

# Age Alliance Wales Manifesto 2015



The demographic of Wales is changing. Population projections estimate that by 2030, the number of people aged over 65 living in Wales will increase by 34%. The largest increase will be in the number of people aged over 85 which is forecast to rise by 80%. As a consequence of this change, the numbers of people living with sensory loss, dementia and other life limiting conditions are likely to increase.

Wales is working towards becoming a good place to grow old; we have an older people's strategy, a commissioner for older people and new legislation for social services which all demonstrate that, at a strategic level, we are fully committed to achieving our goal.

Age Alliance Wales (AAW) believes that the focus now needs to shift towards implementation. The Welsh Government needs to support the development of social networks and preventative initiatives that can underpin and stimulate community activity and enable all older people to live a full and active life.

AAW believes that older people must have access to the health and social care they need, be active and engaged and financially secure. The actions below show how Welsh Government can ensure that these aspirations become reality.

## **1. All older people should have access to high quality health and social care. The Welsh Government can achieve this by:**

- Protecting local services that are successful in supporting older people to live well and maintain independence.
- Continuing to support voluntary organisations to work with the public sector to create and deliver preventative services that are flexible and responsive to individual need.
- Ensure that mechanisms are put in place that enable older people to be involved in the design, planning and delivery of services.
- Address the current inequality in access to services for older people living with life limiting conditions.

## **2. All older people should be active and engaged. The Welsh Government can achieve this by:**

- Ensuring that local authorities and local health boards fully consider the impact of cuts to public services on the lives of older people today and on future generations.
- Supporting legislation that underpins the preventative agenda by building local community and social networks that allow older people to take control of their well-being.

- Ensuring public and community transport systems are widely available, accessible, affordable and integrated to enable participation and access to vital community and hospital services.
- Encouraging people approaching retirement age to make social connections that promote volunteering and civil engagement.
- Addressing inequality in access to digital services.
- Making appropriate housing must be available to all, including the provision of sheltered and extra care housing options or appropriate adaptations made to an existing property.
- Developing mechanisms that enable older people to be actively engaged in shaping all decisions that impact on them.

### **3. All older people should be financially secure. The Welsh Government can achieve this by:**

- Ensuring that older people are fully involved in any decisions relating to paying for care.
- Ensuring that apprenticeships are available for people of all ages.
- Ensuring that older people have access to community based information and advocacy services. Services must be fully accessible to people with sensory loss and other life limiting conditions.
- Working with all sectors to ensure collective accountability for cold calling and junk mail.
- Supporting local credit unions.

**Age Alliance Wales** (AAW) is an alliance of 19 national voluntary organisations committed to working together to develop the legislative, policy and resource frameworks that will improve the lives of older people. Collectively AAW member organisations possess extensive service development and service delivery knowledge and provide direct support to older people across Wales. Members act at a strategic as well as an operational level and many are membership based.

#### **The following 19 organisations are members of Age Alliance Wales:**

Action on Hearing Loss Cymru, Age Connects Wales, Age Cymru, Alzheimer's Society Wales, Arthritis Care Wales, British Red Cross in Wales, Care & Repair Cymru, Carers Wales, Contact the Elderly, Carers Trust, Cruse Cymru, Volunteering Matters, Deafblind Cymru, Disability Wales, NIACE Cymru, Prime Cymru, Royal Voluntary Service, RNIB Cymru and The Stroke Association.

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