



Comisiynydd Pobl Hŷn Cymru
Older People's Commissioner for Wales

Report on the Commissioner's Consultation on Three Key Long-term Priorities

April 2019

Introduction

This report sets out a thematic overview of the responses received as part of the Commissioner's consultation on her priorities for the next three years. The consultation was structured to ask older people and stakeholders their views on the three areas the Commissioner has identified as key long-term priorities for Wales, against which she will deliver a range of work over the next three years:

- Ensuring everyone can age well
- Ending ageism and discrimination
- Stopping abuse of older people

Since she took up post, the Commissioner has travelled the length and breadth of Wales, meeting and speaking with older people and organisations to hear about what would make Wales the best place in the world to grow older.

This has helped the Commissioner to identify three key long-term priorities for Wales. These priorities were assessed against a set of criteria, which judged whether:

- The issue is within the Commissioner's remit, as stated in Commissioner for Older People (Wales) Act 2006.
- The Commissioner is particularly well-placed to take the issue forward because of the nature of the role and profile, or of the issue.
- There is a need for the Commissioner to champion the issue, without which there is a risk that older people's voices won't be heard.
- We are not duplicating work – there is no major programme of work on the issue being led by another individual or organisation, or if there is, it is clear how we will add value.
- It is feasible to achieve the goal, or make tangible progress towards it, within a 3-4 year time frame.

In addition to criteria to judge each individual priority, the Commissioner also set out criteria to judge the priorities as a whole. These criteria set out that the priorities must:

- Seek to improve the quality of life of the most vulnerable, those who are least heard, and those who are at risk.
- Be capable of producing positive outcomes for all older people.
- Assist older people in ageing well, recognising the contribution that older people can and do make to our society.
- Respond to the issues that we hear from older people and/or are evidenced in research.
- Recognise and respond to the diversity of the older population, and the inequalities within it.

Consultation

In January 2019, the Commissioner launched a consultation to hear the views of older people and stakeholder organisations about what she should focus on over the next three years. A copy of the consultation is available at the end of this document in Annex A.

In total the Commissioner received over 260 responses to the consultation. The responses were a mix of online and hard copy versions, and the Commissioner also received one response using the easy-read version of the consultation. The Commissioner and her team also undertook direct engagement events with older people to gather their views. Some groups of older people completed their consultation as a combined group, rather than individuals.

The majority of the responses were from older people, accounting for 78% of the responses. The responses covered a good spread across the age ranges that the Commissioner represents and almost 1 in 3 respondents had caring responsibilities for another older person or children.

There were responses from people from all 22 local authorities across Wales. The map below shows the distribution of the responses across Wales but due to a large number of respondents not providing their location, the geographic spread is likely to be much larger.



As part of the consultation, the Commissioner and her team have been holding meetings with stakeholders to ensure that their views are captured as part of the consultation process. There is a list of the stakeholder organisations that responded to the consultation in Annex B.

The consultation was promoted to older people and stakeholder organisations through a number of channels, including social media, the Commissioner's newsletter, organisations sharing the consultation with their members, local media and members of the Commissioner's team meeting with groups of older people.

Ensuring Everyone can Age Well

The vast majority of respondents provided their thoughts on the Commissioner's priority of ensuring everyone can age well. Respondents were asked to comment on five areas set out in the consultation to help older people to:

- get out and about
- afford to do things they want to do
- lead healthy and active lives
- stay informed
- have their voice heard

A theme running throughout the responses was the need to tackle loneliness and isolation amongst older people across Wales and that by working in the five areas that the Commissioner has suggested, there could be progress made in tackling this area. A number of respondents highlighted the Welsh Government's loneliness strategy, due to be published in the coming months, as a key document to be scrutinised in the future.

Another theme running throughout the responses was to highlight the importance of intergenerational activities and groups. Respondents talked about the benefits for both older and younger people of doing things together and suggested that schemes such as Duke of Edinburgh and the Welsh Baccalaureate should include intergenerational sections and encourage young people to become 'Dementia Friends'.

There was also a clear recognition of the importance of preventative services in the community to enable older people to seek low cost, high impact services to enable them to age well.

"It is important that the value of preventative services isn't forgotten and that we really start to make that transition...from funding crisis services to funding preventative services which help prevent a crisis"

Stakeholder, Vale of Glamorgan

Getting Out and About

There was a strong focus in the responses in this area on the availability of transport, in particular bus services and community transport. Many respondents said that they had difficulty accessing public transport, due to a number of reasons including accessibility for disabled people; a lack of audio or visual announcements; poor bus stop facilities, without seating or shelter; and services not running regularly and in the evening. A large number of respondents also referred to the importance of the concessionary bus pass, including proposed changes to increase age at which individuals qualify for the pass to 66 and suggestions that concessionary fares should be extended to community transport. Some respondents spoke about the need for older people to access taxi services and how expensive this could be. A number of people suggested that voluntary lift sharing schemes could be a useful asset.

“Suitable transport is key to ensuring older people are able to attend the events they wish to attend.” **Stakeholder, All-Wales**

Respondents also talked about the environment in which they live, including the state of pavements and street lighting; closure of community assets such as banks and post offices; the removal of benches; the lack of available public toilets; and a shortage of disabled parking areas. Some respondents suggested that more thought should be paid to pedestrians in town planning and that speed limits in built up areas should be reduced to 20mph.

Activities in the community were raised, including the difficulty that some people face in booking community venues due to costs. They also did not feel that there were enough evening activities available for older people that are still working to take part in, as well as many daytime activities starting too early in the day. Many respondents felt that without adequate transport services, many older people were not able to access activities at all. Access to opportunities to volunteer was also raised by a number of respondents who did not feel that they were able to contribute as much as they would like towards their communities.

“A lifetime of work experience and skills is often going to waste, when with a little help and support retired people could enjoy being a part of their community.” **Individual, 60-69, Female**

There was a particular focus on difficulties facing older people living in rural communities in getting out and about. This included the infrequency of public transport services, meaning that many older people would need to spend hours waiting in town centres for a return bus home.

Respondents also noted that community facilities closing in rural areas were having a particularly negative impact due to the large distances people would need to travel to access these services in larger towns.

“For many older people in Wales, simply getting out and about, to attend health appointments, do the weekly supermarket shop, meet up with family and friends, go to groups and activities, can be challenging if they live in a rural area with limited public transport provision.”

Stakeholder, Rhyl

Afford to do things they want to

“Being able to afford the things that people want to do is probably the overarching theme – it allows access to activities, transport, technology, education, good housing etc. This would help end other issues like loneliness.” **Stakeholder, All-Wales**

This was highlighted as an important area to focus on by a large number of respondents. Older people highlighted access to an adequate level of pension as a concern, with many saying that it was not always enough to get by on and that some, especially women, were not able to access the pensions they were promised.

Many respondents spoke about the underclaiming of entitlements for older people and that older people needed more information about the financial support that they are entitled to. This included the need for people to claim pension credit, if they are eligible for it, as well as a number of respondents highlighting the potential change to the concessionary over-75s TV licence as a concern.

“We are planning a Pension Credit campaign on Anglesey to raise awareness and increase take up. Could this have a national focus to raise the profile of this important benefit/entitlement?” **Council Officer, Isle of Anglesey**

Respondents suggested that day centres, adult education, fitness classes and other activities should be less costly for older people to access, if not free at the point of use.

There were also concerns raised about the lack of support for older people to stay in employment if they wanted or needed to and that they were a group often forgotten.

Lead Healthy and Active Lives

“Good quality healthcare, delivered in a timely manner, is one of the most fundamental factors that determines an older person’s quality of life and should therefore be a major priority” **Individual, 50-59, Male**

This was an area of interest for most respondents, with a particular focus on access to health and care services, especially GP practices and other primary care services. Many respondents spoke about the difficulty in getting an appointment with their GP, as well as many noting how inaccessible they felt the location of new health centres and practices are for older people. The availability of other community health services was raised, with it being noted that older people often want to see their GP when another healthcare professional could be better placed to support them.

The standard of healthcare received was raised by a number of respondents with some unhappy with the level of dignity and respect afforded to them when entering hospital, whilst others were not satisfied with the standard of care they received. Some believed that clinical staff did not properly understand the needs of older people. There was a small number of responses that spoke about the impact of the closure of hospitals.

It was noted that mental health issues are often under reported by older people and that there could be many older people living with depression, anxiety and other mental health conditions that are not being recognised and they are not being provided with the support they need.

Support for unpaid carers was raised by a number of respondents, who believed that carers' health and well-being was being negatively impacted. Issues were raised around the lack of support for carers and respite services. This was leading some carers into becoming isolated.

“Carers need time for themselves and the only way this can be achieved is 1-1 support for their loved one, so that the carer is reassured their loved one is being cared for whilst they are out.”

Individual, 50-59, Female, Cardiff

In terms of keeping active, respondents put forward a number of ideas about how this could be improved. These included opening exercise parks that older people could use, providing free gym membership to older people, social prescribing of Park Run, classes on healthy living and community fitness classes.

There were also a number of other health-related issues raised including falls prevention, access to health screenings for over-70s, the need for better domiciliary care and promotion of social prescribing by GPs and other health professionals.

Stay Informed

Most responses in this area related to digital exclusion of older people and the movement towards information and consultations being held online only. Respondents spoke about the need to provide more training to older people that do want to get online, as well as the necessity of continuing to provide information and services to people that do not want to use the internet. It was suggested that this training should focus on enabling older people to use social media sites to keep in touch with family and friends and to help them access online-only offers for utilities, which are often cheaper.

“Local Councils and the Welsh Government assume that putting something on a website is sufficient. Many older people do have an internet connection but only use it for basic functions such as email.”

Individual, 70-79, Male, Wrexham

It was also raised that when information is made available to people, it needs to be in a format that people can understand. This should consider people’s individual needs, including whether they have a learning disability.

“Information needs to be available in accessible formats (e.g. large print and plain language). Providing information in this way will enable older people to be fully informed and able to participate in engagement.” **Local 50+ Forum**

Respondents also raised that they did not know what was going on in their local area and that they did not know where to go to find this information, or that it was only available in a small number of locations. Changes to wardens in sheltered housing schemes was raised by some respondents as an issue meaning that they were not able to access the same level of information as they had when a full-time warden had been in place.

“I would like to know what is going on in my town. There’s no information about, except in GPs surgeries and libraries, but if you don’t need to see a doctor or go to the library, that’s it.” **Individual, 70-79, Female**

Have their Voice Heard

Many respondents saw the importance of supporting older people to have their voice heard and suggested that public bodies needed to do more to properly engage with older people and listen to their concerns and views. There was a strong level of support for the 50+ Forums set up in each local authority, but concerns were raised about whether they are representing the full diversity of older people in Wales, including people with a diverse life experience. Respondents also suggested that

these 50+ Forums should be better funded and more widely advertised so that more older people could be aware of them.

“Current structures do not represent the reality of diversity in older age, there seems to be a narrow lived experience represented and there needs to be much more done in terms of representing people with protected characteristics, but also finding people who still work into later life, who live in poverty etc.” **Stakeholder, All-Wales**

Linked to the previous section, respondents raised the importance of consultations taking place offline so that older people that don't have access to the internet were still able to have their voices heard. There were also calls for more advocacy support to be made available to those older people that needed support to have their say.

Ending Ageism and Discrimination

Responses on this area of the consultation focused generally around four main themes: the perceived “burden” of older people and the need to challenge this; age discrimination in accessing services, particularly health and care; age discrimination in employment; and the need for more intergenerational activities to break down barriers between younger and older people.

Challenging the narrative around older people

A large number of respondents wrote about the way in which older people are discussed by the media and in society more generally as being derogatory and blaming them for budgetary pressures on the NHS and other public services. It was clear in the responses that this was having a negative impact on people’s self-esteem and self-worth.

“You often see in the press we are a burden on society, whether this is financial, or taking up the resources of the NHS, where it is reported that we are responsible for bed blocking etc.” **Individual, 70-79, Female**

There was a strong focus in many of the responses on the role of the media and how so often the narrative focused on older people as a ‘cost’ rather than highlighting positive stories about older people’s contribution to their communities and society. Some respondents called on the Commissioner to act in this area and to possibly lead a campaign to challenge the negative stereotypes portrayed of older people and highlight their many positive contributions.

“Respecting the contribution made to society by the older adult group and recognise the contribution that they can continue to make respecting their knowledge, wisdom and life skills” **Healthcare professional, 50-59, Female**

Some respondents believed that older people should be empowered and encouraged to challenge ageist and age discriminatory behaviour when they are victims of it. This included in situations where they did not feel

that their voices were heard and should be supported to be able to have their opinion listened to. Advocacy services were highlighted as being particularly important in helping older people to challenge ageism and age discrimination.

“We will all become old and if we want to be valued we need to make sure older people are not discriminated against and talked down to. Their opinion does matter” **Individual, 50-59, Female, Conwy**

Part of challenging the narrative around older people involves tackling the idea that older people are one homogeneous group, rather than the diverse individuals they are. Some respondents highlighted the lack of support and services for older people with other protected characteristics.

“I have found there is very little for older LGBT+ people in Wales. I have come across homophobic comments from some of our tenants...Is there scope for research into the area or better age inclusion in LGBT+ events such as Pride?” **Housing Professional, 30-49, Female**

“More attention to elderly BME people who may feel increasingly threatened by current and future developments...They may become increasingly isolated and lonely. As such they are easy target for both hate crime and mate crime.” **Individual, 80+, Male, Flintshire**

Age Discrimination in accessing services

A large number of responses in this area focused on people’s perceptions of age discrimination in the health service; however, there were some respondents who spoke about public and private services more broadly.

“Ageism is not just prevalent in society, it is prevalent in the care the older people receive from social services, care homes, doctors and hospitals” **Individual, 70-79, Male, Carmarthenshire**

Linked to challenging the narrative around older people, many respondents highlighted comments about the regular blaming of older people for issues in the NHS and the reporting that people living longer was a bad thing, meaning budgetary issues for the health service.

“The NHS should be equal for all. I recently heard that [people] living longer is costing the NHS. That comment made me feel guilty for being alive.” **Individual, 60-69, Female**

As well as this, a number of respondents felt that medical professionals did not treat them equally and with the respect they deserved. They highlighted that they felt that their complaints were not always taken seriously, or they were discouraged from making them. Also, that older people were not trusted to make decisions about their own treatments and when visiting close family members, they were not included in discussions about their treatment.

“Many people I know have gone to their GP with a complaint and have been told ‘its just your age, there is nothing we can do about it’.”
Individual, 70-79, Female

“Medical professionals need to explain why certain treatments cannot be undertaken, everyone has the right to know what risks there are and be able to make the decision as to whether they want to take that risk.” **Individual, 50-59, Female, Cardiff**

“When visiting my husband in hospital with my daughter, information as to his progress was directed by medical staff to my daughter, ignoring my presence and role as his next of kin. It was assumed that I was unable to understand/respond.” **Individual, 80+, Female, Vale of Glamorgan**

A number of respondents, especially stakeholders specialising in the area, raised older people’s access to mental health care as being an area of particular age discrimination. It was noted that there is a disproportionately low level of older people in Wales accessing

treatment for mental illness and that professionals were not always recognising and appropriately treating these illnesses.

“Evidence demonstrates that older people presenting with symptoms of mental health problems face discrimination and inequality in the treatment they receive.” **Stakeholder, All-UK**

“We know that GPs and other clinicians will tend to prescribe antidepressants, rather than referring [older people] for psychological therapies (despite NICE guidance and...Matrics Cymru).” **Healthcare Professional, 30-49, Cardiff**

Many respondents also highlighted the difficulties they faced in accessing services in the first place and believed many of these barriers to be age discriminatory. These included procedures in place in GP practices to book appointments that insisted on either being done online or by telephone, without the option to book in person. This particularly affected an individual respondent with hearing loss. The ‘online-only’ nature of other services such as banking and insurance was also raised by a number of respondents as an age discriminatory practice, that assumed that everyone had access to, and knew how to use, a computer and/or mobile phone.

The location of health services and disability access to areas was also raised by a number of respondents with respondents feeling that the centralisation of health services was causing particular issues for people without cars or access to regular public transport services.

There was also a particular issue raised around older people being able to access health and other services in their language of choice, in particular the Welsh language, due to the lack of available staff and organisations that provide that service.

Age Discrimination in Employment

This was an area many respondents felt strongly about and highlighted the laws and conventions already in place that should stop age discrimination in the workplace but that it was still continuing. A number

of respondents spoke about the positive impact that employing older people can have on an organisation due to their extensive experience and their ability share skills and knowledge with other members of staff.

“So much expertise and experience is lost because of ageism in employment” **Stakeholder, Caerphilly**

It was suggested that flexible working policies in organisations could be adapted to include reference to the care of older relatives as well as those that care for their children. This could encourage more organisations to think about the needs of older people that may be caring for their partner or parents but wish to continue working.

It was also highlighted how older people in the workplace are not given the same level of professional development opportunities as other members of staff. One respondent shared the story of a woman that had partially retired and was no longer offered opportunities to progress.

“[In the workplace] from a certain age women become invisible. Someone recently partially retired...not one of her managers have discussed career development [with her]. She could work another ten years if she chose to.” **Community Council**

As well as older people highlighting some of the barriers they’ve faced in accessing employment, there were also calls in the consultation for more information to be made available to employers on how they could support older workers and design their organisation to better suit older workers.

“As an employer, I’d like more information on how working has an impact on older people. It is clear that some people now tend to work longer, and this is a trend that is likely to increase. Where should I focus my attention when preparing my workplace for older workers?”
Stakeholder, Mid and West Wales

Intergenerational Activities

The final theme that came through very strongly in the majority of responses was a call for more opportunities to be made available for people of all ages to spend time together, especially the older and younger generations. It was noted that this could help increase the understanding between the two groups about the challenges they each face in their lives but also the positive ways in which they can contribute to each other.

“More opportunities for older and younger people to work together in communities so they can support and understand each other.”

Individual, 60-69, Female, Carmarthenshire

There were suggestions about older people going into primary and secondary schools to do activities with children, as well as suggestions for children to enter care settings. A number of respondents said that they would personally enjoy spending more time with children and some were actively looking to volunteer in this way. Some commented on the recent television programmes that have shown young children in care homes with older people. However, it was noted that intergenerational activities should not just be limited to older people living in care homes, extra care or sheltered housing but be open to all.

“There was a lovely experiment where older people were invited into a primary school to chat with the children. This seemed to benefit both.”

Individual, 60-69, Female, Rhondda Cynon Taf

As well as spending time together, many respondents highlighted the need for there to be more education about older people and their lives, including as part of the curriculum in schools. They felt that this would help younger people to understand the challenges and opportunities that come with ageing.

Stopping Abuse of Older People

Responses to this area of the consultation focused on four general themes: raising awareness of abuse; providing more training and support for professionals; ensuring older people have access to the support they need if they are at risk of, or experiencing, abuse; and ensuring that perpetrators are brought to justice.

There was also a common thread that respondents did not feel that abuse was always recognised, both by older people and by professionals, and that older people often did not want to come forward to report abuse, especially if it was being committed by a family member or carer.

“A number of people who have been abused never report it or refuse to confirm suspicions for a variety of reasons. These can include the feeling that they will not be believed, that they will endlessly have to re-live the trauma as countless different people question them about it, but most importantly, the fear that report the abuser will result in worse treatment in the long run.” **Individual, 60-69, Female, Conwy**

There was a strong level of support for the Commissioner to continue work on tackling scams, especially online, telephone and doorstep cold-callers. It was highlighted that older people that are lonely and isolated will often welcome the opportunity to talk to someone, even if their intentions are to take money from them. By tackling loneliness and isolation, it was suggested that fewer people would be at risk of abuse or scamming.

Loneliness and isolation were also raised as an issue for people who have been victims of abuse, in particular domestic violence and coercive control.

“Domestic violence and coercive control make you more isolated and lonely, as you no longer trust anyone” **Individual, 60-69, Female, Powys**

Awareness Raising

In the responses, there was a strong level of support for awareness raising of the abuse of older people at both a national and local level. Many respondents called for an all-Wales campaign, working with the media and other services, to raise people's awareness of what to look out for if someone is being abused and what avenues were available if they wanted to report abuse.

“Increase awareness across society...People do not think twice if they see a child being abused but if it is an older person they think that they can fight back and look after themselves. People must be made to understand that this is not always the case.” **Individual, 70-79, Female**

It was noted that not all forms of abuse, including financial, were recognised as such and that a campaign could bring other forms of abuse to people's attention.

Training for Professionals

Another theme from the responses was the role that professionals play in preventing abuse, as well as providing support to older people that have been victims of abuse. This generally focused on increasing the level of training given to front line professionals but also there were a number of responses that promoted the continued professionalisation the care workforce in particular, to provide staff with the support, training and wages needed to recognise their work. Linked to this was the suggestion of better vetting of people who work or volunteer with vulnerable older people to reduce the risk of abuse.

Some respondents spoke about the need for improvements to complaints systems to enable older people that have been abused to have their cases addressed. There were some respondents that shared their own stories of not being able to navigate the complaints system or being pressured into not pursuing a complaint.

There was a recognition that statutory organisations needed to better collect data about older people being abused and that this data should

be shared across organisations to ensure that different agencies were aware of instances of abuse. Respondents believed that this data should be published so that organisations such as the Commissioner could access and scrutinise progress.

“Collecting accurate data on the extent of abuse and crimes against older people is vital in order to lobby for and ensure that there are adequate resources available to protect older people. However, it is not just the prevalence that is important but the response from agencies and the scrutiny of those responses.” **Stakeholder, All-Wales**

There was a feeling amongst some respondents that the reduction in budgets for police services was having a detrimental impact on their ability to identify crimes against older people and take forward investigations.

Services for Older People

As well as increased support for professionals, a number of respondents highlighted the importance of making sure that older people were able to access services to help them if they are at risk of, or experiencing, abuse. This included access to advocacy services in particular, with a number of respondents highlighting the importance of advocacy services for the most vulnerable older people that need assistance in having their voice heard.

“50+ support services for older abuse victims should be made available and widely communicated through the appropriate channels so that older people know where to turn in the event of abuse. Services should be tailored to the needs of the types of abuse normally suffered by older people, conveniently located with appropriately trained staff.” **Stakeholder, Blaenau Gwent**

There were also a lot of responses suggesting that a helpline, similar to ChildLine, should be set up for older people to contact if they are concerned that they are being abused. This could also be used by family

members, friends and carers if they were concerned about someone at risk of abuse.

A number of respondents spoke about the importance of supporting carers, as they were often placed under extreme pressures and in difficult situations that could result in them being either the victim or perpetrator of abuse. It was mentioned by some respondents that if a complaint was being pursued against a carer or family member, that the older person involved would need to receive additional support for their care and support needs.

Some respondents also suggested that there should be the offer of added security features for older people, including spy holes and more effective locks and that tighter safeguards should be placed on vulnerable older people's finances to stop financial abuse occurring.

Access to Justice

The final theme of the responses was around improving older people's access to justice when they have been abused. This included improving the safeguarding procedures used by social services, as well as ensuring that older people are supported to seek prosecutions for those that have committed crimes against them and that sentences should be tougher and more proportionate to the impact of the crime.

The justice system should be encouraged to be more robust in dealing with offences of elder abuse." **Individual, 70-79, Female, Rhondda Cynon Taf**

It was felt by some respondents that some older people required additional support to access justice and needed to be reassured that they were not being "a burden" or "creating a fuss" by reporting abuse and pursuing a prosecution.

"We all have a duty to ensure they [older people] are protected and they receive the justice they are entitled to and that they are, above all, safe from harm and free from abuse." **Stakeholder, Bridgend**

A stakeholder working in the area called for the Commissioner to pursue the creation of a specific aggravated offence of “elder abuse” to adequately recognise the seriousness and unique dynamics involved.

Conclusion

The Commissioner and her team have been analysing the responses to the consultation throughout the time it has been running and have been using the responses to guide the areas of focus within her three priorities: Ensuring everyone can age well; Ending ageism and discrimination; and Stopping abuse of older people.

In addition to the responses on the three priorities, respondents were able to provide additional comments on any other areas that they believed were important to focus on. The issues raised included topics such as older people's experiences in care homes, dementia care, provision of housing, and the future costs of social care. All of these areas have a significant impact on older people's lives and will continue to be part of the Commissioner's work.

In April, the Commissioner will publish her three-year strategy, which will set out her priorities for the rest of her term in office, as well as publishing a detailed one-year work programme for 2019-20. The Commissioner will continue to engage with older people and stakeholders through her term in office and will use the voices of older people to guide her work.

Annex A: Consultation

Share your views on how we can make Wales the best place in the world to grow older

The Older People's Commissioner for Wales wants Wales to be the best place in the world to grow older and is currently determining the work she will undertake over the next three years to improve the lives of older people.

Since she took up post, the Commissioner has travelled the length and breadth of Wales, meeting and speaking with older people and organisations to hear about what would make Wales the best place in the world to grow older.

This has helped the Commissioner to identify three key long-term priorities for Wales, against which she will deliver a wide range of work over the next three years:

- Ensuring everyone can age well
- Ending ageism and discrimination
- Stopping abuse of older people

The Commissioner wants the voices and experiences of as many older people and stakeholders as possible to inform her work and would welcome your views on what she should focus on under these priority areas, particularly the changes you want to see and your ideas about how to make these changes happen. In your response you may want to highlight something you are concerned about or share an example of something positive that works well and could be replicated in other parts of Wales.

The Commissioner is particularly keen to focus on work that will improve the quality of life of the most vulnerable older people, those whose voices often go unheard, and those who are at risk of harm. The Commissioner also wants to use her work to highlight the contribution that older people make to their communities and to society, and to help people to age well.

Once you have completed the attached pro forma, please return it to the Commissioner's office in the Freepost envelope provided. The closing date for responses is **Friday 22 February 2019**.

Many thanks for your help!

Ensuring everyone can age well

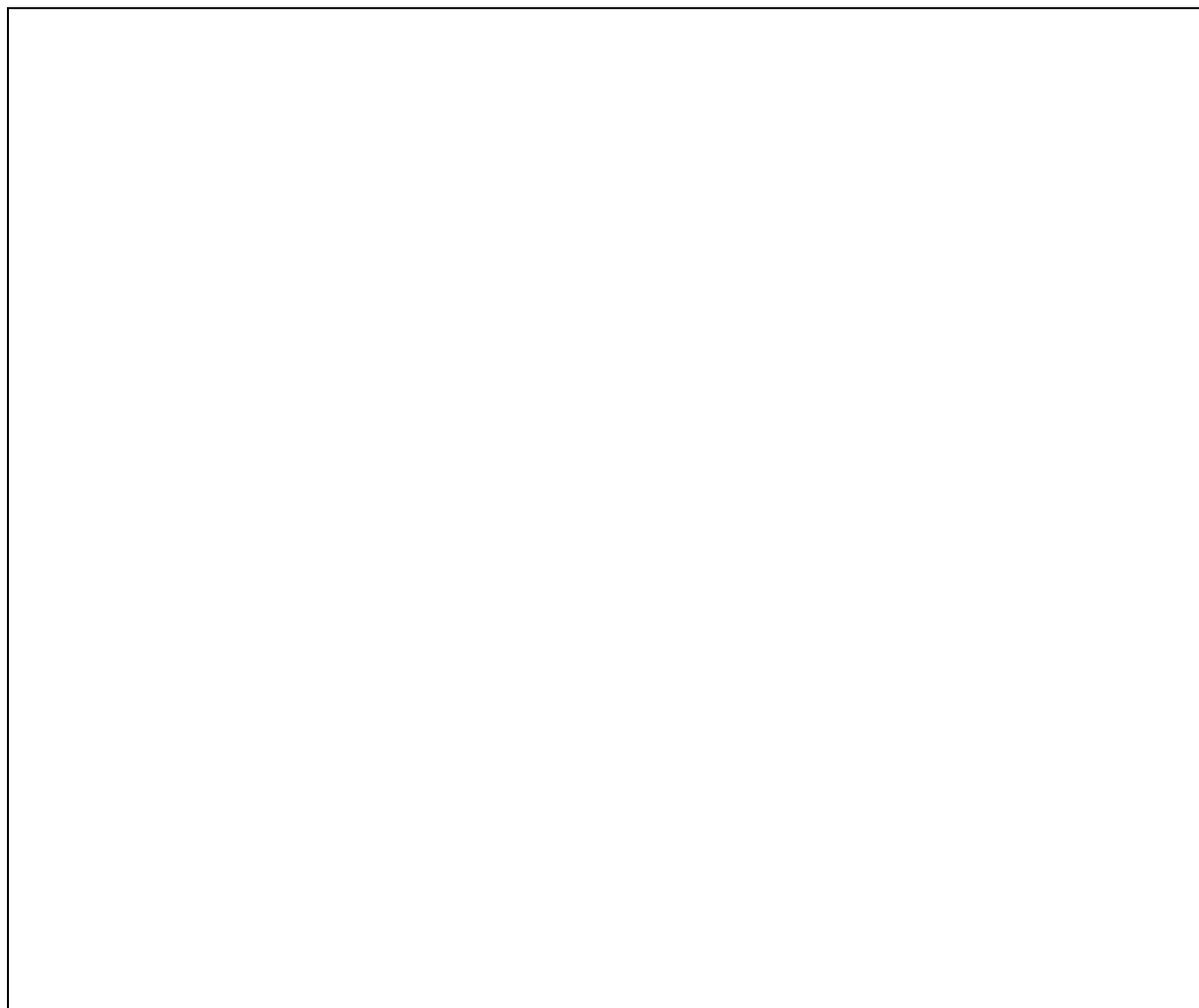
Ageing well is something everyone in Wales should be entitled to do, but many people find themselves unable to do the things that matter to them as they get older. Older people should be seen as a vital part of society and should be able to have more opportunities to participate in and contribute to our economy and our communities.

We need to work together to make Wales a nation of age-friendly communities where older people feel valued, included and respected and can:

- get out and about
- afford to do things they want to do
- lead healthy and active lives
- stay informed
- have their voice heard

What should the Commissioner focus on within this priority area?

What changes are needed and how can we make this change happen?



Ending ageism and discrimination

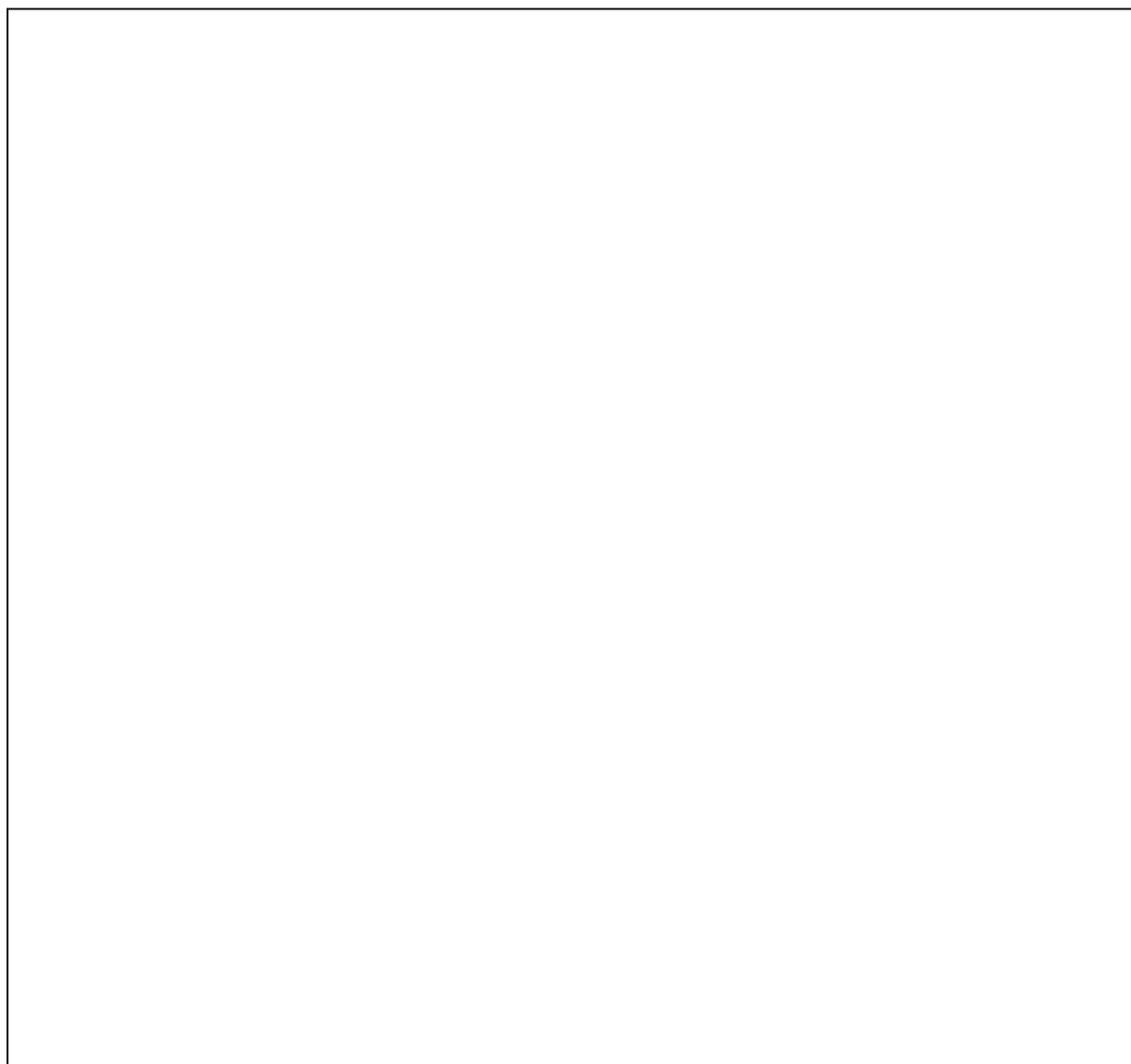
Ageism is prejudice or discrimination based on a person's age and is still very prevalent within society.

Ageism underpins many of the issues currently faced by older people and results in negative stereotypes, older people being treated unfairly and their rights not being respected and upheld. Ageism can also negatively influence the decisions made by society, meaning that the services, facilities and opportunities that people need to help them to age well can be inadequate and discriminate against older people.

Tackling ageism and age discrimination is essential to ensure that older people have equality, are treated with dignity and respect, and that the contribution they make to society is both recognised and celebrated.

What should the Commissioner focus on within this priority area?

What changes are needed and how can we make this change happen?



Stopping abuse of older people

Thousands of older people in Wales experience abuse – a single or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, which causes harm or distress – and crimes committed against older people are under-reported. The types of abuse against older people may include physical abuse; domestic violence; sexual abuse; psychological or emotional abuse; financial or material abuse; organisational or institutional abuse; neglect or acts of omission; and coercive control.

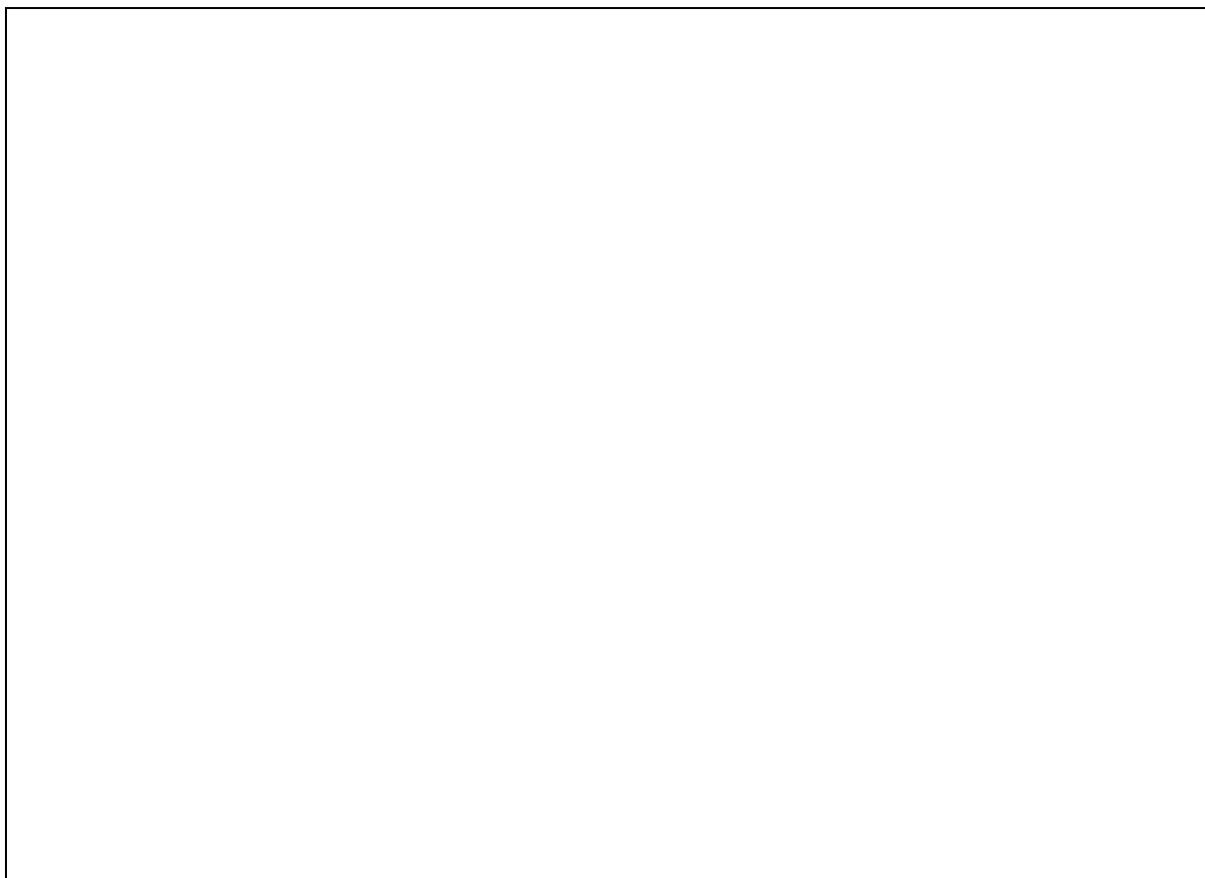
Whilst there is a growing understanding of the scale and nature of abuse and crimes against older people, there is still a lack of meaningful data about the levels of abuse in Wales, and awareness of these issues is still far too low across our public services and society in general.

The Commissioner's priority is to stop this abuse by increasing awareness across society, improve preventative actions across public bodies and secure access to justice for those who are or at risk of being abused and help them to feel safe.

What should the Commissioner focus on within this priority area?

What changes are needed and how can we make this change happen?

If there are any other areas of work you think the Commissioner should focus on over the next three years, please include them in the box below. You can also use this space to let the Commissioner know any other changes that would make Wales the best place to grow older and how we can make this change happen.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for users to provide feedback or suggestions regarding the Commissioner's focus over the next three years.

Thank you for taking the time to share your views and ideas, which will help to inform and shape the Commissioner’s work over the next three years.

The Commissioner may wish to contact you to request further information about what you have shared above, to capture your views as part of any further consultation on her work and priorities or to provide you with an update on how she has used the information you have provided. Your personal information will be processed for these purposes and will not be shared with any third party. For further details as to how we will process your personal information, please look at our privacy notice at www.olderpeoplewales.com or request a copy.

If you would be happy for us to contact you in the future, please include your contact details below:

I am responding: (please tick)

- As an individual
- On behalf of an organisation

Name:

Organisation (if applicable):

Email:

Tel:

Address:

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It would also be helpful if you could complete the attached diversity monitoring form and return with your completed pro forma.

Please return this pro forma to the Commissioner in the Freepost envelope provided. The closing date for responses is Friday 22 February 2019.

Many thanks for your help!

Annex B: Responses received from stakeholder organisations

Action on Elder Abuse Cymru	Diverse Cymru
Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales	Dyfed Powys Police
Age Connects Cardiff and the Vale	Flintshire County Council
Age Connects North Wales Central	Glamorgan Voluntary Services
Alzheimer's Society, West Wales	Gwent Drug and Alcohol Service
Aneurin Bevan CHC	Henllys Community Council
Aneurin Bevan UHB	Lewis School Pengam
Aneurin Day Care Centre	Llanbedr Community Council
Anglesey Older Peoples Council	Men's Sheds Cymru
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	Merched y Wawr
Brecon Beacons National Park Authority	Neath Port Talbot Council for Voluntary Services
British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)	Newport 50+ Forum
British Psychological Society	North East Wales Presbyterian society
Caerphilly 50+ Forum	North Wales CHC
Campaign to End Loneliness	POBL
Care in the Vale	Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC
Carmarthenshire County Council	Royal British Legion
Communications Consumer Panel	Shine
Community Transport Association	Sovla Care
Contact the Elderly	Swansea CBC
Conwy County Borough Council	Taff Ely 50+ Forum
Cymru Older People's Alliance	Torfaen Voluntary Alliance
Dementia Friendly Maerdy	Upper Rhondda 50+ Forum
Derwen	Wales and West Housing
	West Wales Domestic Abuse Service
	Wrexham Over 50s Forum