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## Do they really mean it?

- JRF report <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/older-people-shaping-policy-and-practice>
- said in 2004 *“Older people are a diverse population; their definitions of “a life worth living” and the support needed to achieve that should be paramount*
- *Much policy and practice are still based on the assumption that older people are a burden. This is problematic for older people and means resources fail to deliver their definitions of quality”*
- That was 16 years ago – so what has changed?

## Ageism Prism is still prevalent.

- 1000 older adults people questioned in a survey in October

Two in five (43 per cent) have been on the receiving end of patronising language in relation to their age and a quarter (28 per cent) say certain terms used about them are outdated.

Almost two in five (37 per cent) have been addressed with names they say are ageist.

## Views of the surveyed public

- A poll of over 2,000 people, showing that over half (53 per cent) admit to regularly using words that were deemed patronising by older people.

(31 per cent) of confessed to using ‘fogey’ about an older person

(27 per cent) have used ‘bidly’

(18 per cent) use the term ‘past it’ to describe people.

## Remove Ageism Vision and then anything is possible

*World Health Organisation said...*

- Pervasive ageist stereotypes of older people as uniformly frail, burdensome and dependent are not supported by evidence and limit society's ability to appreciate and release the potential human and social resources inherent in older populations.

Ageism – stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination against older people on the basis of their chronological or perceived age – creates barriers to developing good policies, both on health and broader development

<https://www.who.int/ageing/sdgs/en/>

## How to engage older adults?

- People want to be involved
- They want to shape their futures
- They want to buy and use products and services because they want them not because they need them
- There is a part of the conversation and delivery missing – people need to be treated and viewed as consumers not as service users
- The products and services need to be desirable as well as useful

## Older Adults as consumers

- The first step in developing any product or service is normally know your audience/ customer – yet often this is overlooked with products and services designed for older adults
- Older adults know what they want, and know how they want it – this doesn't change with age
- Older adults get involved

## Putting people at the heart of shaping their future

House of Lords consultation House of Lords Select Committee on COVID-19 The Life Beyond COVID Inquiry 2800 U3A responses

Learning to use virtual meeting technology such as Zoom had been life enhancing during lockdown and many would continue to use them post lockdown.

Health and Wellbeing value of positive action to change lifestyle, exercise regime and eating habits.

Some felt that individuals should take more responsibility for their health and wellbeing and that this should be supported by the NHS. Investment in programmes that assisted people to manage their own health and wellbeing.

## How to engage?

All the usual mechanisms...

- Focus groups
- Case studies
- Questionnaires
  
- And really listening and then really acting....
- And do those needs change because of age...

## How might the tech aspirations of the next generation of older and disabled people change?

- Stamp out ageist assumptions
- 2019 Survey of a random sample of 3200 members of the 450,000 U3A members showed
  - 95% of members reporting having internet access in the household
  - 82% of members now access the internet on most days and 5.5% reported never using the internet
  - 73.5% of members now access their emails daily and a further 20.6% will access their emails on most days.
  - 49.9% owned a smart phone, 55.5% a tablet and 44.8% a laptop

## What do people want?

- Historically aids and adaptations have been made to resolve a problem but as William Morris said “Have nothing in your house that you do not know to be useful, or believe to be beautiful.”

### Example

Community alarms – bracelet or pendant how are they left unworn

*But...*

Now some companies are resolving that and are producing alarms that are also health monitors that look wearable.

## And what about standards

- A home is probably the most important personal and emotional investment made by an individual
- Being treated as a consumer is important
- Consumers look for standards for quality and for safety
- Successful housing is “age friendly”, intergenerational , fosters strong communities
- .... recipe for good health and wellbeing
- The ISO standard provides that opportunity to deliver this
- It is everyone’s business and we all play a part in making ISO a new reality

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**“U3A shows the value of communities of interest and learning which are not defined by age, or by past experience, but instead are defined by the experiences still to be explored”.**

