

Age Scotland helping you to grow old gracefully



Time to rethink our perception of later life

More than four out of five Scots want to see society adjust its perception of later life, moving away from negative stereotypes of ageing.

New research from Age Scotland, commissioned to understand more about people's attitudes towards ageing and living longer, shows that more than three-quarters of adults in Scotland are looking forward to living longer, peaking at more than eight in 10 for the 65-74 age group.

When asked about the things that would help them live longer, nearly three-quarters of people prioritised diet, while high numbers also pointed to exercise and not-smoking. However those aged 55 to 64 rated 'having a positive attitude to ageing' very highly – 53 per cent compared with 31 per cent for all ages.

Scotland's population is ageing. Between 2010 and 2035 the percentage of the population aged 65 or over is projected to increase from 17 per cent to 25 per cent .

Brian Sloan, Chief Executive of Age Scotland, said:- "The fact that the our population is ageing is something to be celebrated, and I'm delighted that more than four out of five people agree with Age Scotland that we need to change how we all think about later life

"Every day I see and hear about fantastic examples of older people taking advantage of their later years, whether as active volunteers in their community, taking up new hobbies or

travelling. However, we recognise that many older people aren't in a position whether they can enjoy later life and that's exactly why we exist. Via our helpline, information services, campaigning and the community support we provide to more than 900 member groups working with and for older people, we want to create a Scotland where everyone can make the most of their later life."

Age Scotland believes the growth of an older population needs commitment from policy makers in terms of investment in the sorts of services an ageing society will rely on. In particular there needs to be sustained preventative spending that enables older people to enjoy a high quality life in their own communities for as long as possible.

Almost nine out of 10 respondents of all ages felt changes were needed to help us all lead a better later life. 53 per cent of those surveyed wanted older people to be treated with more dignity in hospitals and care homes, while almost half wanted to ensure that older people had enough money so as not to worry.

More than one in four people aged 65 and over associated later life with serenity and being a wonderful and exciting time to embrace. One in four aged 65 and over looked forward to it as a time of personal growth and development. However almost one in three of over 65s surveyed associated later life with health concerns, and 18 per cent with worries about paying bills.

As part of a drive to demonstrate what later life means to people in all communities across the country, Age Scotland is asking individuals to get in touch and share their stories – with via social media or by contacting Age Scotland's communications team at communications@agescotland.org.uk

To find out more about Age Scotland visit www.agescotland.org.uk .