

LGA'S AGEING WELL PROGRAMME EVALUATION (2010-2012)

Background and objectives

Ipsos MORI recently completed a two-year evaluation of the Ageing Well programme. The programme was designed to provide sector-led support to assist local authorities in meeting the challenges associated with an ageing population. It was delivered by the Local Government Association (LGA), was funded by the Department for Work and Pensions, and ran from July 2010 to March 2012.

The programme provided a range of national and regional programme activity such as master classes and leadership academies, to more tailored 'bespoke' support for those local authorities who required it. This included support in developing ageing strategies, peer reviews and stakeholder engagement.

The evaluation aimed to assess the progress local authorities had made to date in preparing for an ageing society, the experience of areas that benefited from programme support, and to gauge how the programme had contributed to improved outcomes particularly in relation to local authorities and older people.

Solutions

The evaluation was structured into three strands:

- **Three waves of an online survey of local authorities in England**, to understand how the sector was preparing for an ageing society and its experience of the *Ageing Well* programme. A number of the same questions were carried over three waves to understand what improvements, if any, had been made during the lifetime of the programme.
- **A qualitative piece of research covering 11 case study areas where bespoke programme activity was taking place, plus three control areas where it was not.** Depth interviews and observation were carried out in two phases; one during the early stages of the programme to understand the expectations local authorities had, and a second at the end of the programme to assess how well the programme activity was delivered on the ground and the impact it had in terms of helping local authorities achieve positive outcomes. Participants included lead officers, members, older person representatives, the voluntary sector and LGA Regional Improvement Managers.
- **Analysis of secondary monitoring data collected via the LGA to understand take-up of particular programme outputs and participant feedback.** This included evaluation data such as questionnaires completed by participants attending wider Ageing Well activities such as seminars and leadership academies.

Benefits

The evaluation adopted a longitudinal approach, which not only allowed the LGA and DWP to establish a baseline of opinion against which to measure progress over time, but also ensured the evaluation informed the design and delivery of the programme as it progressed. More specifically, the evaluation has helped to:

- assess the progress local authorities have made to date in preparing for an ageing society;
- understand the impact of the programme in supporting preparedness for an ageing society and contributing to improved outcomes for local authorities and older people;
- assess the extent to which the benefits of the programme are sustainable and can provide a legacy for the sector; and
- capture important areas of learning and for improvement which can be transferred to any future support programmes.

Ipsos MORI presented a final report and presentation to the Ageing Well Programme Board and senior officials at DWP in June 2012.

How to get in contact

If you would like help or advice:

Victoria Harkness, Research Director (Local Government)

T: +44 (0)20 7347 3186