



Policy & Research Update March 2019

Acting editor for Jane Vass in this edition is Chris Brooks, Acting Head of Policy:

This month we've heard about just how difficult being a sandwich carer can be. The new Age UK report 'Breaking Point' (see below) showcases the tales of four women who have given up a lot, in some cases almost everything, to look after loved ones. Meanwhile the Chancellor delivered his Spring Statement with no news on the future of social care, which was disappointing even with the current goings on in Westminster. Of course other issues dominate the political debate – no need to mention the 'B' word here! – but this is not an excuse for yet again letting down so many older people and their families.

News

Age UK has [responded to the Spring Budget Statement](#) made on 13th March

Caroline Abrahams, Charity Director at Age UK and Co- chair of the Care and Support Alliance (CSA) said:

“Not for the first time the Chancellor held out the prospect of unspecified amounts of ‘jam tomorrow’ for our beleaguered social care system, but only if a deal to leave the European Union is agreed by Parliament. Given the uncertainty over that it is difficult to be at all confident that relief is on the way any time soon.



Meanwhile, with only a couple of weeks to go now until April we notice that Ministers and officials have stopped saying that the repeatedly delayed Social Care Green Paper may be published that month.

“If this endless prevarication over social care didn’t have such serious consequences for millions of older and disabled people whose needs are not being fully, or in many cases even partly met, it would be laughable.

Of course, great matters of State are under discussion and in important respects the future of our country is at stake, but with each delay it is becoming harder to avoid the conclusion that the political commitment to reform and sustain social care is just not there at the moment, leaving many older and disabled people, and their families and carers, to pay an extremely heavy price.”

Featured Publication

Breaking point – the social care burden on women. This month Age UK published a report containing the harrowing stories of four women who care for a loved one. A majority of carers are women and many are caring for an older family member as well as children. With little, if any support, from the state many women are struggling to get through each day and are in difficult financial circumstances. Not only that, but they have had to give up their career, leisure, and social life in order to care. These stories are seldom heard but are important because they reveal another side to an inadequate social care system. **[Click here to read Sarah, Rasila, Joyce, and Elaine’s stories.](#)**



Policy & Research

Publications

Age UK and Care Connect at the University of Sheffield, have written an article exploring the learnings from research into digital inclusion. The article explores Local Age UK projects that have helped older people to remain, or become, more socially connected and how this has contributed to combatting loneliness.

[Click here to read the latest on Loneliness and Digital Inclusion](#)

Consultation Responses

There is increasing interest in off-site factory built homes to speed up the construction and reduce costs. Age UK responded to the MHCLG select committee inquiry into Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) to discuss the implications for older people's housing.

[Click here to read Modern Methods of Construction: Submission to the Inquiry](#)

Blog



Women and caring

This month, Caroline Abrahams reflects on Age UK's report into the care burden on women and busts some of the myths surrounding caring for family members in this country. While carers in the UK may feel the State does little to support them, alternative systems do exist around the globe, and Caroline argues it is high time the UK Government valued the work of those who provide care, and facilitated a fairer system of support.

More from Age UK

Age UK information guides and factsheets

The following factsheets have been updated:

FS67 Home improvement and repairs and FS62 Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards.

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

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