

# GENERAL ELECTION 2024 TOOLKIT

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Prepared for Later Life Ambitions members

Connect



## **INTRODUCTION**

Later Life Ambitions is determined to ensure that the voice of people in later life is heard during this upcoming General Election. Our manifesto lays out our vision for a better deal for the 11 million people in later life throughout the UK. From an Older People's Commissioner to a National Social Care Service, maintaining the Triple Lock State Pension to a delivering a National Housing Strategy, we are focused on issues that impact older people the most. We require bold and forward-looking action from our political leaders to address the challenges that we will all face in the future.

This manifesto sets out our vision for a better future not just for our members, but for all those in later life throughout the UK. By 2030, there will be almost 13 million people in later life. The issues we face today will also impact on future generations unless today's policymakers are willing to confront the challenges now. This manifesto lays out our vision for a better deal for older people, and we urge you to join us in championing this vision.

Later Life Ambitions will remain focused on campaigning to ensure that older people across the country are able to lead fulfilling lives. We want all candidates to help change the terms of the debate to focus on the ambitions and hopes for the future rather than the perceived 'costs' to the rest of society.

This toolkit has been created to support members to engage with local candidates in the election, including guidance on how to find out who your local candidates are, how to contact them and what to say. It has been designed to be as user-friendly, straightforward and simple, because we want everyone to have their voice heard.

## **STANDING BY PENSIONERS: A MANIFESTO FOR LATER LIFE**

Later Life Ambitions has published a manifesto ahead of the next general election to campaign for a better deal for older people. Our asks are as follows:

- Create a Commissioner for Older People and Ageing for England and Scotland to provide a voice for older people.
- Legislate for a National Care Service to be integrated with the NHS that remains free at the point of delivery
- Combat social exclusion and poverty by maintaining long-term access to cash and cash free withdrawal services, and providing increased support for banks and businesses to develop more accessible tools.
- Maintain the State Pension Triple Lock, protect the State Pension Age and uprate Pension Credit in line with the State Pension.
- Strengthen the Lifetime Homes standard into a National Housing Strategy to provide accessible and affordable housing.
- Increase investment in and uprate concessions for local bus services and improved accessibility for older people.

## HOW TO ASK YOUR MP OR FUTURE MP TO SUPPORT OLDER PEOPLES' AMBITIONS

### 1. Find out who your local candidates are

Prospective parliamentary candidates can be found on the following website: <https://whocanivotefor.co.uk/>.

You can also try the website of your local council which is likely to have a list of candidates.

### 2. Write to all local candidates and ask them how they will enable older people to live an ambitious and fulfilling life

- It is important to write and engage with all candidates in your constituency, even if you feel that a particular candidate is likely to be more supportive.
- Email addresses for candidates can usually be found on their website. Please note that it is not possible to find contact details for every candidate, as some choose not to share this information publicly.
- If there are no direct contact details available, you can try to contact them through social media. You can also contact candidates through their party's local branch. You can find these by ringing the main telephone line for the political party and asking for further details:
  - Labour Party: 0345 092 2299
  - Conservative Party: 020 7222 9000
  - Liberal Democrats: 020 7022 0988
  - The Scottish National Party: 0800 633 5432
  - The Green Party: 02036919400
  - Plaid Cymru: 029 2047 2272
  - Alliance Party: 028 9032 4274
  - Democratic Unionist Party: 028 9047 1155
  - Sinn Fein: 028 9022 3001
  - Social Democratic and Labour Party: 028 9024 7700
  - Ulster Unionist Party: 028 9047 4630
  - The Electoral Commission: 0333 103 1928
- The following template letter has been designed to be sent to all candidates in your constituency either through email or the post. The sections highlighted in yellow should be filled in with your constituency's details.



Subject: **Will you enable older people to live an ambitious and fulfilling later life?**

Dear **[insert name of candidate]**

I live in the **[name]** constituency and am writing to request that addressing the challenges facing those in later life be at the forefront of your political agenda.

I am a member of the Later Life Ambitions. Later Life Ambitions is a campaigning organisation which brings together the collective voices of over 250,000 older people through three organisations – the National Federation of Occupational Pensioners, the Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance and the National Association of Retired Police Officers. We campaign nationally, regionally and locally on a wide range of issues to improve the lives of older people. We have ambitious aspirations for pensioners.

From an Older People's Commissioner to a National Social Care Service, maintaining the Triple Lock State Pension to a delivering a National Housing Strategy, we are focused on issues that impact older people the most.

We require bold and forward-looking action from our political leaders to address challenges facing older people and implement solutions. So, we urge you to recognise the value of older people, and provide an aspirational, ambitious future for those in later life.

As my prospective MP, I would like you to support the following calls for the next Government to:

- Create a Commissioner for Older People and Ageing for England and Scotland
- Legislate for a National Care Service to be integrated with the NHS that remains free at the point of delivery
- Maintain long-term access to cash and cash free withdrawal services, and providing increased support for banks and businesses to develop more accessible tools to combat digital exclusion
- Maintain the State Pension Triple Lock, protect the State Pension age and uprate Pension Credit in line with the State Pension.
- Strengthen the Lifetime Homes standard into a National Housing Strategy to provide accessible and affordable housing.
- Increase investment in and uprate concessions for local bus services and improved accessibility for older people.

I would appreciate your response to the issues I have outlined above.

**Name**  
**Address**  
**Sign off**

**3. Seek a meeting with candidates in your local area to talk to them about ensuring older people have the opportunity to live ambitious later lives.**

- In addition to writing to your candidate, Later Life Ambitions is encouraging members to seek face-to-face meetings with them as it is more likely to have an impact and candidates will be interested in meeting with constituents in the run-up to the election.
- If you have met with a local candidate in the run-up to the General Election who then goes on to win a seat in Parliament, it will be much easier to arrange future meetings with them as an MP. The run up to the General Election is therefore an important time to build relationships with future parliamentarians.
- If you secure a meeting, the most important thing is to speak about your personal story and how Later Life Ambition's asks will ensure yourself and other older people can have good quality, affordable social care, a fair deal on pensions, and housing which enables you to continue living aspirational later lives.
- You should also tell them what they can do to help. It is important to come to the meeting with 'actions' in mind, for example:
  - Print off a copy of Later Life Ambition's Manifesto (available on our website) and take it with you to the meeting.
  - Get a picture with them, you can then share this on social media.
  - Ask them to champion the rights of the UK's older people if they are elected as an MP by organising a meeting with the new Secretary of State for Work and Pensions or the new Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, in what will be one of their first acts as an MP.
- You should use the meeting as an opportunity to secure support from other candidates in your constituency. If you let other candidates in the constituency know that their rival has met with you and is supporting the Later Life Ambition's campaign, can encourage them to show their support.
- Follow up with the candidate by writing them a short email or letter. Thank them for their time and thoughts, and for their support, if appropriate.

**4. Attend local campaign events and debates to ask about commitments to older people.**

- A hustings event is a meeting where election candidates or parties debate policies and answer questions from the audience. Hustings provide voters with an opportunity to hear the views of candidates or parties.
- Debates usually happen closer to election day. To find one near you check your local council website or local news publication.
- If you are able to ask a question at an event you attend, you can ask one of the questions below or ask your own.

- How are you planning to raise awareness and address issues facing older people including accessible transport, affordable housing, and committing to the triple lock, if/when you get into post?
- Are you concerned about how the cost of living is impacting older people and how do you plan to address it?
- What do you see as the main challenges facing older people?
- The move to more digital services, such as online banking, risks excluding those who cannot access online services. How do you plan to ensure that groups effected, such as those in later life, are not digitally excluded?

#### **5. Inform Connect about any interaction you have with any candidate**

- Please email Connect, Later Life Ambitions' Westminster based team, to let them know about any engagement you have with any of your local candidates. We would love for you to share your photos with candidates for us to use on our website and in future publications. The email address is [laterlife@connectpa.co.uk](mailto:laterlife@connectpa.co.uk)
- Connect can then use this information to follow up with any candidate who is elected at the General Election.

## **LOCAL AUTHORITY ENGAGEMENT**

Many issues facing older people are not just national issues but impact local communities and your local representatives have oversight over some of the issues facing older people. For example, issues like the accessibility of local bus and transit services, adequate housing supply, local services like banks and post offices, and health and social care services, all have a local impact and can be influenced by local representatives.

#### **1. Write to all local representatives and ask them how they will enable older people to live an ambitious and fulfilling life**

- Local representatives can include
  - Combined Authority Mayors
  - Combined Authority Deputy Mayors or Portfolio Holders
  - Council Leaders
  - Councillors
- It is important to write and engage with all local representatives in your area, even if you feel that a particular candidate is likely to be more supportive.
- Email addresses for local representatives can usually be found on the Council website or the Combined Authority website.
- The following template letter has been designed to be sent to all candidates in your constituency either through email or the post. The sections highlighted in yellow should be filled in with your constituency's details.



Subject: **Will you enable older people to live an ambitious and fulfilling later life?**

Dear **[insert name of local representative]**,

I live in the **[name of local authority]** and am writing to request that addressing the challenges facing those in later life be at the forefront of your agenda.

I am a member of the Later Life Ambitions. Later Life Ambitions is a campaigning organisation which brings together the collective voices of over 250,000 older people through three organisations – the National Federation of Occupational Pensioners, the Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance and the National Association of Retired Police Officers. We campaign nationally, regionally and locally on a wide range of issues to improve the lives of older people. We have ambitious aspirations for pensioners.

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  - Get a picture with them, you can then share this to social media.
- You should use the meeting as an opportunity to secure support from other candidates in your constituency. If you let other candidates in the constituency know that their rival has met with you and is supporting the Later Life Ambition's campaign, can encourage them to show their support.
- Follow up with the candidate by writing them a short email or letter. Thank them for their time and thoughts, and for their support, if appropriate.

## **MEDIA ENGAGEMENT AND CONTENT**

Social media can be a powerful tool to highlight important issues like the need for an Older People's Commissioner and affordable housing for those in later life. Below are some example social media posts that can be used on platforms like Facebook or Twitter. You can tag Later Life Ambitions as @laterlives on Twitter or our Facebook page Later Life Ambitions.

### Twitter Examples

- I'm supporting @laterlives Pensioner Manifesto to make sure the ambitions of pensioners are included in our next Government
- Ahead of the upcoming #generalelection all parties need to provide for those in later life.
- I stand with Later Life Ambitions to call for all political parties to make manifesto commitments to guarantee the triple lock pension for at least the duration of the next Parliament.



### Facebook and Instagram Examples

- I stand with Later Life Ambitions to call for all political parties to make manifesto commitments to guarantee the triple lock pension for at least the duration of the next Parliament.

If you have met with your local MP or prospective parliamentary candidates you can use the examples below to post about it on social media.

- Great to meet **MP or candidate name** to discuss the importance of supporting the ambitions of pensioners through policy.
- Met with **MP or candidate name** to talk about issues facing older people.

Print and online media is another powerful way to communicate Later Life Ambitions' calls.

- Writing a letter to the editor is a great way to raise awareness about the issues facing you. Writing about your experiences offer a compelling story about why Later Life Ambitions' calls are the right ones.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

More information about Later Life Ambitions can be found here:  
<https://www.laterlifeambitions.co.uk/>

If you have any further questions, please contact Connect, Later Life Ambitions' Westminster based team, on [laterlife@connectpa.co.uk](mailto:laterlife@connectpa.co.uk).