

manifesto differences in the devolved nations of the United Kingdom

The pledges outlined in the Later Life Ambitions manifesto are directed at the UK Parliament as we are focusing on the 2015 General Election. MPs from all parts of the UK can vote on issues in the House of Commons, regardless of whether they are devolved matters in the constituency they represent. However, legislation and policies vary in different parts of the UK and this is outlined overleaf.

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NORTHERN IRELAND

Pensions and universal benefits

- Policy surrounding pensions and universal benefits is the same in Northern Ireland as it is in England.
- The Warm Home Discount scheme is not available to those living in Northern Ireland.

Care

- The equivalent of the Care Quality Commission in Northern Ireland is the Regulation and Quality Authority.
- The Care Act 2014 only applies to England (and Wales in parts) therefore the cap on the costs of social care at £72,000 does not apply to Northern Ireland.
- The individual will pay for care costs if they have assets and savings of more than £23,250. Means tested benefits are available for people with less.
- Means testing for care costs is carried out by the Health and Social Care Trusts which provide integrated health and social care.
- Health and social care has been integrated in Northern Ireland since 1973.

Housing

- The Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 transferred the majority of planning decisions to local authorities. The transfer is in progress and will be completed after the UK Parliament General Election 2015.
- The Department of Social Development requires all new homes to be designed to the 16 'Lifetime Homes' criteria.

Transport

- In Northern Ireland a Smartpass is available to those who are 60 years and over which permits concessionary travel on both bus and train.
- In addition a Senior Smartpass is available to those who are 65 years and over which permits concessionary travel throughout Ireland on both bus and train.



SCOTLAND

Pensions and universal benefits

- Policy surrounding pensions and universal benefits is broadly the same in Scotland as it is in England.
- The Smith Commission on devolution to Scotland announced that Winter Fuel Payments and Cold Weather Payments will be fully devolved to the Scottish Parliament.

Care

- The equivalent of the Care Quality Commission in Scotland is the Care Inspectorate.
- Health and social care is being integrated in Scotland via regulations laid in the Scottish Parliament in October 2014. The Regulations will come into effect by December 2014.
- The Care Act 2014 only applies to England (and Wales in parts) meaning the care cap of £72,000 does not apply to Scotland.
- The individual will pay for care costs if they have assets and savings of more than £25,250.
- It is possible to get direct payments (also known as 'self-directed support') for eligible care services, which are cash payments given to individuals by the local authority to pay for care services or equipment in lieu of community care services.

Housing

- In 2007, revisions to Scottish building regulations introduced a range of measures to improve accessibility and ease of use in new homes, and includes aspects of the 'Lifetime Homes' criteria.
- From 1 April 2015, the Land and Buildings Transaction Tax will replace Stamp Duty Land Tax.

Transport

- Concessionary bus travel is available for those over 60 and includes limited cross-border routes.



WALES

Pensions and universal benefits

- Pensions and universal benefits policy is the same in Wales as in England.

Care

- The Welsh equivalent of the Care Quality Commission is the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales.
- The individual will pay for care costs if they have assets and savings of more than £23,750.
- There is a cap of £50 per week to all those using non-residential social services.

Housing

- All new publicly funded social housing has to meet the 'Lifetime Homes' standard.

Transport

- Concessionary bus travel is available for those over 60.
- Where bus services are limited, bus passes can be used on certain train lines. The scheme is currently funded until 31 March 2015.
- There is limited cross border concessionary travel between England and Wales.