

Sharing Experience

Developing the Strategy for a Scotland with an Ageing Population

1. What do you think?

Consultation questionnaire

This paper is available on request in alternative formats and languages.
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SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

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1 Introduction

Scotland is changing. As a result of lower birth rates and greater life expectancy, in the coming decades there will be many more older people in Scotland, and fewer younger people. This poses a challenge for Scotland's government – how to ensure that Scotland is a fit place in which to grow old? And how can Scotland benefit from this change? It's also a challenge for local authorities, businesses, charities, communities, and individuals.

There have been two significant baby-booms in the last century – the first was after the second world war, and the second was in the 1960s. In previous years government responded to the challenge by building and expanding schools – now as these baby-boom generations age, Scotland needs to respond in new and different ways, to make sure that its services, buildings, transport, structures and society are fit for purpose.

Because of this, the Scottish Executive is developing a Strategy for a Scotland with an Ageing Population, which will be published by the end of 2006. We want to know what you think should be in the Strategy.

Some issues, like pensions and benefits, are the responsibility of the UK Government. The Scottish Executive works closely with the UK government on these reserved matters, for example to promote better take-up of benefits.

The Scottish Executive wants to recognise and maximise the contribution made by older people to society. That's why we're asking you for ideas on how we might be able to do this.

2 How to use this paper

This paper is meant to stimulate discussion on Scotland's ageing population. There is space after each question to write in your comments, or you can send your response separately, but please remember to fill in the **Respondent Information Form** (RIF) that is at the end of the questionnaire.

The paper can be used in various ways by groups, individuals, or organisations. It is easy to copy and share. If you need extra copies, please let us know and we'll send them out to you.

- **For Individuals:**

You can send us your own views. Please remember to give us your details on the RIF at the end of the questionnaire.

- **For Organisations:**

You can use the form to submit your organisational view. You could also use it for group discussions (as below), or you could circulate it to your members and collate their responses. If you do consult your members, please can you let us know how many people you involved. Please remember to complete the RIF.

- **For Group discussions:**

You can also copy the form and use it as the basis for group discussion, and fill in a summary of the discussion. If you submit a collective response, please let us know how many people took part in the discussion, and complete the RIF.

3 The Questions

There are six broad questions, covering a very wide range of issues. Don't worry about answering the questions exactly – we want to know what issues concern you about the ageing population. You can also tell us about things that you think are currently working well.

3.1 Contribution and Opportunity

Older people today contribute in many ways to Scottish society. For example they provide care for partners, parents, grandchildren, friends and relations. They might go to work, or be self-employed. They pay taxes and support the economy. They are consumers, buying goods and services, and supporting business. They are volunteers, giving their time and skills to communities and charities; and they are citizens, involved with friends, neighbours, families and communities. They have also contributed to society throughout their lives.

The Scottish Executive wants to know how best to support older people who wish to contribute to society, and to recognise the contribution that people have already made. For example,

- What do you think are the main ways in which older people contribute to society and Scotland?
- Are there other ways they might be able to contribute more in the future?
- Do you think there are obstacles to older people contributing to society? What are they, and how can they be overcome?
- What do you think about ageism and age discrimination?
- What else could be done?

Please tell us what you think:

Participants noted that Older People contribute:

- as carers (to grandchildren, partners, relatives, neighbours)
- as citizens
- as consumers
- through membership & officer-ship of community groups and this should be encouraged and promoted
- as volunteers
- financially, as consumers
- Experience of older people/knowledge and wisdom of Older People, Wide range of people ages across 50-85-100
- Childcare of grandchildren - adopt a granny scheme. Loss of role for grandparents.

and that Older People could contribute more if:

- public bodies and commissioners took account of the expertise and skills of Older People and promoted initiatives that use this social capital, for example, as teachers, trainers and mentors in schools, colleges, community, starting with, for example, a survey and databank of skills and expertise which would be linked to needs and opportunities. Expectation of older people working longer - miss out on grandchildren: make use of flexible working hours.
- People were given more choice of retirement age/opportunity for satisfaction guaranteed income enough to live on along with flexibility.
- Manage and look after older people as volunteers – produce a Charter for volunteers and older people.

Barriers to opportunity were cited as:

- Ageism and negative stereotyping generally
- Structural barriers such as fixed retirement age
- Low incomes and pensions not linked to earnings
- Experience through CAB - skills and experience are helpful, but sometimes an unwillingness of people to acknowledge older people and their experience
- Recognition of contribution: No positive images of Older People.
- People not presently empowered to have a voice.

3.2 Work

Some people want to retire early, and others want to keep working for as long as they can, but too often it doesn't work out the way people want.

The Scottish Executive wants to know what you think about work for people who are not yet retired, for example:

- Thinking about older people who want to keep working, what stops people from working for as long as they want to?
- What help might older people need if they want to continue working?
- What do you think can be done to help people build up a better income for when they retire?
- What help might people need to combine work with other things, such as caring, looking after children, or volunteering?
- What else could be done?

Please tell us what you think:

Participants commented that:

- Public bodies should take a lead in promoting work for over 65 year olds
- Balance is needed though to enable young people to progress their careers
- The burden of tax reduces the economic benefit of working beyond 65
- Caring for others is work and should be valued (for example by a tax rebate)
- Responsibility of caring, especially for an ageing partner or relative is a barrier to work
- Equity of cost is needed. For example the cost of an unpaid carer versus the cost of NHS or residential care, busy lives versus a caring expectation
- It is important for people to achieve a work-life balance while at work and for Government policy to recognise the consequences of too much work – poor physical & mental health, strains on family, no alternatives outside work thus no preparation using time in retirement
- Government policy should anticipate pressure points for future Older People for example long term mortgages that will carry into retirement.

3.3 Services for older people

Lots of services for older people are provided by councils, charities, the NHS and business; services such as health care, housing, community care and transport. As society ages, we will need to make sure that we can continue to provide services for older people, and that these services work well for the people who use them.

The Scottish Executive wants to know what you think about services for older people. For example:

- What sort of services do you think will be important for older people in the future?
- Thinking about services that work well, what makes those services good?
- What can be done to make sure that different services work together properly?
- How can we make sure that as services develop and change, they continue to meet the needs of older people?
- What else could be done?

Please tell us what you think:

Participants perceived:

- Social care services are perceived as doing an excellent job
- Personal alarm - cost prohibitive and possibly "waste of money" and other things to spend money on.
- NHS services is of variable quality, for example ambulance services and waiting times need to be improved
- Leisure services free for older people.
- Low costs for Homecare
- Wider services not just about care services
- Gap in befriending services: opportunity for older people; need to access services
- Pride sometimes an issue – people want to look after self/can cope on their own

Participants made some suggestions as a way forward:

- Caring prevents carers taking part in the life of the community and contributes to isolation from peers. Help is available in West Dunbartonshire and we need to promote carer respite services,
- Promote befriending and outreach for older people to prevent isolation
 - Welfare Rights 75 years Birthday Card & contact information cited as a good example
 - Fostering Schemes whereby older people could support families with Children
- Improve co-ordination of NHS and Care services at all levels
- Dichotomy between where does money go? More consultation - are services meeting the need strategy and how will it be resourced?
- Access to information; where do people get information reasonable plumbing service - caring role if involve agencies will they take over life
- Probably with keeping information up to date use forums - to spread information older people resources - CAB or Shop?
- Income - money advice and debt and support family
- Welsh example : funded as per HLI
- Joint Future up services/choice

- **Health and well-being**

The following questions ask about older people and the importance of health and well-being in old age. The questions also ask what needs to be done to support good health in later life. These questions deal with both physical and mental health.

The Scottish Executive wants to know what you think about helping people stay healthy and well in later life. For example:

- What do you think are the most important things for good physical health in later life?
- What are the things that contribute most to good mental health and well-being in later life?
- What can be done to support those things?
- What else could be done?

Please tell us what you think:

Participants suggested that health and well-being could be improved by:

- Planning for the future by ensuring that everyone has a healthy start in life.
 - Older People seen as soft target - Improve safety
 - Community policing at key times
 - Neighbourhood wardens
 - Improved transport
 - Less negative and more positive press reporting
 - Older People have more sense of not feeling safe; fear of crime in local community/scared after – run local events such as providing training on precautions to feel safe in the home
 - Stiffer sentences for people who are caught for crimes: "Criminal Justice is a joke"
 - Feelings of being threatened by other people in the community. Young boys and girls: Fear of what they might do. Drug problems make this worse.
 - No positive images of young people; some community projects have positive project working young and older people – run more projects where young and older people interact.
 - Police resources need to be better utilised - targeted at particular times e.g. around at 4:15pm when schools come out
 - Education from Criminal Justice and work with community to identify key issues and problem areas and how to target resources.
-
- Making day care more stimulating as there is a low expectation of Older Peoples' ability
 - Raise staff horizons -older people are more able and need a challenge
 - Plan creative physical and mental activity into day's events
 - Tackle staff perceptions and attitudes
 - Involve Older People with ability and expertise
 - Balance day care mix
 - Redefine day care purpose activity – more than containment
 - Promote active lifestyles through
 - Outreach initiatives
 - We all know when we are well - more difficult to know when we are not well - introduce Health checks including basics like chiropody (improve mobility), diet (weight), hydration (elimination of toxins) & review of medication (confusion)
 - Using the social capital of Older Peoples' experience & expertise
 - Supporting community activists in their endeavour
 - Education on citizenship for younger people
 - Sense of feeling safe/in control/ have choices

3.4 Housing, transport and surroundings

Houses that are being built today will last for many decades. The same goes for communities, roads, towns – but how suitable are they for older people of the future? Many older people have lived in the family home for many years, near to friends and neighbours. It can be really difficult for people who no longer drive a car to get to shops, community centres, local facilities, or just out to visit family and friends. How our communities are designed can make a difference to safety too.

The Scottish Executive wants to know what you think about our houses and environments. For example:

- What should be done to make sure that our houses and homes are suitable for an ageing population?
- What should be done to make sure that our transport system is good enough?
- What should be done to make sure that our towns, cities, villages, and neighbourhoods are suitable for an ageing population?
- How can we plan better for an ageing population?
- What else could be done?

Please tell us what you think:

Participants noted that:

- Free travel is very welcome and will encourage active lifestyles.
- Local bus services after 6pm need to be improved to enable older people to get out and about.
- More bus stands are needed to enable Older People to get out and around (mobility & continence can be a barrier to people going out).
- A £50 voucher per month for taxis to enable people get out and about would recognise the problems associated with local bus services, and also safety fears.
- Easier access is needed to Dial a Bus (application form is complicated) which is recognised as a valuable service.
- Transport issues need to be built into NHS planning (eg location of hospitals).
- Housing should be designed with the future in mind, for example with wide doorways to accommodate mobility aids.
- More SMART housing for people who can use it is needed. WDC were commended on the 200 houses already adapted.
- More secure areas with resources on site with support services: supported care
- 450 sheltered housing units
- 10,000 living up in community networks and family connections - difficult for people to move away into more appropriate accommodation – require to address.
- Models of older people villages; connected to universities - so inter-generational mingling Need community supports.
- Transport suggestions:
 - Increase frequency
 - Improve accessibility and drivers trained to allow older people time to get on
 - Card scheme
 - Thistle care scheme
 - Time available to bus drivers to be more older people friendly as they are tending towards being more practical and aggressive
 - Community transport – improve dial a bus and availability of it.

3.5 Other

There may be lots of other things that need to be done to help Scotland benefit from its ageing population. We need to think about things like new technology, or the different needs of people with disabilities or from minority ethnic communities. We might need to think about how different generations can work together, and about how older people can have a better say about the services they get. We might need to think about how we can encourage businesses to provide products and services designed for older people; or about how older people are viewed by society.

Please tell us what you think:

From a survey carried-out by local NHS a number of Factors Affecting Health were identified by older people as follows (some of which have been highlighted above):

- Problems sleeping
- Falls
- Problems with mobility
- Housing – suitability
- Money problems
- Transport – availability, etc.
- Relationship problems
- Safety fears
- The local environment
- Feeling isolated or lonely

A high percentage of those who took part in the survey indicated that specific services for older people to assist in tackling the above problems would be helpful e.g. Drop-in

- Advice/Information centres
- Public events such as talks/seminars on specific topics for older people
- Information leaflets in public places
- Health fairs
- Local newspaper information column
- Local radio service

The survey identified that the majority of services provided to local people was through Community Centres and Health Centres, others being GP Surgeries, Advice Shops and Others. People tended to use such services monthly and mainly in the afternoon.

4 Extra information

It would be helpful if you were able to complete the information below. The ageing population is likely to affect different age groups in different ways, and we're interested to find out if there are any differences in opinion between age groups. The ageing population may also affect different social groups in various ways. Therefore we are also asking questions on gender and ethnicity. These questions are voluntary, and will be held in confidence.

- If you are answering as an individual, please go to section (i)
- If you are answering on behalf of an organisation, please go to section (ii)
- If you are answering following a group discussion, please go to section (iii)

(i) Individuals

What is your age group?

Up to 21 21-34 35-49 50-64 Over 65

What is your ethnic group?

Choose ONE section from A to E, then tick the appropriate box to indicate your cultural background.

A White

- Scottish
- Other British
- Irish
- Any other White background, please write in:

B Mixed

- Any Mixed background, please write in:

C Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British

- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Any other Asian background, please write in

D Black, Black Scottish or Black British

- Caribbean
- African
- Any other Black background, please write in:

E Other ethnic background

- Any other background, please write in:

Please can you tell us your gender?

Male

Female

Other please write in: _____

(ii) Organisations

If this response is on behalf of an organisation, did you consult with your members or interest groups?

Yes No

If yes, how many people did you consult? 50

Does this organisation represent minority ethnic communities as its main focus?

Yes No

Does this organisation represent women or men as its main focus?

Yes, women Yes, men No

(iii) Discussion groups

If this response is following a group discussion, how many people contributed to the response? 50

What was the approximate age range of most of the people in the group? (please tick):

Up to 21 21-34 35-49 50-64 **Over 65**

Mixed age

Does this group represent minority ethnic communities as its main focus?

Yes No

Does this group represent women or men as its main focus?

Yes, women

Yes, men

No

Please can you now complete the **RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM** to provide us with essential information on how to deal with your response.

RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM: STRATEGY FOR A SCOTLAND WITH AN AGEING POPULATION

Please complete the details below and return it with your response. This will help ensure we handle your response appropriately. Thank you for your help.

Name:William W. Clark.....

Postal Address: West Dunbartonshire Council

Social Work Services, Garshake Road,.....

Dumbarton.....

.....Postcode G82 3PU

1. Are you responding: (please tick one box)
- (a) as an individual or following a group discussion
go to Q2a/b and then Q4
 - (b) **on behalf of** an organisation
go to Q3 and then Q4

INDIVIDUALS OR GROUP DISCUSSIONS

2a. Do you agree to your response being made available to the public (in Scottish Executive library and/or on the Scottish Executive website)?

Yes (go to 2b below)

No, not at all

We will treat your response as confidential

2b. Where *confidentiality is not requested*, we will make your response available to the public on the following basis (please tick one of the following boxes)

Yes, make my response, name and address all available

Yes, make my response available, but not my name or address

Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address

ON BEHALF OF ORGANISATIONS:

3 The name and address of your organisation ***will be*** made available to the public (in the Scottish Executive library and/or on the Scottish Executive website). Are you also content for your **response** to be made available?

Yes

No We will treat your response as confidential

SHARING RESPONSES/FUTURE ENGAGEMENT

4 We will share your response internally with other Scottish Executive policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for the Scottish Executive to contact you again in the future in relation to this consultation response?

Yes

No

Thank you

THE SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE CONSULTATION PROCESS

Consultation is an essential and important aspect of Scottish Executive working methods. Given the wide-ranging areas of work of the Scottish Executive, there are many varied types of consultation. However, in general, Scottish Executive consultation exercises aim to provide opportunities for all those who wish to express their opinions on a proposed area of work to do so in ways which will inform and enhance that work.

The Scottish Executive encourages consultation that is thorough, effective and appropriate to the issue under consideration and the nature of the target audience. Consultation exercises take account of a wide range of factors, and no two exercises are likely to be the same.

Typically Scottish Executive consultations involve a written paper inviting answers to specific questions or more general views about the material presented. Written papers are distributed to organisations and individuals with an interest in the issue, and they are also placed on the Scottish Executive web site enabling a wider audience to access the paper and submit their responses¹. Consultation exercises may also involve seeking views in a number of different ways, such as through public meetings, focus groups or questionnaire exercises. Copies of all the written responses received to a consultation exercise (except those where the individual or organisation requested confidentiality) are placed in the Scottish Executive library at Saughton House, Edinburgh (K Spur, Saughton House, Broomhouse Drive, Edinburgh, EH11 3XD, telephone 0131 244 4565).

¹ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations>

All Scottish Executive consultation papers and related publications (eg, analysis of response reports) can be accessed at: [Scottish Executive consultations](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations) (<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations>)

The views and suggestions detailed in consultation responses are analysed and used as part of the decision making process, along with a range of other available information and evidence. Depending on the nature of the consultation exercise the responses received may:

- indicate the need for policy development or review
- inform the development of a particular policy
- help decisions to be made between alternative policy proposals
- be used to finalise legislation before it is implemented

Final decisions on the issues under consideration will also take account of a range of other factors, including other available information and research evidence.

While details of particular circumstances described in a response to a consultation exercise may usefully inform the policy process, consultation exercises cannot address individual concerns and comments, which should be directed to the relevant public body.