



## Policy & Research Update

### January 2020

2020 is the year when we at Age UK sincerely hope to see real progress towards fixing our broken care system. It was encouraging to see social care near the top of the agenda in the Queens Speech, but it is vital that the Government doesn't falter in its commitment to fix social care. You can sign our petition [here](#), and see our response to the [Queen's Speech](#).

## News

[Age UK analysis](#) finds our over 80s save Government £23 billion a year through the unpaid care they give loved ones.

New figures by Age UK show that an army of carers amongst the oldest old in our society (80 years old and over) provide 23 million hours of unpaid care a week which adds up to 1.2 billion hours of care a year, saving the health and care system a massive £23 billion a year.

**Caroline Abrahams, Charity Director at Age UK** said:

*“Nearly a million over 80 year olds are gifting the Government a whopping £23 billion a year and it's high time these fantastic older people got something back in return. Almost all of them willingly provide care for the person they love, typically a sick or disabled husband or wife, son or daughter, but by repeatedly failing to sort out our social care system the State is exploiting their goodwill and often leaving them to*

*manage incredibly difficult situations alone. The burden placed on these older Carers' shoulders is not only physical and emotional but financial too, because after years of government underfunding so many older people who need care are having to pay for it themselves, wiping out the savings they've worked had for all their lives and sometimes resulting in the family home having to be sold.*

*"Blessed as it is with such a substantial Parliamentary majority, our new Government is better placed than any in the last twenty years to refinance and reform social care. The Prime Minister has promised to fix care and now he needs to follow through, with no more excuses or delays - surely it's the least our brilliant older Carers deserve. "*

[Read the full article](#)

## Feature



### Older people encouraged to ditch "stiff upper lip" approach to mental health

New data reveals that more than six in 10 people in the UK aged 65 or over have experienced depression and anxiety. So NHS England and Age UK have joined forces in a [Your Mind Matters](#) campaign to encourage older people to access treatment for mental health conditions, as new analysis shows a majority of older people do not seek help.

The campaign will also work with health professionals to highlight the importance of supporting older people with their mental health.

Read the full [Your Mind Matters Guide](#).

## Policy & Research

### Publications



As people grow older, staying physically active is very important to counteract changes that come with normal ageing, and also to prevent or minimise the effects of age-related illnesses. However, people are likely to become less physically active as they age.

Working with Sport England and the Richmond Group of charities, Age UK has explored how best to help people become more active in later life.

[Read the full report](#)

The annual lecture in memory of David Hobman took place on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> November. This year Professor Andrew Steptoe, Professor of Psychology and Epidemiology, gave an engaging talk entitled 'Ageing, Health and Wellbeing: Good News or Bad?'

[Read the conclusions](#)



A survey for Age UK's No one should have no one to turn to campaign finds that Christmas is the loneliest time of the year for over 1.5 million older people, with those who have been widowed feeling it the most.

Research found that over [750,000 older widowed people](#) often feel more lonely over Christmas than at any other time of the year, with over 200,000 older widows and widowers not looking forward to the festive season because they would be alone.

[Find out more](#)

### **Age UK policy positions:**

The following positions have been updated:

- [Crime and scams](#)
- [Older private renters](#)
- [Engaging older people in decision making](#)

## Consultation Responses

Age UK has responded to the consultation on '[simpler annual benefit statements](#)' for pension savers, broadly supporting the proposed initiative. We suggest that regulation will be needed to ensure that pension firms are delivering a good statement, and that it is an opportunity for the Government to link with other policy initiatives.

Age UK has responded to the Open Banking Implementation Entity's [revised roadmap](#) consultation that sets out what work needs to be done to deliver a functioning open banking system.

## Discover



Age UK Trafford have a specialised day support that called upon the services of some dogs to bring some joy to local people with dementia and help them unlock memories of their own pets.

[Read more and view the video](#) about people's canine experiences.

You can see all of our **Discover** articles [here](#)

## More from Age UK

### Age UK information guides and factsheets

The following factsheets have been updated:

- FS22 [Arranging for someone to make decisions on your behalf](#)
- FS25 [Returning from abroad](#)
- FS66 [Resolving problems and making a complaint about NHS care](#)

- FS78 [\*Safeguarding older people from abuse and neglect\*](#)
- FS14 [\*Dealing with an estate\*](#)

The guides below have been updated and are ready to order this month.

- AgeUKIG21 [\*Powers of attorney\*](#)
- AgeUKIG57 [\*Getting help with debt\*](#)
- AgeUKIG32 [\*Bereavement\*](#)
- AgeUKIG17 [\*Adapting your home\*](#)

[All factsheets can be found on our website](#)

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

Our previous Policy and Research Updates are available [\*\*here\*\*](#) to download.