

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:

Older People contribute to society in a number of ways:

- Family Life
- Involvement in local activities
- Service development & interest groups
- Community engagement
- Work and socially

Obstacles exist in terms of discrimination and accessibility to facilities/services/transport.

The contribution of older people is not valued and/or utilised as much as it could be.

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:

Obstacles to older people who want to remain in employment include:

- Physical activity (perceived and/or actual)
- Discrimination
- Commitments to family
- Labour market eg. Paying younger or migrant workers a lower rate of pay

Older people would benefit from financial help, and flexible/part time work opportunities.

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:

Important services in terms of future provision:

- A range of services to enable people to remain at home eg homecare, integrated health and social care services and rapid response.
- Accessible and available transport
- Access to community facilities/amenities
- Accessible and appropriate housing

More emphasis should be placed on joint provision of services to reduce duplication of work and the number of staff working with individuals. Services need to proactively involve older people in design and development.

Services need to be flexible and responsive.

3.4 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:

Access to appropriate, responsive and local health care when required.

People should have access to advice/information on health living: including nutrition, exercise and involvement in the community.

There is a need to reduce the social isolation and loneliness experienced by some older people.

The contributions that older people can make need to be valued and utilised and their involvement in communities/employment/services facilitated. In order to achieve this then the above need to be accessible.

3.5 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:

Housing and Technical Resources, South Lanarkshire Council will be submitting a separate response to this consultation.

Transport is a huge issue in terms of accessibility, the range of vehicles in use both in rural and urban areas. Local transport needs to meet the needs of the community eg routes through housing estates.

Communities need to ensure the safety and security of people accessing them as well as ensuring paths, roads, shops, facilities etc are accessible

3.6 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:

The population aged over 65 in South Lanarkshire continues to increase, with a 2.46% projected increase in that population by 2007.

The 75 + population is projected to increase by 21% between 2005 and 2015 and the impact on health and social care needs to be considered.

Older people have a valuable contribution to make and innovative ways of facilitating this are needed.