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**For immediate release: 30/04/2018**

**“Make London’s Boroughs Age Friendly!”**

**Manifesto from Age UKs in London for the London Borough Council Elections**

Age UKs across London are proud to present “Make London’s Boroughs Age Friendly!” a brand new manifesto for the upcoming London borough council elections on May 3rd.

As London continues to grow, the number of older Londoners is increasing too. A socially and economically diverse group, older Londoners contribute massively to every borough of the capital, as workers, volunteers, carers, and much more besides. However, a large number of older Londoners are living below the poverty line and the pressure on local government finances has driven adult social care to breaking point. Action must be taken to ensure London can remain a great place to grow older.

Accordingly, Age UKs in London are calling on candidates in the London borough council elections to commit to making changes in five key areas. Our asks include:

**Quality, Responsive Local Care Services:**

1. **Quality, responsive local care services**

National underfunding has put social care under huge pressure and in many respects, the care market is broken. Local government did not cause this situation, yet has the key legal responsibility for older adults needing long-term care.

We call on candidates to:

* Give top political priority to ensuring that older people with identified care needs are not left without support

**2. Age Friendly Boroughs and Neighbourhoods**

The World Health Organisation has developed the concept of Age Friendly Cities. This covers the areas of housing; outdoor environment and neighbourhoods; transport; social, cultural and civic participation; employment, skills and income; community support and health services; communication and information; and respect and social inclusion. Many of these are fields where boroughs play a key role.

We call on candidates to:

* Bring the borough into line with the Age Friendly Cities approach and cooperate with other local authorities and the Mayor of London to develop this concept. Work to make the borough dementia friendly if this is not already in progress.

**3. Better Communication with Older People**

Many older people, especially in the older age groups, find the switch to digital very challenging. Although more and more older people are getting online, the majority aged 75+ are still not using digital technology. It is often the people who most need the information who find it the most difficult to access it.

We call on candidates to:

* Make information and advice accessible to all older Londoners, including disabled people with physical and sensory impairments and those who are not online
1. **Make London’s Housing Age Friendly**

London’s housing crisis affects older people as well as younger generations. Across all housing tenures, older Londoners who want or need to move struggle to find affordable, accessible and suitable housing in the areas where they want to live and have their family and social networks.

We call on candidates to:

* Ensure provision of more genuinely affordable, accessible housing to rent (long term) and buy for people of all ages; meet at least the London Plan targets for provision of good quality, affordable specialist housing for older people.
1. **Accessible Transport for Older Londoners**

Transport is a key concern for many older people: being able to get around is an important part of being able to take part in society and avoid social isolation and the risk of loneliness.

We call on candidates to:

* Ensure that the borough supports retention of the Freedom Pass and TfL 60+ Oyster Photocard and that they are not means tested.

Paul Goulden, CEO, Age UK London, said:

“I am delighted to present the manifesto for the local elections in May 2018 from Age UKs in London. Age UKs across London are committed to making sure that all older people in London, regardless of faith, ethnicity, gender, sexuality or circumstance, are able to enjoy a fulfilling and valued life, and we hope all candidates of all parties will be able to support this and the recommendations in this manifesto.”

The full manifesto can be downloaded from the Age UK London website: <https://bit.ly/2Gecod1>

**ENDS**

**Notes to Editors:**

* Age UK London is a regional charity that helps London to love later life by campaigning for older Londoners, working on their behalf, and championing their cause.
	+ [www.ageuk.org.uk/london](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/london)
	+ [www.twitter.com/ageuklondon](http://www.twitter.com/ageuklondon)
	+ [www.facebook.com/ageuklondon](http://www.facebook.com/ageuklondon)
* There are local Age UKs working across London, providing hands-on local support to older people: providing advice, enabling independence, and combatting loneliness.
	+ <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/london/local-directory/>
* In 2016, over a million Londoners were aged 65+ and 140,000 of those were aged 85+.
* In 2014, 20% of households in London were headed by a person aged 65 or over.
* Over half of Londoners aged 65+ have a long-term health condition or are disabled and in 2017 almost 67,000 older Londoners were estimated to be living with dementia.
* The Jo Cox Commission on Loneliness found that “more than 1 in 3 people aged 75 and over say that feelings of loneliness are out of their control.”
* 36.7% of Londoners over 65 were born outside of the UK.