

**How do we improve
seniors'
engagement across
Government ?**

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The opportunity...

- General Election 2015 – new brooms...
- Budget constraints
- Greater appreciation of ageing society
- Possible appointment of a Minister for Older People/Ageing Society
- Possible appointment of a Commissioner for Older People

Elbourne Review

- Principle 1: To ensure that the voices of older people can influence government at a national, regional and local level in order to develop policies and services that meet their needs
- Principle 2: To ensure that the voices of older people can be clearly heard

Government response

- “Older people are to have a bigger say in developing central, regional and local Government policies” - Rt Hon Rosie Winterton, Minister for Pensions and the Ageing
- “A new national UK Advisory Forum on Ageing will give older people a direct line to Government to comment on new policy ideas, services, legislation and what areas they feel the Government needs to address.”

Government approach

“Engaging older people and government at all levels, to address the changing nature of later life in an ageing society.”

UKAFA membership

“I propose membership of the UK Advisory Forum should include Ministers from key Government Departments (DWP, DH, CLG)”

Regional forums

“A key aim will be to encourage the appointment of local authority champions and the setting up of local forums where none exist. This will help to ensure that older people can have real influence on the development of local services and policies.”

What is currently missing...

Full engagement with relevant departments such as DEFRA, Cabinet Office, Transport, DCLG, Treasury, Culture, Media & Sports, DECC, Home Office, Justice...

...yet all of these have responsibilities and develop policies impacting on Older People.

UKAFA 2013/14

- **6 Government departments led 9 agenda items - each about one hour:**
- DH - social care funding reform, integrated care, changes to primary care;
- DWP - single tier pension; fuller working lives
- DfT - mobility scooters
- DECC - fuel poverty
- DEFRA - impact of an ageing population on rural services
- DCLG - housing in later life

UKAFA “outcomes”

- Age Action Alliance Transport working group worked with UKAFA members, primarily the English Forums on Ageing, to progress survey on mobility scooters.
- *Comfortable Life? toolkit – self assess your individual needs*, developed by Years Ahead in response to DWP data on pensioner material deprivation (referenced at UKAFA meeting in May 2011).
- Do Ministers get good value for their time?

Who can best speak for older people?

- Charities, older people themselves...
or a combination of the two...?

And at a more local / regional level...

Still there are “black spots” where
local authorities and health
organisations do not consult and
engage meaningfully with Older
People

Compare England with...

- Northern Ireland
- Wales
- Scotland

We need:

- Full implementation of the Elbourne Report, so Seniors Forums have effective engagements with ALL departments and on ALL issues directly affecting them
- An opportunity to work in depth with civil servants and Ministers far enough upstream to make REAL difference
- Direct working with a future Minister for Older People / The Ageing Society – making their task easier
- More involvement in Select Committees
- UKAFA to have a national voice

We would add value by...

- Enabling Government to design and deliver better quality services within tight budget constraints
- Helping to break down the silos between departments
- Designing a future that will enable an ageing society to function effectively and to everyone's benefit

The barrier: policy making is currently too short term, too driven by events

- **Policies need to be designed, not just conceived.** Current processes greatly underestimate the value of policy design. A greater emphasis on policy design helps to ensure that the planned actions represent a realistic and viable means of achieving the policy goals.
- **Policy making is often determined by events** Policy making does not take place in a vacuum, where the government is in total control of its agenda. The result can be sharp discontinuities and apparently illogical decisions, as the government's coherent position can get overwhelmed by events.
- **The effects of policies are often indirect, diffuse, and take time to appear.** Unless the policy process is set up to capture those impacts and be sensitive to other, interlinked policies, the real impact of a policy cannot be properly understood

What would be needed?

- Cross cutting approach – possibly through direct involvement of Cabinet Office / Treasury in UKAFA
- More focused UKAFA meetings
- More direct involvement on policies upstream – through working groups / policy labs (seniors as well as charities)
- Possible crossover with Age Action Alliance where relevant

At a local level...

A direct instruction / mandate / to relevant bodies to engage with seniors through their regional / local forums

Your thoughts?

- 1 Is the status quo acceptable? If not, why not?
- 2 How improved engagement with Government might best work
- 3 How we achieve greater say in local matters
- 4 What changes would we need to make to UKAFA / EFAs?