the researchers working with Age UK, asked more than 3,000 people across the UK about this. [Give your brain a workout and see how your answers compare to other people's from across the UK.](#)



## Policy & Research

### Publications

In January the Government announced that from May 15<sup>th</sup> [new claims](#) for benefits will change so that 'mixed age' couples (where one has reached State Pension age and the other is younger) will have to claim the working age benefit Universal Credit rather than Pension Credit which could mean they get a much lower level of support than under the current system (people already on these benefits will remain on the old system). Age UK is very concerned about the impact this will have and has produced this briefing paper to explain more about the change and our views

[Click here to read the briefing](#)

### Consultation Responses

#### [Pensions dashboard consultation response](#)

Age UK has responded to the Government's consultation on setting up 'pensions dashboards', which would allow people to see **all their pension pots at the same time**, making it easier to manage their money. Age UK is supportive of the scheme, but stresses that consumer protection is of paramount importance if a useful, trustworthy service is to be established.

[Click here](#) to read Age UK's response.

Age UK's Lesley Carter has produced an article for the Nursing Standard on Malnutrition in the community and what professionals could and should be doing to tackle it.

The article can be accessed with a Nursing Standard Subscription [here](#).

### [BBC consultation on free TV licences for those aged 75+](#)

Age UK has responded to the BBC's consultation on the future of the free TV licence for people aged 75+. We have argued that the free licence should continue in its current form but that this should be the Government's responsibility to fund, not the BBC's.

## Blog

Charity Director Caroline Abrahams further breaks down the drastic changes to Pension Credit in her blog; "[Why the Government is wrong to change the pension credit rules](#)".



## More from Age UK

### Age UK information guides and factsheets

The following factsheets have been updated:

*FS9 Anti-social behaviour in housing, FS27 Planning for your funeral, FS42 Disability equipment and home adaptations, FS59 How to resolve problems and complain about social care, FS65 Equity release, FS71 Park homes, FS48 Pension Credit, FS56 Benefits for people under Pension Credit age, FS92 Universal credit.*

All factsheets can be found on the Age UK website [here](#).

Large Print versions of all factsheets are now also available to download [here](#).

# Age UK Research

## Research Digest

### Raising the bar on strength and balance: The important of community-based provision

Chair of the Board of Trustees at Age UK Calderdale and Kirklees, Dr Liz Boulton has been involved in research looking at balance programmes targeting older adults and evidence-based programmes to reduce falls.

The Centre for Ageing Better commissioned the University of Manchester's Healthy Ageing Research Group to bridge the gap between evidence and practice. Their new report looks directly at communities to better understand their local challenges and identify practical examples of doing things differently, and presents the models of delivery, issues, barriers and innovative solutions that support effective community-based programmes.

[Click here](#) to read the research report



## Upcoming Events

Age UK provides the secretariat for the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Ageing and Older People. The APPG inquiry into housing standards for older people is underway. For interested parties the final two meetings take place in March and May:

**Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> March - Meeting 4:** Focus on the private rented sector and the implications of the growth in older tenants for standards both here and in other parts of Europe.

**Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May – Meeting 5:** To discuss solutions to the issues and problems identified in the previous sessions.

[Click here](#) to find out more and how you can attend these meetings

### **Privacy policy update**

You may have read about the new privacy data laws being introduced last year. This doesn't mean we're changing the way we collect or use your information; but to help make it easier for you to find out what we do, we've created a new 'Privacy Policy' which can be found at [www.ageuk.org.uk/help/privacy-policy](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/help/privacy-policy). If you have any questions or would like a printed copy, please give us a call on 0800 169 8787.

