






Age UK policy positions 2019 – a quick reference guide



Age UK's policy positions set out our guiding principles and key objectives in major policy areas

<p>Ageism and age equality</p> <p>Human rights</p> <p>Age-friendly Government</p> <p>Reshaping public services</p> <p>Information and advice</p>	<p>Everyone should live with dignity and respect. Older people are equal members of society and should not be subjected to ageist attitudes, stereotyping or conduct.</p> <p>Human rights standards provide vital protection for older people by helping to change practice and procedure, culture and attitudes, and offering redress when breaches of human rights have taken place.</p> <p>Government at all levels should take a strategic approach to making the UK a great place to grow older where everyone is able to have a say in decisions that affect their lives</p> <p>In reshaping public services, Government at all levels should take account of the needs of an ageing population.</p> <p>All older people should have choice and control over their own lives, with easy access to the information and advice they need to make that happen</p>			
<p> Money matters</p>	<p> Health and wellbeing</p>	<p> Care and support</p>	<p> Housing and homes</p>	<p> Active communities</p>
<p>Consumer policy</p> <p>Competitive markets should work for older people, being fully inclusive and offering a real choice of goods and services that meet their needs and preferences at fair prices.</p>	<p>Ageing well: health and prevention</p> <p>We must all be supported to live and age well, this means addressing the causes of poor health and embedding a culture of prevention in public services and policy. Health and care services must recognise the impact of both physical and mental health in maintaining our wellbeing.</p>	<p>Adult safeguarding</p> <p>The abuse and neglect of older people remains a largely hidden issue, which leaves hundreds of thousands of older people experiencing, or at risk of, avoidable harm.</p>	<p>Age-friendly communities</p> <p>Everybody should be able to live in an age-friendly environment, that enables people of all ages to lead independent and fulfilling lives.</p>	<p>Digital inclusion</p> <p>Older people should be supported and encouraged to get online but those who cannot or do not want to do so should continue to be able to access services and support in a way suits them.</p>
<p>Consumer vulnerability</p> <p>Business has a vital role to play in ensuring that products and services support wellbeing and resilience in later life, especially for customers in vulnerable circumstances, and regulators must ensure firms do this.</p>	<p>Carers</p> <p>Carers must not be expected to sacrifice their health and quality of life. Society should recognise carers' contribution, and ensure that they are supported to be able to live fulfilling lives whilst continuing in their caring role.</p>	<p>Care homes</p> <p>Care home residents must be able to maintain their personal identity and contact with family and community, and be protected against abuse, poor care and breaches of their consumer rights.</p>	<p>Crime and scams</p> <p>Nobody should live in fear of crime. Police, Government and industry action should prevent crimes targeted at older people, including scams, and support victims.</p>	<p>Employment</p> <p>Older people who want to work must have the opportunity to do so. Someone's age alone should play no part in judging whether they are capable or able to do any job.</p>
<p>Financial inclusion</p> <p>Older consumers should have safe, convenient and affordable access to financial services. They should be able to expect appropriate protection and fair treatment.</p>	<p>Improving healthcare</p> <p>Older people must be able to access health services that do not discriminate and that are equipped to provide safe, high quality care that's right for them.</p>	<p>Digital Assistive Technology</p> <p>Older people should be able to choose well designed digital care and support which helps them better manage their independence, dignity and wellbeing.</p>	<p>For more detail on our policy positions, visit ageuk.org.uk/our-impact/policy-research/policy-positions/, where you can also sign up to our Policy and Research update. Alternatively email policy@ageuk.org.uk or phone 0800 169 2081. For Media queries, email media@ageuk.org.uk</p>	

Financial entitlements

The benefit and welfare systems should ensure an adequate income for people in retirement and for younger people who are unable to work for reasons such as disability or caring responsibilities. Benefits designed to boost income for those in work should ensure that work pays.

Private Pensions/State Pensions/ Poverty and financial disadvantage

All current and future pensioners should have enough money from state and private sources to live comfortably and participate fully in society.

Taxation

The tax system should be fair; demands must be affordable but the taxation system should also ensure that people do not feel penalised for having saved.

Using housing wealth

Housing wealth can be a valuable means of financial provision in retirement but it is not available to all and it is not an alternative to an adequate pension income.

Living well with dementia

Every person with dementia should be supported to live well and to continue participating in society. They and their carers should have access to good-quality care and support from diagnosis to the end of life, wherever they live and whatever their background.

Loneliness

Older people should have the support and opportunity to make and maintain meaningful connections so that they can enjoy life as much as possible for as long as possible.

Mental capacity

People must be supported in making as many decisions for themselves as possible, and where they are unable to do so, decisions must be made in that person's best interests.

Mental health

Older people must have fair and equal access to the services, support and opportunity to maintain good mental wellbeing. Older people must have confidence that their mental health needs are fully recognised and supported and seen as equally important as their physical health needs.

Nutrition and hydration

Good nutrition and hydration benefit older people. Well-nourished people are more likely to remain healthy and independent for longer.

End of life care

Everyone has the right to expect services and support that help them to achieve a dignified and pain-free death, with choice in how they are cared for in their final months and days, regardless of where they live or their diagnosis.

Independence and personalisation

Older people should have choice and control over the support that they receive, so that it is tailored to their individual needs and preferences, and should be able to draw on a wide range of support which is not limited to traditional care services.

Older prisoners

Older prisoners should be held in establishments that meet their basic needs, receive the same level of basic health and social care as non-prisoners, and receive adequate support on release.

Social care assessment and eligibility

Older people must be able to expect full consideration of their individual care and support needs and access to services that will fully meet them.

Social care reform and funding

The social care system must be reformed to guarantee high-quality support for everyone who needs it and sufficiently funded to enable current and future generations of older people to lead fulfilling lives.

Housing design, adaptations and support

New and existing homes need to be adaptable to the changing needs of an ageing population to promote both independence and self-determination.

Older homelessness

No older person should find themselves homeless, either living in unsuitable temporary accommodation or sleeping rough on the streets.

Retirement housing

Older people should have access to a range of different retirement housing options that match their individual needs and aspirations.

Rural ageing

Older people should be able to thrive whether they live in the countryside or in towns. They should be able to access essential services and live active lives.

Our policy positions are an important part of our governance framework, as Age UK speaks on public policy issues affecting England and UK/GB on behalf of all partners, including local Age UKs and (for reserved matters) Age Cymru, Age Scotland and Age NI. Age UK's policy positions are regularly reviewed and updated, with valuable input from the Policy Panel of local Age UKs and Policy Sounding Board of older people.

Learning and skills

Meaningful opportunities to learn for both work and pleasure should be available to people of all ages. Publicly and privately funded provision should be accessible to people regardless of their date of birth.

Local public transport/Older drivers

Wherever they live, older people should be able to reach key services, friends and family at reasonable cost, in reasonable time and with reasonable ease.

Volunteering and active citizenship

Everyone should have the opportunity to learn, join in, volunteer or work.