

A. EQUALITY

EVIDENCE AND ANALYSIS – Strategy for an Ageing Society

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010

How does the policy advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not?

The strategy's vision is to create a Wales that supports people of all ages to live and age well. By implementing the actions across the document and its supporting delivery plan, we aim to create built environments, social networks, health and care and transport systems that improve lives for all.

The strategy has been co-produced with stakeholders, however we also collated statistical and research evidence against each priority. By utilising this approach, we have sought to identify and mitigate against any negative impacts on older people; any potential breaches of older people's rights and to foster good relations between people with a protected characteristic and those without.

Although many of us are working longer than before, providing more unpaid care and spending more time contributing to our local communities, older people are often depicted as a drain on society. By providing a narrative that contradicts such stereotypical notions of ageing, we aim to promote equality of opportunity between older people who share a protected characteristic and those of other ages who do not. The strategy aims to change the way individuals, businesses and public sectors view ageing. Older people are tax payers, consumers, local councillors and business owners. By acknowledging and valuing the contributions of all older people in Wales, the Strategy rejects ageism and promotes work to create an age friendly Wales.

In 2021- 22, we are funding activity or a post in each local authority in Wales to champion an age friendly Wales. In 2022 – 23, £1.1million has been allocated to local authorities to continue this work (50k per local authority). We also plan to support the work of the Older People's Commissioner to encourage each local authority to gain membership of the WHO's Age Friendly Network of Cities and Communities. To gain membership, local authorities must draft a plan and set how they are engaging with older people in their communities. This action will promote equality at a local level. The publication of the strategy promotes equality at a national level.

Wales: Our Strategy for an Ageing Society, sets out the action we will take to ensure Wales can reap the benefits of growing numbers of older people in our communities. This, in turn, will enable us to better support people living in challenging circumstances. To reflect the multi-dimensional nature of ageing and the intersectional nature of people's experiences of inequality and discrimination, we have worked across government departments to promote equality and address the range of factors that influence how we age – from our health and transport systems to the way we socialise, work and care for others.

The Ministerial Advisory Forum on Ageing advises government on how to promote age equality, combat ageism and embed a rights based approach. We also continue

to fund Age Cymru to host 5 national older people's organisations and to engage with older people with protected characteristics.

How will you demonstrate the impact of this policy once implemented?

From the outset, members of the Ministerial Advisory Forum on Ageing and our key stakeholders, including the Older People's Commissioner, were clear that this strategy should focus on actions against which progress can be measured.

The membership, terms of reference and purpose of the Ministerial Advisory Forum on Ageing (MAFA) have been refreshed to ensure this group can play a pivotal role in overseeing the implementation of this strategy and its supporting delivery plan which clearly sets out clear milestones and timescales by which progress can be measured. We will publish annual progress reports and provide quarterly updates to MAFA.

In 2019, the Centre for Innovative Ageing (CIA) at Swansea University was commissioned to use the [Global AgeWatch Index](#) to benchmark the situation of older people in Wales against the other 3 UK nations – Northern Ireland, Scotland and England. This measure was updated in 2021. CIA used a range of measures to create a [UK Age Index \(UKAI\)](#). The results for the overall UKAI show that Wales was ranked 1st, with the highest overall score, followed by Scotland (2nd), England (3rd) and finally Northern Ireland (4th). This shows that there is much that we are doing well and we should feel proud that our commitment to support older people is clearly evidenced.

To accompany the strategy, we have published the full results of the Age UK Index and a report benchmarking the situation of older people in Wales.

Age

What are the intended positive impacts of the proposal and reasons for your decision (including evidence)?

Evidence and data

The Office for National Statistics shows that since 1948, across England and Wales, life expectancy has increased by 14 years for men and 13 years for women.

In Wales, the central demographic projects that **in 20 years (by 2038) 1 in 4 of the population will be over 65**. The population aged over 75 in Wales is also projected to increase from 9.3% of the population in 2018 to 13.7% in 2038 (Office for National Statistics 2019). It is worth noting that despite these predictions, improvements in life expectancies have stalled since around 2011 and there has been little change in recent years. Equally, around a third of adults in Wales reported a limiting longstanding illness in 2018-19, with little change in recent years.

By 2030, it is projected that there will be over 1,008,000 older people in Wales – 33% of the total population¹

¹ (Office for National Statistics, (2019), Population projections for local authorities: Table 2, 9 April 2019. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/datasets/localauthoritiesinenglandtable2> [Date Accessed: 20/08/2019])

Across the UK, which is ageing less rapidly than elsewhere, nearly a third (31.5%) will be over 60 by 2050, and nearly one in three of today's babies will get to live to 100².

Ageism

The report: *Global reach of ageism on older persons' health: A systematic review* found that ageism harms the health of older people in 45 countries and across 5 continents. The study had over 7 million participants.

The 2018 report *That Age Old Question: How attitudes to ageing affect our health and wellbeing* by the Royal Society for Public Health has linked ageism to a negative attitude to growing older.

In 2018, the report, *Living Well for Longer: The economic argument for investing in the health and well-being of older people in Wales*, found that the economic value of the contribution made by older people in Wales was estimated to be £2.19billion per annum.

- Almost **1 in 8** older people (12% of people aged 60+ in Wales) feel they have been discriminated against because of their age, while **1 in 5** older people (21%) say they would not be confident in identifying instances of ageism.
(*Older People's Commissioner "State of the Nation" Report 2019*)
- Ageist stereotypes, whether through a person's own attitudes to ageing or through discrimination from others, can negatively impact upon the ageing process, affecting health and well-being, performance on cognitive tests or physical tasks, and influencing decisions made by older people about their lives.
(*Older People's Commissioner "State of the Nation" Report 2019*)
- Around **66,000** older people in Wales (8%) report that they have been made to feel too old to receive health services.
(*Older People's Commissioner "State of the Nation" Report 2019*)

Volunteers make a significant contribution, in unpaid hours, to the economy of Wales. It is estimated that every year volunteers contribute 145 million hours, which is worth £1.7 billion (WCVA 2016). This is equivalent to 3.1% of Wales GDP. Data from the National Survey for Wales (2020) showed that the majority of volunteers in Wales are aged over 65.

At our engagement events, older people were keen to counteract ageist stereotypes and wanted to be portrayed as valuable members of society with skills and knowledge worth sharing.

Impact of retirement

The research report, *Retirement Transitions in Later Life*, by the Centre for Ageing Better showed that the main thing that retirees miss from work is the social contact it gave them. In addition, the sense of isolation following bereavement can be particularly acute. Closures of places to meet, such as libraries, community centres, pubs and churches can make it more challenging for older people to develop and maintain social networks.

² [experience-of-people-approaching-later-life-lockdown.pdf \(ageing-better.org.uk\)](#)

Attendees at our engagement events said that although they had retired from full-time paid work, they were as busy as they had ever been, with voluntary jobs, part-time jobs and caring roles (for adults and grandchildren). They questioned what is meant by the concept of “retirement”, as they could not envisage a time when they would not have some sort of responsibility towards others or calls on their time.

Analysis

The reports above show that there is a need to champion the positive contributions older people make to Welsh society and economy by caring, volunteering, working and paying taxes. Doing so will help to address negative stereotypes of ageing. As the evidence shows, ageism can have a long term negative impact on health and well-being. The strategy aims to engage people to engage in a conversation about ageing so that everyone can look forward to growing older and is prepared to make the most of the opportunities older age brings. The strategy’s vision sums up the aim:

- Our vision is an age friendly Wales that supports people of all ages to live and age well.
- We want to create a Wales where everyone looks forward to growing older.
- A Wales where individuals can take responsibility for their own health and well-being whilst feeling confident that support will be available and easily accessible if needed.
- A Wales where ageism does not limit potential or affect the quality of services older people receive.

The Strategy has been co-produced with older people and their representatives via working groups, the Ministerial Advisory Forum on Ageing and a public consultation. Therefore we have avoided including actions that have negative impacts on older people with protected characteristics or living in low income households. Through our engagement, we have identified where action is needed to support all older people to live and age well. Examples of areas highlighted in the strategy where we plan to take action to mitigate any negative impacts associated ageing include access to health and social care services, tackling age related poverty and access to local bus services.

During the Covid 19 lockdowns, we funded Age Cymru and five national older people’s organisations to carry out two surveys of the [Experiences of people aged 50 or over in Wales during the first Covid-19 lockdown, and the road to recovery](#). The surveys showed that concerns relating to the availability of buses and local services were heightened. These and other issues heightened by the pandemic were already included in the strategy, showing that our extensive engagement helped us to identify the key issues impacting on older people. Other issues highlighted in the surveys included digital inclusion, a rights based approach, the availability of places to meet and loneliness and isolation.

Disability

What are the intended positive impacts of the proposal and reasons for your decision (including evidence)?

We engaged with older people living with a disability via our engagement events and their membership of Welsh Government funded groups and forums.

Action on Disability: the Right to Independent Living focuses on what the Welsh Government is doing to achieve greater equality in Wales. Underlying the whole framework is the ‘Social Model of Disability’, which recognises the need for society to be transformed by removing barriers so that disabled people are able to participate fully. Although not all older people are disabled, the chance of having a functional impairment increases with age. Therefore older people with a disability will also benefit from this wider approach to independent living.

Our engagement and research highlighted that building age friendly communities and cities can support people of any age living with a disability and also people that develop a disability as part of the ageing process. Age Alliance Wales, whose membership includes RNIB Cymru, Action on Hearing Loss and Versus Arthritis were involved in coproducing the document and ensured that we were mindful of the needs of people with disabilities at every stage of the strategy’s development.

For example, the availability of public toilets is a constant concern for many older people and people with a disability - numerous people at our engagement events and meetings noted that toilets are a significant factor in whether people chose to leave their home or use public transport.

Evidence shows the importance of making our streets and pavements safer and more age friendly. For example, people over the age of 60 make up **20% of the population** of the UK, around 8% of pedestrian activity, yet account for **41.5% of all pedestrian fatalities** (Musselwhite C.B.A. 2018). Poorly maintained pavements, poor crossing facilities and poor lighting among other things can contribute to this figure (Musselwhite C.B.A. 2018). In addition, Wales ranked third out of the four UK nations in the Global Age Watch Index on physical safety which is defined as how safe people feel when going out at night. These are identified negative factors that prevent older people and people with a disability from living the life they choose and are factors the strategy aims to address.

Improving the availability of local bus services is always cited as a priority in our wider engagement with older people living with a disability – we asked participants ‘what matters most to you?’ and transport was the most popular response. This was reflected in our transport working group discussions. Statistics showing the impact of austerity on local bus services further support our decision. The working group also prioritised the need to support people to plan their journeys from door to door to allow people with limited mobility to use public transport with confidence.

Gender Reassignment

Data and statistics

- Across the UK, but particularly in Wales, there is very poor data about the numbers of transgender people and individuals who identify outside of the traditional gender binary (non-binary individuals) of all ages – this is something that has been highlighted by a wide range of public bodies, researchers and other organisations.

(Older People’s Commissioner “State of the Nation” Report 2019)

‘I’m going to live my life for me’: trans ageing, care and older trans and gender non-conforming adults’ expectations of and concerns for later life (2020,

Paul B Willis*, Michele Raithby, Christine Dobbs, Elizabeth Evans, Jenny-Anne Bishop)

To ensure the strategy has no negative impact on people living with this protected characteristic, from November 2018 to January 2019 Age Alliance Wales and Age Cymru carried out a series of focus groups across Wales, visiting venues in Bangor, Wrexham, Swansea, Cardiff and Newport.

Opinions and comments were sought on a range of issues aligning with the key areas initially identified by members of the Ministerial Advisory Forum on Ageing (whose membership is comprised of 50% older people). Attendees at the focus groups were all people aged 50+, with additional meetings specifically aimed at minority ethnic and LGBT+ people.

A report was drafted which includes sections focussing on LGBT+ people:



Age Cymru focus
group report.docx

Specific issues relating to gender reassignment highlighted in the report include:

- There was a great deal of concern about the families of individuals – who may be estranged – “interfering” in their care. We were told that family members may not approve of their LGBT+ relative’s lifestyles, and so “instruct” the care home to treat their relative in a particular manner. This was said to be a particular concern for transgender people, who may find their family instructing the care provider to ignore their wishes around gender identity.
- There were concerns around transgender people reverting to their ‘birth gender’ if they have dementia. It was stated that a transgender woman may regress to an earlier age where she lived as a man, and essentially hide her gender status, if she develops dementia.
- There were further matters surrounding health care for transgender people: transgender men may need cervical smear, but don’t want to sit in a clinic full of women, whilst transgender women may need prostate examinations. Health boards have helped greatly with this situation, providing timeslots at the end of the clinic for transgender people, which was seen as an acceptable solution to their concerns.

Through this engagement, we were able to ensure the strategy did not negatively impact on the protected group of gender reassignment.

In order to take positive action to address some of the points outlined above, we shared the report with officials drafting the LGBT+ action plan and scheduled meetings to discuss how the plan can reflect the needs of older transgender people. We have also met with the author of the report *'I'm going to live my life for me': trans ageing, care and older trans and gender non-conforming adults' expectations of and concerns for later life*. Any actions will be recorded in the delivery plan.

Race, including Gypsies and Travellers and Migrants, Asylum seekers and Refugees

Data and statistics

Recent estimates from the Annual Population Survey (APS) show that:

- 5.9% of the Welsh population described themselves as Asian, Black, 'Mixed/Multiple ethnic group' or 'Other ethnic group'.
- However, the proportion of the population identifying as ethnic minority varied considerably by local authority – from 1.7% in Wrexham to 19.8% in Cardiff.
- Of the 1,462,000 people currently in employment in Wales, 5.2% identify as ethnic minority.

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) and the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic \(BAME\) population in Wales \(gov.wales\)](#)

- There is little ethnic diversity in the older population, with **97.8%** of older people in Wales identifying as White British. Projections indicate this will change over time – 98.8% of over 75s identify as White British, compared with 97.2% of 60-74-year olds.

- [\(Older People's Commissioner "State of the Nation" Report 2019\)](#)

The full ethnic breakdown of older people in Wales is difficult to estimate because older people who identify as non-white have been under-represented in population surveys. More engagement and research with BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) older people is therefore needed for a better understanding of the diversity within these communities.

[\(Older People's Commissioner "State of the Nation" Report 2019\)](#)

- Many older Gypsies have not traditionally participated in formal education and therefore most elders are not literate. This is important for service providers to remember, as most elders will not be able to read information such as appointment letters, pharmacy instructions, or health promotion materials.
- [\(Perspectives on ageing in Gypsy families \(jrf.org.uk\)\)](#)
- A number of research studies have shown that Gypsies and Travellers experience the poorest health relative to other minority ethnic groups in the UK and they are the most 'at risk' health group in the UK, with the lowest life expectancy (Parry et al., 2004). Listening to the elders, it is clear that the main reason that they did not see a doctor when they were young was because of shortage of money and the attitude of some health professionals.
- [\(Perspectives on ageing in Gypsy families \(jrf.org.uk\)\)](#)
- Most of the elders were very positive about the service they now get from their local GPs and their treatment in hospital. However, nearly all of those we spoke to were struggling with some health problems in older age.

To ensure the strategy has no negative impact on people living with this protected characteristic, from November 2018 to January 2019 Age Alliance Wales and Age Cymru carried out a series of focus groups across Wales, visiting venues in Bangor, Wrexham, Swansea, Cardiff and Newport.

Opinions and comments were sought on a range of issues aligning with the key areas initially identified by members of the Ministerial Advisory Forum on Ageing (whose membership is comprised of 50% older people). Attendees at the focus groups were all people aged 50+, with additional meetings specifically aimed at minority ethnic and LGBT+ people.

A report was drafted which includes sections focussing on older minority ethnic people:



Age Cymru focus
group report.docx

Specific issues included:

- We were told that the vulnerability of ethnic minority people post Brexit is a concern. One contributor indicated that he expects a spike in hate crime in March 2019, and there was a fear that the UK government has developed an anti-immigrant stance. (This point is included in the Strategy).
- It was reported that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people can experience general disrespect daily. Indeed, we were told of ethnic minority people being given poor treatment from GPs and surgery staff, local authority staff and bus drivers, amongst others.
- It was also clear that more could be done by the providers of social activities to engage with their communities: Age Cymru met with a number of ethnic minority people living very close to a major sports ground in South Wales, including a “community connector” with a focus on engaging with the local ethnic minority population. He organised a community sports day at the venue, with many ethnic minority people from across the region attending for the first time, despite having lived within a few streets of the venue.
- We were told that the notion of leaving one’s own home and entering supported housing or residential care was troubling for some ethnic minority people: property ownership is seen as being very important to some groups, and the idea of leaving behind an owned home, to enter into what may be seen as a rental property, would be a “a loss of face”.
- Further, those we spoke to explained that it is something of a myth that ethnic minority communities and families wish to care for their older members in a significantly different manner to the rest of the population.
- Further, we were reminded that ethnic minority people with dementia can lose the use of English, and it can be very difficult to get care workers who can speak the appropriate languages – more so than it is to get care workers who can speak Welsh, we were told.

Through this engagement, we were able to ensure the strategy has no negative impact on older minority ethnic people.

In order to increase access to services and awareness of rights amongst older minority ethnic women, we provide funding via the Sustainable Social Services Third Sector Grant to a project in Cardiff managed by Women Connect First. The project aims to share the learning from the project across Wales and develop and a successful model of delivery that can be replicated.

Older ethnic minority people are represented on the Ministerial Advisory Forum on Ageing and, officials will continue to work with members and across government to address issues outlined above. This will be reflected in the delivery plan.

We are also working with officials in social services who are leading the work in the Race Equality Action Plan which includes actions that will support ethnic minority older people to access services. The detail will be captured in the delivery plan.

Religion and belief (including non-belief)

Research and data

- *The re-opening of community venues, libraries and **places of worship** were important to many older people to enable the resumption of social groups, leisure activities, support groups and access to computers. These facilities all provide a vital community hub and are often used by older people to connect with people, socialise and host groups for people living with health conditions and their carers to connect, support each other and provide respite. They are also an important community hub for publicising local information, health campaigns, and ensuring that the voices of older people are heard in their local community.*
(Age Cymru: Experiences of people aged 50 or over in Wales during the first Covid-19 lockdown, and the road to recovery)

Whilst we acknowledge the impact that closures of places of worship has on older people, the need to protect lives during the pandemic meant the closures had to take place. However, the strategy acknowledges the importance of places to meet and we will monitor how well older people are engaging with their communities via the delivery plan and work with local authorities.

No negative impacts on religion and belief were identified as the strategy's rights based approach seeks to promote inclusion and respect for all.

Sex

- Women far more likely to be economically inactive prior to State Pension age (SPA) than men at all older ages. At age 50 years, 17.9% of women were economically inactive compared with 9.6% of men and at age 64 years, 58.6% of women compared with 44.9% of men.
(State of the Nation (2021) Older People Commissioner for Wales)

The key impacts noted through our consultation regarding the protected characteristic of sex were; the financial circumstances of older women; older ethnic minority women who struggle to access statutory support or information and the abuse of older women.

The section on *race* earlier in the document shows how we plan to work across government to improve access to services for older ethnic minority women. Work already underway includes funding to Women Connect First via our Sustainable Social Services Third Sector Grant 2020/23 to improve access to preventative

services for older ethnic minority women in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. The organisation is working with a range of partners to provide culturally appropriate, coproduced activities that support the women to live and age well. It will also pilot delivery in other regions across Wales so a model can be developed for national roll out. We will track the progress of this project in the delivery plan.

Aim 4 of the Strategy focusses on tackling age related poverty and through the delivery plan we will work with relevant officials to identify if there is a need to tailor messaging to women to ensure they can benefit from messaging relating encouraging pension credit take up or planning for later life.

The Action Plan on Abuse of Older People will also include a section focussing on violence against older women and the steps needed to support women experiencing or fleeing domestic violence. The delivery plan will track the progress of the action plan. Organisations that support women in this situation are members of the Ministerial Advisory Forum on Ageing.

There were no negative impacts identified.

Sexual orientation

Research and data

- *The limited data available in Wales shows that slightly fewer people aged 65 or over identify as gay/lesbian/bisexual/other when compared to the overall adult population.*
(Older People's Commissioner "State of the Nation" Report 2019)
- *A recent report from the International Longevity Centre demonstrates the inequalities experienced by LGBT+ men and women aged 50 and over, across physical and mental health, isolation, loneliness and experiences of violence. The report highlights the need to not only improve the inclusivity of health and care services, but also to enhance the data collected about older LGBT+ people.*
(Older People's Commissioner "State of the Nation" Report 2019)

The lack of data on the experiences of LGBT+ was also highlighted in our commissioned [Benchmarking the Situation of Older People in Wales: UK Age Index](#), by Swansea University, which states:

there were only 99 people (representing 2 percent of the over 60 sample) aged 60 years and over who identified as non heterosexual in the National Survey for Wales. Therefore it was not possible to conduct any analysis by sexual orientation. Hence there is a need for research with LGBTQI older adults in Wales

To address this issue, the Welsh Government's draft LGBT+ Action Plan states that 'We will improve data collection, including intersectional data, to identify the discrimination and wellbeing disparities experienced by our LGBTQ+ communities.'

We will track this action via our delivery plan.

To ensure the Strategy has no negative impact on people living with this protected characteristic, from November 2018 to January 2019 Age Alliance Wales and Age Cymru carried out a series of focus groups across Wales, visiting venues in Bangor, Wrexham, Swansea, Cardiff and Newport.

Opinions and comments were sought on a range of issues aligning with the key areas initially identified by members of the Ministerial Advisory Forum on Ageing (whose membership is comprised of 50% older people). Attendees at the focus groups were all people aged 50+, with additional meetings specifically aimed at minority ethnic and LGBT+ people.

There is an LGBT+ representative on the Ministerial Advisory Forum on Ageing.



Age Cymru focus
group report.docx

The above document summarises findings from focus groups with older LGBT+ people, key points raised include:

- There may be insufficient numbers of LGBT+ people to sustain businesses designed for them alone. It was suggested that a more achievable ambition (and one which is attempted, with differing degrees of success), is to have a “gay friendly” evening in a coffee shop or pub.
- The situation in rural areas can be even more difficult. We were told that LGBT+ people often don’t feel safe to be “out” in rural areas. Hate crimes were said to be relatively commonplace, and people were concerned for their wellbeing.
- Social isolation was cited as the biggest problem for older LGBT+ people. It was felt that as older people are less likely to be online so organisations need to do more than use social media to advertise and promote their services and events: they need to go back to using newspapers and more traditional, community –based methods.
- On a wider scale, LGBT+ people told us they were also deeply concerned about the changing attitudes towards marginalised groups and individuals in society, citing the growth of the far right in UK and across Europe and concerns about a possible loss of rights and safety post Brexit. It was felt that more needs to be done to protect the wellbeing of LGBT+ people, with a fear that otherwise we could see a reversal of the progress made over past decades.
- We were told that many LGBT+ people wouldn’t be comfortable being cared for by strangers. One person told us they were “terrified” of going into a home, and the possibility of facing discrimination when incapable of challenging it, or if they lose their partners and the support they provide. Several respondents were concerned about discriminatory behaviour, and the level of “bullying” of older gay residents.
- Further, it was felt that training for all existing and new care home staff on LGBT+ issues would be beneficial.
- There was concern about the ability to live as an LGBT+ couple in a care homes. Some respondents were fearful that same sex couples could be split up, whereas mixed sex couples would not.
- The LGBT+ partners of care home residents can also be very badly treated by the families of their partners. Respondents were aware of people being excluded from decisions in the living arrangements of their partners, despite their long-term relationships. They felt that housing providers as bodies, and

their individual staff members, should properly recognise same-sex partners and fully include them in decision making.

- It was felt that LGBT+ people experience the same issues as any other person on retirement, but it was believed that losing networks of friends in the workplace is more difficult to cope with: they are essentially losing contact with a network of friends they have learnt to rely upon.
- Many LGBT+ people were concerned that their status as “next of kin” was not properly recognised: we were told that as well as some staff in hospitals and care homes being prejudiced against same-sex couples, their rules around “next of kin” were outmoded.

To address the concerns relating to health and social care outlined above, the draft LGBT+ Action plan states Welsh Government will *‘Work alongside NHS Wales, Social Care Wales and social care providers and commissioners to embed comprehensive and ongoing LGBTQ+ specific health and social care training to all staff. Health Inspectorate Wales and Care Inspectorate Wales should act to ensure compliance with best practice.’*

To address the points relating to hate crime, the draft LGBT+ plan states Welsh Government will *Continue to invest in hate crime prevention programmes across Wales* and also *Work with the tech companies and media platforms to tackle hate crime and misinformation.*

We will track these actions via our delivery plan.

Although many issues were highlighted via our engagement, no negative impacts stemming from the Strategy were identified.

Marriage and civil partnership

There were no negative impacts identified.

Socioeconomic: low-income households

Data and research

The [Centre for Ageing Better](#) has warned that the COVID-19 crisis could lead to a generation of people in their 50s and 60s entering retirement in poor health and without enough money to support themselves.

The percentage of pensioners living in relative income poverty increased for 4 consecutive periods reaching 20% between 2014/15 and 2016/17 before falling to 19 per cent between 2015/16 and 2017/18 (StatsWales). Although these figures are still below what they were in the mid to late 1990s, the impact of austerity, soaring rents and the zero hour economy are making it difficult for people in middle age to save for retirement. This could have an impact on rising levels of pensioner poverty for future generations.

Against rising levels of poverty, an estimated £214 million of Pension Credit and Housing Benefit (which is unlocked via a Pension Credit claim) goes unclaimed every year (Older People's Commissioner for Wales, 2019).

Older people told us that their financial position has a significant influence on their social life. People who do not own a car or are unable to pay for taxis, are far less likely to take part in evening time activities.

(p34)

UK Age Index (UKAI)

The **UK Age Index (UKAI)** was commissioned by Welsh Government to monitor the success of the Strategy for an Ageing Society by benchmarking the situation of older people in Wales against the 3 other UK nations. The report states that:

Wales was ranked as third overall for income security. However, when we take a closer look at the rankings for the individual components for the income security domain, we see that Wales was actually ranked as 1st for the level of pension income coverage (indicator 1.1). It was also ranked 2nd in the relative welfare of older people, behind England which was ranked as 1st. However, it was ranked last for the proportion of the older population that was not at risk of poverty in later life (indicator 1.2)..... Wales ranked as joint 2nd for the labour market engagement of older adults (with Scotland) and 3rd for the educational attainment of older adults. Hence, while there is still work to be done to improve the educational attainment of current and future cohorts of older people in Wales the rates of labour market participation are looking good.

Analysis

Although Wales ranked 1st for the level of pension income coverage, the high level of unclaimed pension credit shows that we could be performing better. Unclaimed entitlements were raised as problem by all working groups and at our engagement events.

Aim 4 of the Strategy is Tackling Age Related Poverty and therefore seeks to improve the well-being of older people who struggle with their finances.

Through our engagement with stakeholders, the following actions were agreed to tackle age related poverty:

- Commencing the Socio-economic duty
- Increasing take up of pension credit
- Investing in Wales' Foundational Economy

Officials will continue to engage with other government departments to pull together policy, funding and initiatives that address the issues outlined above. Cross governmental actions will be captured in the strategy's delivery plan.

No negative impacts on low income households were identified.

Human Rights and UN Conventions

Data and research

Data shows that over **184,000** older people in Wales (23%) report that they do not know about the rights they have, which means they are likely to find it difficult to recognise

when their rights are not being upheld and would therefore be less likely to challenge age discrimination.

(Older People's Commissioner for Wales (2020) Leave No one Behind)

The Strategy for an Ageing Society adopts a rights based approach informed by the UN Principles for Older Persons which are referenced throughout the document. There is no UN Convention on Older People's Rights, but the Strategy states that:

Raising awareness of rights can also empower people to take control and recognise when their rights are being compromised. Defining human rights in simple terms can empower older people to challenge and change the way services are designed and delivered in Wales, but it is equally important to raise awareness of rights amongst professionals.

A rights based approach is informed and guided by the legal framework outlined above and can transform people's lives. The United Nations Principles for Older Persons have also informed the development of this strategy and will guide its implementation. The Principles for Older Persons were adopted by the UN General Assembly in December 1991 and although the principles do not create new legal obligations, governments are encouraged to incorporate them into their national programmes wherever possible.

As explained in the Strategy, we are already undertaking a series of actions to 'make rights real for older people.' In November 2019 we launched a national campaign to make older people and carers aware of their rights under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

We have worked with Social Care Wales to co-produce practical guidance demonstrating how local authorities can have due regard to the UN Principles for Older Persons as required by the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. A version has also been produced aimed at older people. This guidance has been updated to include reference to the Welsh language and the 'active offer.' It will be used by Age Cymru in 2021 – 22 to facilitate conversations with different groups of older people, including those with protected characteristics, about their rights. £110,000 of funding has been allocated in this financial year to take this work forward and the delivery plan will monitor progress.

Welsh Government funds the Older People's Commissioner to promote older people's rights and champion older people across Wales. Ministers meet regularly with the Commissioner to hear any concerns and take appropriate action. We also actively support the Commissioner's work to raise awareness of ageism.

All Welsh Government communications relating to the Strategy for an Ageing Society reject ageism and ageist stereotypes that link older people to illness and decline.

There is no UN Convention on Older People's Rights but there is a set of UN Principles. Welsh Government is committed to ensuring that no older person is disadvantaged because of the lack of a UN Convention. The UN Principles have guided the development of the Strategy and are referenced throughout to highlight how the actions support and embed older people's rights.