

# Getting Ready for Ageing: a manifesto for action

ready  
for  
ageing  
alliance

## Helping us get ready for ageing

With the best will in the world, many of us are not equipped to act on all of these ideas. We must ensure that older people are well informed and have access to information and advice. If we are to have a responsibility to age well we must also have rights. For example, if we are asking people to get online, we must provide opportunities to help people learn. Given that some older people will never go online we must continue to make alternative provision for them. If we want older people to keep active, we must ensure there are services available. And if we want people to continue to be engaged as older workers or volunteers, we must end ageism.

People should be sent a Ready for Later Life pack at age 50, signposting them to additional information and advice on preparing for ageing, if they need it.

## About the Ready for Ageing Alliance

The Ready for Ageing Alliance is a coalition of independent organisations based in England. We formed in 2013, following publication of 'the Filkin report'<sup>1</sup>. We came together in order to make the case for action to ensure that our society is ready for our ageing world.

Members of the Ready for Ageing Alliance (R4AA) are:

Age UK, Alzheimer's Society, Anchor, Carers UK, Centre for Policy on Ageing, the International Longevity Centre - UK (ILC-UK), Independent Age, Joseph Rowntree Foundation.



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<sup>1</sup><http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/lords-select/public-services-committee/report-ready-for-ageing/>

# Ensuring you are ready for ageing?

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**Get fit:** Keeping physically active is one of the most important things we can do to ensure a healthy old age. Learn to ride a bike or get out to the park. Not everyone can do a marathon, but most of us should keep fitter than we do.

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**Save for your old age:** Yes, you will get a state pension. But for most people, it is unlikely to provide the sort of income you are used to. Saving is important at any age. But the younger we start, the greater we benefit from investment returns and compound interest.

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**Pay off your debts:** Having debt can be a major barrier to preparing for ageing. Get advice from a charity such as Age UK or Stepchange and start planning for the future.

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**If you smoke, stop or cut down:** Smoking reduces our life expectancy and can make it more likely that we suffer poor health or need care in old age. You are never too young or old to stop.

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**Be healthy:** Eat a healthy balanced diet, drink enough water, and not too much alcohol. Be mentally active. Keep yourself informed about how you can prevent ill health and ask your GP if you need any adult vaccinations.

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**Plan ahead:** Too few of us plan for the future. And planning for old age is difficult as few of us expect to suffer ill health, bereavement or a job loss. But a little thinking about how we respond to these challenges can make for a better old age. If we are to have longer working lives, it is unlikely that many of us will stay in the same job for a long time. We need to accept our careers may change and invest in careers advice and retraining. In addition, don't be afraid of thinking about your own death, however far off it may be. Ensure you have taken out a Will and consider a Power of Attorney.

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**Keep your friends and make new ones:** Isolation and loneliness in old age hits far too many people. Maintain friendships and build new networks and relationships across the life-course and into older age. And build relationships in your home community, not just where you work.

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**Adapt your home:** As we age, we want and need different things from our housing. Our homes may have become too big or may no longer suit our needs. If this is how it is for you, think about moving home. Everyone should take opportunities to upgrade home energy efficiency.

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**Keep up to date with the kids:** The world is changing around us. Keep your mind active and engaged, from new digital technology through to new attitudes. Make sure you aren't missing out and take every opportunity to talk to younger people. Try to get yourself online. Listen to One Direction (at least once).

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**Talk about ageing:** Ageing should be seen as a positive experience. Too few of us talk about ageing as anything but a passing joke. Talk to friends and family about this list.

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**See retirement positively.** A time of change. A time perhaps of getting out more, taking more exercise, eating better, giving up smoking and making new friends. A time to have fun.

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