

Evaluation of Age UK London

'Reaching to be Heard'

5-year Campaigns Project

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January 2013

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all those who supported us to carry out this evaluation. In particular we would like to thank Janet West and the Redbridge Voices of Experience user involvement panel and the members of the Campaign Alliance volunteers who took part in the focus groups.

We are also grateful to the London borough-wide Age UKs for taking part in the final survey and contributing their views at their regional network meeting.

Thank you also to the London wide stakeholders who gave their time to talk to us about the impact of Age UK London's campaigning and policy work in London.

CONTENTS

Summary	4
1. Introduction	6
2. Background	7
3. Evaluation Approach.....	9
4. Findings	10
4.1 Increasing the awareness of London regional stakeholders on age issues	10
4.2 Developing the capacity of London borough-level Age UKs to campaign and influence	14
4.3 Involving older people in prioritising issues of importance to them	18
5. AUKL Campaigning and policy-influencing ‘theory of change’.....	21
6. The future direction of Age UK London’s campaigning and policy-influencing work: key messages and learning	23

Appendices:	
1: Evaluation questions	25
2: Age UKs Chief Executives focus group discussion guide	26
3: Stakeholder interview guide	28

SUMMARY

This report brings together the findings from a five-year Campaigns project at Age UK London (AUKL) between 2008-2012, funded by the Big Lottery Fund. The regional campaigning project was built on AUKL's purpose to campaign on real issues that make a difference to older people and to increase older people's voice in London. It also gave an opportunity to further support and develop the effectiveness of the organisation's policy-influencing role.

Over the five years, multiple campaigns of 3 each year have been launched, which have come together under two broad themes:

- Health and Wellbeing¹
- Older People's Contribution to London²

A theory of change framework has been used to guide the evaluation process. This is the methodology of choice in complex social programmes because it allows for changing contexts and determines why the changes occurred.

Findings

In the five years of this ambitious project, Age UK London has achieved a great deal of what it set out to do. Regional bodies value the organisation as a strategic partner at the decision-making table and it has made a great deal of progress in bringing forward the concerns and issues of older Londoners to policy makers. It has been particularly successful in linking regional strategy with local relevance.

As a result, the following outcomes were achieved by the project:

- Older people's concerns are on the agenda of London regional bodies
- Older people are co-producers of campaigns and policy-influencing
- There is a more co-ordinated voice of older people across London
- London Age UKs and Age Concerns have more capacity to campaign
- AUKL is an established platform for the concerns of older people reaching policy makers

The changes were driven by a number of mechanisms in four main areas:

- AUKL strategic leadership
- Regional partnerships and alliances
- Building the capacity of borough Age UKs
- Relevance of the campaigns to older people's concerns

¹ Kelmanson A and Bond B (June 2012): *On the health and wellbeing trail*, AUKL website

² Schehrer S and Sexton Stephanie (June 2012): *Supporting older people's contribution to London*, AUKL website

Key messages and learning

6.1 The relationships and partnerships with key regional bodies should continue to mature and deepen. As part of the maturing relationships, AUKL may wish to develop mechanisms for policy makers to be more accountable to older people for their promises and actions.

6.2 Over the funding period of the project, Age UK London recognised the need to consolidate and build on campaigns, carrying through the influencing approaches, rather than moving on too quickly to other issues. This strategy is supported by this evaluation with the added suggestion that feedback mechanisms to the participating boroughs on the outcomes of campaigns could be strengthened.

6.3 Age UK London has made great strides in bringing forward the views of all older people but there was evidence that representation, which included marginalised and excluded groups of older people, could be improved.

6.4 The quality and quantity of the campaign resources were a key mechanism for developing the capacity of the local Age UKs, and has been highly valued. It is suggested that AUKL should explore opportunities for working with a few boroughs where the campaign issues crossed borough boundaries, particularly when issues focused on central or outer London.

6.5 Communicating with and influencing multiple stakeholders to give older people a more positive and less stereotypical presence remains a challenge, which is hard to solve. One way forward may be to further develop resources for more effective use of social networking. Sites such as facebook, twitter and other emerging methods can spread messages very quickly - the 'viral effect' - as well as provide valuable feedback loops to campaigners.

6.6 The concept of a regional campaign volunteer group with campaign champions is a good one and would help to build further capacity at local level. It promotes co-production and it would benefit from more development in the future. It also provides an opportunity to bring forward the voices of older people who are seldom heard.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report brings together the findings from a five-year Campaigns project at Age UK London between 2008-2012, funded by the Big Lottery Fund. The audience for the report is Age UK London and the Big Lottery Fund.

Age UK London (AUKL) is a regional charity working closely with local Age UKs and Age Concerns in each of the 32 London boroughs and with the national organisation Age UK. It works to support and enhance local work in London and champion the voices of older people at a regional level.

The regional campaigning project built on AUKL's purpose to campaign on real issues that make a difference to older people and to increase older people's voice in London. It also gave an opportunity to further support and develop the effectiveness of the organisation's policy-influencing role.

The next section outlines the background to the project, followed by the evaluation approach. A theory of change framework was used to test the underlying assumptions of the project, identify the key outcomes and evidence of how and why the changes occurred.

Section 4 presents the findings of the evaluation under three themes:

1. Increasing the awareness of London regional stakeholders on age issues
2. Developing the capacity of London borough-level Age UKs to campaign and influence
3. Involving older people in prioritising issues of importance to them

Section 5 illustrates the final theory, or model, of change and section 6 offers key messages and learning from the project on the future direction of Age UK London's campaigning and policy-influencing work.

2. BACKGROUND

In 2008, Age UK London received a five-year grant from the Big Lottery Fund's BASIS (Building and Sustaining Infrastructure Services) programme, 'Reaching to be Heard'. The project finished in December 2012.

The outcomes supported by the project fall into two main areas of focus:

- Campaigning to raise awareness of London regional stakeholders (statutory and other) on age issues
- Work to increase the capacity of London borough-level 36 Age UKs and Age Concerns to influence locally

Over the five years, multiple campaigns of 3 each year have been launched, which have come together under two broad themes:

- Health and Wellbeing³
- Older People's Contribution to London⁴

Within these themes there have been a number of individual campaign initiatives. For example, Health and Wellbeing included Our Right to Heat and Eat, Rhetoric or Reality, Don't Cut Care in London and Still Hungry to be Heard; Older People's Contribution included A Wealth of Experience, On the Buses and the Older People's manifesto 2012-2016. Details of these campaigns can be found on the Age UK London website⁵ along with six campaigning reports. Previous reports from the 15 campaigns are available on request.

Throughout the past four years, Age UK London's campaigning work has contained three core components⁶: research and intelligence gathering; action ranging from robust consultation to lobbying, and review and evaluation. This process has allowed an accumulative and iterative approach to be adopted, which has informed and shaped further campaigns and initiatives.

The campaigns have produced a number of products and resources for use by Age UKs and other organisations including campaign reports, research evidence, templates of letters to local authorities, NHS Trusts and the media, and films exploring the issues affecting older people in London.

Age UK London's campaigning activities have taken place at a time of considerable political and social change. External developments include: a

³ Kelmanson A and Bond B (June 2012): *On the health and wellbeing trail*, AUKL website

⁴ Schehrer S and Sexton Stephanie (June 2012): *Supporting older people's contribution to London*, AUKL website

⁵ <http://www.ageuk.org.uk/london/> (viewed December 20th 2012)

⁶ Kelmanson A and Bond B (June 2012): *On the health and wellbeing trail*, AUKL website

change of government to a coalition in 2010, London mayoral elections and the re-election of a Conservative mayor in 2012, the implementation of austerity measures across the UK, a changing role for the public sector and the resulting impact on the stability of the voluntary and community sector. Other changes include the demographic influences of ageing and immigration, the London Olympic games, the reconfiguration of the NHS, the introduction of the Equality Act, the debates on funding long term care, and in 2009 the merger of Help the Aged and Age Concern to form Age UK.

These profound changes are a key contextual factor in determining the effectiveness of AUKL's campaigns and policy influencing approach. The evaluation approach that has been adopted takes these factors into account.

3. EVALUATION APPROACH

A theory of change framework has been used to guide the evaluation process. This is the methodology of choice in complex social programmes because it allows for changing contexts. It also determines why the changes occurred and what drove the changes.

A draft theory of change was drawn up with the project team at the start of the evaluation, and the final theory, or model, of change framework can be found in section 5 on page 21.

The purpose of the evaluation is to evaluate the progress of 'Reaching to be Heard' in meeting the agreed targets and present evidence of the value that has been provided over the five years. In addition, the evaluation was to identify possible improvements and adaptations to guide the future direction of campaigning and policy-influencing work after the conclusion of the project.

A list of the evaluation questions is provided in appendix 1.

A number of research and evaluation reports have been carried out during the funding period and for the purposes of this final, overarching evaluation, these documents have been synthesised and analysed. A number of individual campaign reports were produced, which are available on the Age UK London website. Two internal reports were also produced for the organisation in 2012 on taking forward campaign issues identified under the headings of 'Health and Wellbeing' and 'Older People's Contribution to London'. The findings from these have been considered in this evaluation.

Methods

- Document synthesis and analysis against a theory of change framework
- An electronic survey of borough level Chief Officers at Age UKs and Age Concerns across London
- Focus group of 10 Age UKs CEOs (appendix 2 discussion guide)
- Two focus groups of 14 older people from the Campaign Alliance and Redbridge 'Voices of Experience' group (appendix 3 discussion guide)
- 11 Stakeholder interviews with the following organisations: Greater London Authority, the Mayor's office, Transport for London, London Councils, London Voluntary Services Council, Kings College London, Department of Health and the Department for Work and Pensions

All the data has been brought together and a thematic analysis applied, guided by the draft theory of change and the evaluation questions.

The findings of the analysis are presented in section 4 below.

4. FINDINGS

The 'Reaching to be Heard' campaign project was an ambitious programme of work with three campaigns each year for five years. This meant that the delivery model initially focused on breadth rather than depth in order to meet the targets. However in the final stages of the programme a pattern of consolidation and building on previous campaigns to make greater impact has emerged.

The analysis has shown that the programme has been successful in three key areas of campaigning and policy-influencing work:

1. Increasing the awareness of London regional stakeholders on age issues
2. Developing the capacity of London borough-level Age UKs to campaign and influence
3. Involving older people in prioritising issues of importance to them

Evidence for these themes is presented below and section 5 explores how these changes occurred. The findings demonstrate how specific campaigns have raised the profile of older people in London and also how the campaign project has enhanced the policy-influencing role of AUKL.

4.1 Increasing the awareness of London regional stakeholders on age issues

There is strong evidence that the awareness of London regional stakeholders on older people's issues has been increased through the project. There have been two key reasons for this: AUKL's ability to offer a strategic view of the issues to regional bodies and secondly, the confidence of the regional bodies that AUKL is bringing a representative view from older Londoners. One stakeholder summed it up:

"I want them (AUKL) to continue to thrive and strive – a conduit. Without them there would not be the same level of intelligence on older people across London readily available" (stakeholder)

And another comment:

"Age UK London has a strong, supportive, invaluable role, a strategic view and brings a very strong voice for older people to the table" (stakeholder)

Strategic leadership

Age UK London is highly regarded by a range of London regional decision-making bodies because of its understanding of the regional structures in London. Stakeholders are impressed by AUKL's ability to understand and

skilfully manage the extreme complexities of London in terms of its political structures and nuances, demographics, differing needs of inner and outer boroughs and the different local identities:

"They understand the multiple political layers that happen across London, which is hard to do but they manage the complexities" (stakeholder)

AUKL was considered an excellent partner and critical friend with a considerable degree of respect and trust from partner organisations. One example given was the trust that the organisation had in AUKL about sharing press embargos.

There was an acknowledgement by some interviewees that in its strategic role, AUKL had contributed to increasing the role and profile of the community and voluntary sector.

In particular, some stakeholders commented on the way AUKL was focused on finding solutions:

"AUKL make very pragmatic suggestions, there is not a shopping list of moans and groans, it's: 'let's talk about practical solutions'." (stakeholder)

Regional policy stakeholders and regional providers appreciated the opportunity to work with an umbrella body because often the resources to consult and communicate with a number of smaller organisations across London was difficult:

"It is impossible for us to link with 36 smaller organisations, umbrella organisations are easier to communicate with when resources are low in the team" (stakeholder)

Bringing the voice of older Londoners to the table

Through its relationship with the borough Age UKs and other local voluntary and community sector organisations, stakeholders were confident that voices and concerns at the local level were being brought forward to the strategic table:

"We know they have a lot of dialogue with local organisations, it helps make them a representative body" (stakeholder)

Stakeholders referred to the extensive reach of AUKL as like an octopus's tentacles that spread throughout London and therefore could not be ignored.

Organisations valued the regional role and it was felt that AUKL provided a structure for older people's voices to be heard at a regional influencing level.

Age UK London was described by one stakeholder as "*part of the architecture for London*" and there was concern that without this structure, there would be fragmentation of the user voice.

A key mechanism for bringing older people's issues to policy makers was AUKL's membership of key committees. For example, AUKL is a member of the Mayor's Older People Advisory Forum; they were also invited to the London Summit where leading councillors from across London debated the future of social care in London.

Stakeholders acknowledged the challenge of an organisation being a representative voice for older Londoners, but they had evidence that gave them confidence that AUKL was striving to achieve this. One stakeholder explained the consultative process:

"If we ask a question, there is never an instant response but instead 'I will ask and get back to you'." (stakeholder)

Age UK London was seen as being effective in bringing the voice of older people into the London equality agenda. There was a view expressed by some stakeholders that the voice of older Londoners has been underplayed and overlooked in the past, but that since the campaign and influencing role of AUKL, older people's issues were higher on the agenda. One organisation claimed they had been able to refresh their understanding of matters relating to older people since their relationship with AUKL because they had experienced *the real world of older people*.

There was some evidence to show that AUKL had been able to raise the profile of older people in the media through their campaigns. At times, media involvement was not always in response to a particular campaign but the media outlets were now more aware of the organisation and contacted them for views or support with particular stories the press or television were covering. Links were most established with regional media organisations, in particular BBC London radio and television, but challenges remain; a recent report in the London media referred to the new policy on the buses for older and disabled people but made no reference to the role of AUKL in influencing the changes.

Examples of change from specific campaigns

There have been some specific campaigns that have particularly increased awareness of older people's issues with key policy makers and service providers in London, as well enhancing the policy-influencing role of AUKL.

On the Buses⁷ was a joint campaign from Age UK London, the Greater London Forum for Older People and Transport for All, in response to barriers experienced by older and disabled people when using London bus services. In April and May 2011, a team of older people observed buses at bus stops with the survey covering 1091 bus journeys. The second survey carried out in a similar time period recorded the experiences of older people during and after boarding a bus. One of the recommendations from the campaigns was that Transport for London (TfL) should involve older people directly in bus driver training. As a result, AUKL and Transport for All are now involved in producing a bus driver training DVD in partnership with TfL.

Through this evaluation, there is evidence that the influence of this campaign has gone further. The relationship with TfL has developed in that TfL now see AUKL as a trusted stakeholder, who has a role in holding them to account and who can help the service in making the right policies for older people in the future. The campaign has opened up a two-way dialogue between older people and the provider, which can bring about a real change in attitudes. It has helped the managers and the people directly delivering the service to understand more clearly the barriers for older people in travelling, and also that older people now have a better perspective on the challenges to delivering a comprehensive bus service across London.

Older People's Manifesto 2012-2016⁸ was launched prior to the 2012 elections for Mayor of London and the London Assembly. It was a call to the incoming political leaders to make older people a mayoral priority and to take action to improve the quality of life and enhance the status and influence of older people in the capital.

Age UK London was well placed to lead this campaign because of its developing profile as a critical stakeholder and strategic, informative voice for older people in London. As a result of the Manifesto, AUKL were able to engage the current mayor in a hustings event with 255 older people present. Other regional stakeholders have claimed this as an example of how AUKL's campaign raised awareness of older people's issues at a time when other groups in the Capital were less successful in pre-election campaigning.

"At the recent mayoral elections, they (AUKL) raised the profile of older people and had older people's issues on the agenda" (stakeholder)

Evidence from this evaluation has shown how this campaign has now given leverage to the mayor's advisors and provided valuable intelligence to help

⁷ Age UK London, Greater London Forum for Older People and Transport for All (2011): *On the Buses: Older and disabled people's experiences on London buses*, Age UK London website

⁸ Age UK London (2012) *Older People's Manifesto 2012-2016*, Age UK London website

shape future policy on older people's issues. The GLA have agreed to produce a Mayoral report quantifying older people's contribution to London, and they are working with AUKL on the content of the report.

Hungry to be Heard – in London⁹ is a good example of how AUKL's regional campaigning role complements the national role of Age UK. Since 2006, Age Concern London (now Age UK London) supported Age Concern's (now Age UK) campaign to end malnutrition for older people in hospital. In 2011, Age UK London with the Greater London Forum for Older People campaigned for the NHS in London to take further and stronger action. A piece of regional research was carried out to establish how far the NHS in London had met the national campaign's seven recommended steps. The research aims to help develop a London wide strategy to spread good practice in preventing malnutrition and to contribute to the national debate.

As a result of the Hungry to be Heard campaign a number of NHS Trusts have contacted AUKL expressing an interest in working to develop their response to the seven recommended steps. Resources for hospital staff, volunteers, older people and their families have also been developed. An engagement event with NHS senior managers was also held to look at ways to take things forward.

4.2 Developing the capacity of London borough-level Age UKs to campaign and influence

There was good evidence that the campaigning project has increased the capacity of many London borough Age UK's to participate in some campaigning work, and made them more aware of the campaigning and policy-influencing role of Age UK London. A survey of the 36 Age UKs carried out by the project in 2010 showed that 70.4% (19/28) had found the AKCL regional campaigns important in enabling them to raise issues in their local area; in 2011, 21 (out of 23 responses) local Age UKs had found the campaigns very useful or useful in raising local issues.

Support

Age UKs involved in the evaluation¹⁰ found the resources, such as templates for letters and leaflets produced by AUKL, the most useful for supporting them in local campaigns. They also found the press releases and Revolve bulletin helpful.

"The support materials enabled us to participate despite limited capacity in the organisation" (borough Age UK CEO)

⁹ Age UK London and Greater London Forum for Older People (2011): *Still Hungry to be Heard – in London*, Age UK London website

¹⁰ 5 Chief Officers responded to the survey and 10 attended the focus group out of 36 Age UKs

The local organisations found they could use the resources to 'piggy back' on other materials available locally and nationally. The Campaign project raised awareness and increased the capacity of local Age UKs to participate:

"There have been lots of raised awareness about issues and a plethora of information sent" ((borough Age UK CEO)

The quality and quantity of the resources was highly valued and special reference was made to Age UK London's relationship with academia; being able to produce research reports of a high standard gave credibility to the campaigns. One Chief Officer recognised that while campaigning was part of their organisation's aims, the AUKL campaign materials had enhanced that role:

"What it (AUKL campaigns) does give us is higher quality materials to use more effectively and that has enabled us to make stronger relationships with local politicians than we'd had in the past" (borough Age UK CEO)

Revolve E-bulletin is one of the resources produced by Age UK London for the local Age UKs to support their campaigns activity. It is a very engaging and informative communication with useful links to resources and contacts. Although a survey in 2010 found that only 28% opened the email, further enquiry found that nearer 60% read the communication in the viewing panels without opening the email. Those who opened it found the content interesting and relevant, and nearly 60% of borough Age UKs surveyed in 2011 found the bulletin useful.

Local relevance

A focus group of London Age UK Chief Executives reinforced the value of being provided with resources that they could 'tailor-make' to local issues. Chief Executives explained:

"We can't do it all but we take what we can and follow it with local leads" (borough Age UK CEO)

"If it (campaign report) is a real meaty document that can be circulated to local senior officers and politicians then I will do that, but I am quite selective in how I use the materials" (borough Age UK CEO)

A good example of local Age UKs selecting campaigns that were relevant to their local context was given by one officer and illustrated the importance of recognising the different political environments across London. It was felt the campaign was too politically sensitive and would have compromised their relationship with local politicians, so on this occasion the organisation did not participate in the campaign. Another Chief Officer put it this way:

"We mix and match; is it relevant or potentially dangerous if we did participate?" (borough Age UK CEO)

Some Chief Officers described using the campaign templates as a prompt that could be adapted for local use:

"There is a very particular way you need to work in your borough and how you approach your officers" (borough Age UK CEO)

The 'On the Buses' campaign¹¹ was given as an example of how a regional campaign can have local relevance. It was described as being a "good example of top down, bottom up campaigning". Bus transport is a key issue in London, which has specific regional characteristics involving a range of regional bodies. Age UK London was able to give the regional context but specific local issues and problems in the boroughs could be identified and fed into the campaign. The campaign has been effective in influencing the regional bodies and opened up meaningful dialogue to improve the services for older and disabled people.

The Mayoral campaign and the production of the Older People's Manifesto¹² was another example of how AUKL could develop the capacity of borough Age UKs to be involved in campaigning. There were a large number of older people at the hustings event, which achieved a higher profile than on previous occasions; the reason given by the local Age UKs was that AUKL had led a very focused campaign that resonated strongly with older people in London:

"It (mayoral election campaign) focused on what mattered to older people – it really gripped them because it was relevant" (borough Age UK CEO)

Alliances and partnerships

The local Age UKs appreciated the constructive dialogue between the national Age UK and Age UK London in adapting campaigns to the London Region. They welcomed the recognition by their national and regional bodies that in campaigning work "one size does not fit all" and that it was more efficient to work together and use each other's expertise and influence.

For example, 'Hungry to be Heard' has been an on-going national campaign since 2006, which AUKL picked up to focus on in 2010¹³. The partnership between Age UK national and AUKL brought a London perspective to the

¹¹ Age UK London, Greater London Forum for Older People and Transport for All (2011): *On the Buses: Older and disabled people's experiences on London buses*, Age UK London website

¹² Age UK London (2012) *Older People's Manifesto 2012-2016*, Age UK London website

¹³ Age UK London and Greater London Forum for Older People (2011): *Still Hungry to be Heard – in London*, Age UK London website

national campaign, which made it relevant to London boroughs. Many of the borough Age UKs took part in the campaign because older people were able to relate to the issues at a local level through their experiences with their local hospitals. In turn the information gathered from the London perspective was fed into the national campaign.

Another key factor for borough Age UKs getting involved in AUKL campaigns was their relationship with local older people's forums and older people's groups. They found it most effective to work in partnership with older people and often sent the AUKL campaign materials to user groups to see if they wanted to take the issues on board. Some Chief Officers wanted to develop stronger relationships with older people's forums so that the campaigns could be grass roots led but with some support from their local organisation. This would increase the capacity of borough Age UKs to campaign on local and regional issues. In addition, the campaigns had also offered the local Age UKs a catalyst and opportunity to engage with older people in their boroughs. Some officers sent local forums the campaign materials even when, for whatever reason, it was inappropriate for the Age UK or there was a lack of capacity to take the issues forward.

The relationship of Age UK London with the Greater London Forum for Older People (GLF) was considered to be an important one by the local organisations. They recognised the separate identity of the GLF and its role in bringing out the voice of older people across London and felt that the partnership with AUKL gave a potentially effective channel for that voice.

Strategic response

There is evidence that the campaigning project had increased the capacity of local Age UKs to campaign, but there is patchy evidence that it had enabled the 36 Borough Age UKs and Age Concerns to develop a more strategic and co-ordinated approach to campaigning and influencing older people's issues. This was due to two main areas of concern that are linked: tension with their service delivery role and their capacity to support campaigns and influence change.

For many of the borough organisations, they are contracted by the local authority to deliver services and particularly in times of austerity and the reduction in funding to the voluntary sector, the imperative has been on delivery. It was also important to recognise the potential conflict between campaigning against the organisation funding the delivery of their service.

Many local Age UKs were also concerned that they did not have the capacity to deliver effective campaigns in spite of the support from AUKL. In many ways, the AUKL campaigns project had thrown a spotlight on the time it took to deliver effective campaigns, and in small organisations it was not possible to make this a strategic priority. The organisations recognised that there was a

significant need to influence older people's issues locally but they needed more resources to do it.

One example was given on how the AUKL campaigns had influenced strategy during a restructuring of the local organisation; campaigning as an area of activity was included in a member of staff's job description:

"I don't think I would have done that before because subconsciously, I get so much from AUKL around different campaigns and national influencing, I put it in as part of the remit" (borough Age UK CEO)

4.3 Involving older people in prioritising issues of importance to them

There is good evidence that the Age UK London campaigns project involved older people in prioritising issues that were important to them. This evidence came from three sources: the views of stakeholders who were confident that AUKL represented older people's voice across London (4.1); the strategic involvement of local Age UKs who reach out to older people in the boroughs (4.2) and from older people themselves (4.3).

Older people were concerned about national and London-wide issues, but they also wanted to campaign on issues that affected them locally. For example, in Redbridge, getting on and off the buses whilst a London wide issue, was seen as a particular problem in the outer London borough. Another example of London-wide action that had local relevance was concerning the health services. One older woman said:

"Because the clinical commissioning is going on, we are getting involved with GPs and patient participation groups so the elderly don't get left behind. The other thing we get involved in is the food in the local hospitals" (older person)

People got involved with issues for a variety of reasons. It may be personal experiences such as illness or a concern about older people. One woman was worried about the lack of respect towards older people on the buses:

"The more people talk about it, someone will hear – that's why I got involved" (older person)

Another gave her reasons for campaigning:

"It's no good having a complaint and then stopping. You have got to go on and on until something is done" (older person)

Participation depended on physical factors such as accessibility of venues, and getting to meetings in central London from the outer London boroughs. There were some suggestions from an outer London group that many of the

AUKL campaigns were more relevant to people living in central London. One exception to this was the transport campaign, which it was suggested was why so many people wanted to get involved.

The hustings event for the Mayoral election organised by AUKL was singled out as being particularly successful because:

"It was a fascinating experience for many elderly people to actually be able to ask questions (of the candidates) face to face" (older person)

Influencing

Among the older people in the evaluation focus groups there was optimism that things were beginning to change. Campaigning older people told us:

"I think people are beginning to listen...and the more you are aware of it, the more aware you are of where you can go for advice...which I would say 20 or 25 years ago was non-existent" (older person)

"Even the Dignity we went on this week – you got a feeling people were listening and it wasn't going over their heads" (older person)

There was evidence of new relationships being built with, for example, local MPs, councillors and hospital trust managers. One group of older people felt they saw more of their local councillors now and that they were beginning to take notice of their concerns.

Mobilising

There were signs that involving older people at a local level required link people in the boroughs. It was felt by some older people that a paid worker was required to provide leadership to the older volunteers in campaigning activities and there was concern that with less funding the activities would be reduced.

It was suggested that it would be useful to work across a few neighbouring boroughs where there were common issues with local services and that this was a role AUKL could co-ordinate.

AUKL co-ordinates the Campaign Alliance volunteer group to campaign across the region. During the funding period, Age UK London aimed to have 20 trained older volunteers in place to campaign and champion older people's concerns in London. This target was achieved during the majority of the project. Training is planned for the group in influencing, networking and representational techniques and the group is supported by AUKL's communications and campaign officer.

The Campaign Alliance volunteers have been very active in producing video films as evidence of the problems that older people face in, for example, in care homes.

Campaign Alliance members spoke of making links with other older people's organisations such as older people's forums, pensioner groups and networks and that this allowed them to involve more older people, *"just a question of meeting people and going from there"*. One member explained:

"After joining the Campaigns Alliance and finding out about it I'm now part of the Older People's Forum and have rung up the (local) Age UK. So I certainly have had a positive impact in terms of - rather than doing something on my own - join the local forum where I can put ideas and find out what local people have as their problem" (older person)

Including ALL older people

There were some signs that AUKL are extending their reach to engage a diverse range of older people. Relationships were building with organisations outside the Age UK brand that had an interest in ageing, in order to understand the issues of older people who may traditionally have been under represented. One example is the Greater London Forum Minority Ethnic Elders group.

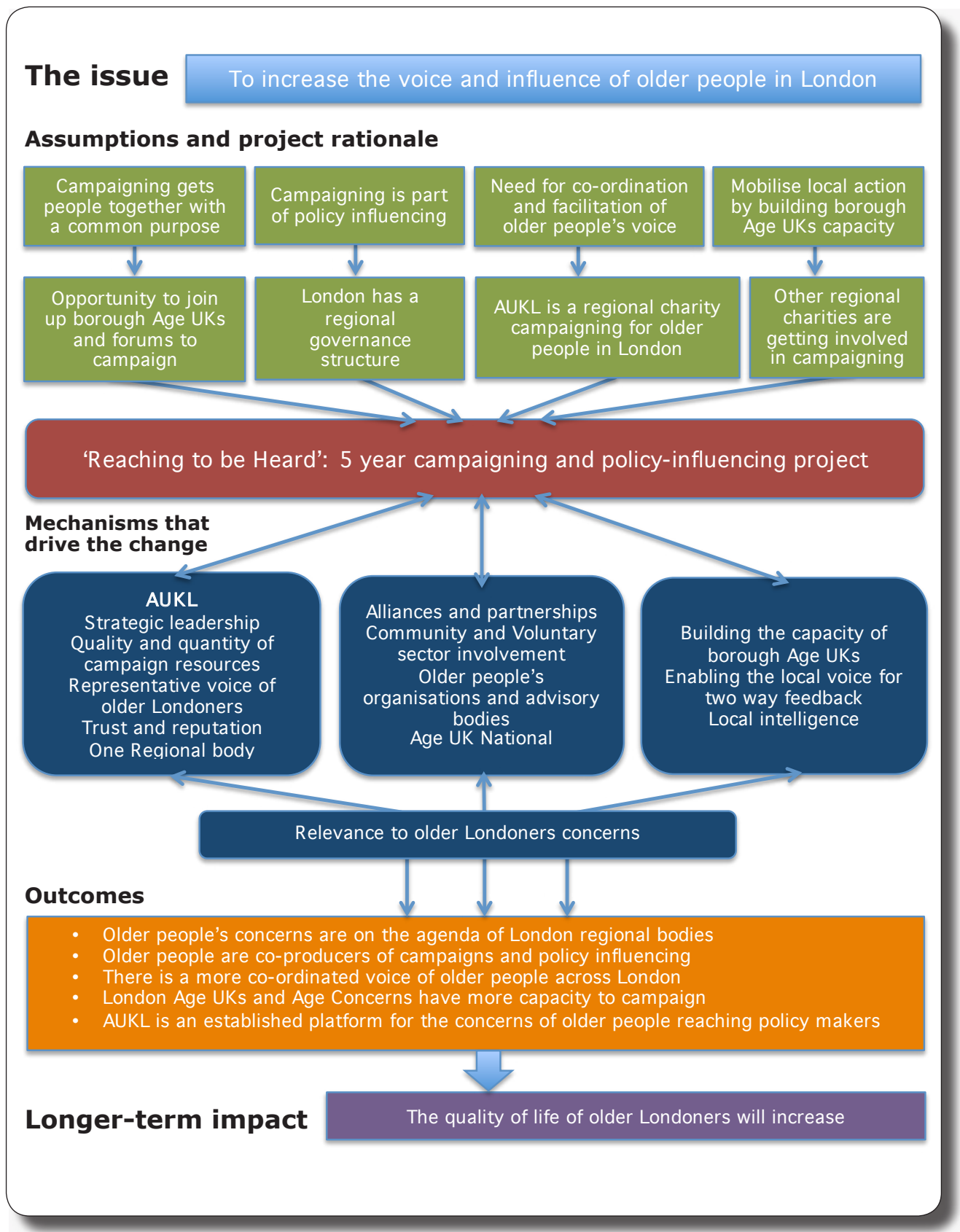
One way AUKL demonstrates its approach to reaching more diverse older people is through membership of the London network HEAR. This organisation works to place equality and human rights issues at the heart of the work of London's voluntary and community sector (VCS). It has provided an opportunity for ageing and older people to be considered with other equality issues, and to offer a more holistic approach to ageing.

The Campaign Alliance volunteers saw it as their remit to represent the views of all older people. One Alliance member spoke of the role in involving other groups:

"We get involved with (Borough) Cabinet members, local authority, voluntary action groups, refugees and other people...so we could reach out to many other groups. It is quite challenging but rewarding in the end" (older person)

The volunteers appreciated the campaign materials they could use when they attended other groups; one suggestion was that the research would be useful in other languages as a DVD or cassette.

5. AUKL CAMPAIGNING AND POLICY-INFLUENCING THEORY OF CHANGE



Testing the assumptions and driving change

The issue that the campaigning project at AUKL between 2008-2012 set out to address was to increase the voice and influence of older people in London. The underlying assumptions were that campaigning was a part of policy influencing and that campaigning activities were a way of getting people together with a common purpose. There was a need to co-ordinate and facilitate the voice of older Londoners and to get a range of regional charities involved. AUKL is the only independent charity for older people in London and as part of the Age UK movement it was ideally placed to support and build the capacity of London borough Age UKs to take part in campaigns, and to join up forums and Age UKs. It was also an opportunity for AUKL to establish itself as part of the regional structure in London in order to influence policy making in the capital.

As a result, the following outcomes were achieved by the project:

- Older people's concerns are on the agenda of London regional bodies
- Older people are co-producers of campaigns and policy-influencing
- There is a more co-ordinated voice of older people across London
- London Age UKs and Age Concerns have more capacity to campaign
- AUKL is an established platform for the concerns of older people reaching policy makers

The changes were driven by a number of mechanisms in four main areas:

- AUKL strategic leadership
- Regional partnerships and alliances
- Building the capacity of borough Age UKs
- Relevance of the campaigns to older people's concerns

The next section, Section 6, explores the key messages and learning from the campaigns project, which can inform the future direction of Age UK London's campaigning and policy influencing work.

6. THE FUTURE DIRECTION OF AGE UK LONDON'S CAMPAIGNING AND POLICY INFLUENCING WORK: KEY MESSAGES AND LEARNING

In the five years of this ambitious project, Age UK London has achieved a great deal of what it set out to do. It is valued by regional bodies as a strategic partner at the decision-making table and it has made a great deal of progress in bringing forward the concerns and issues of older Londoners to policy makers. It has been particularly successful in linking regional strategy with local relevance.

Age UK London can now build on the learning from the project, and move forward in its policy influencing activities. Key messages from the evaluation are:

- 6.1** The relationships and partnerships with key regional bodies should continue to mature and deepen. AUKL's relationship and alliances with community and voluntary sector organisations is also important as local authorities struggle to make difficult choices on funding. However, there will also need to be constant vigilance to establish new and varied partners as the changing landscape of public service delivery continues.

It was suggested that AUKL could take the opportunity to use its reputation to seek out more informal discussions, or 'sounding outs', with organisations it is seeking to influence before developing more formal campaigns. This guidance may help them to tailor and target their campaigns more effectively.

As part of the maturing relationships, AUKL may wish to develop mechanisms for policy makers to be more accountable to older people for their promises and actions.

- 6.2** Over the funding period of the project, Age UK London recognised the need to consolidate and build on campaigns, carrying through the influencing approaches, rather than moving on too quickly to other issues. This strategy is supported by this evaluation with the added suggestion that feedback mechanisms to the participating boroughs on the outcomes of campaigns could be strengthened.

The proposal to have a week long event to acknowledge and promote older people's contribution to London would benefit from a cost-benefit analysis and evaluation of outcomes.

- 6.3** Age UK London has made great strides in bringing forward the views of all older people but there was evidence that representation, which included marginalised and excluded groups of older people, could be improved. It

was felt that this would more accurately represent the ageing population of London. It would be helpful to develop transparent and clear systems that demonstrate how all views are included.

The strength of AUKL is in its ability to reach grass root opinions and the relationship with the Greater London Forum for Older People is an important example. Clarity on how that relationship works in practice would be beneficial to some policy makers.

- 6.4** The quality and quantity of the campaign resources were a key mechanism for developing the capacity of the local Age UKs, and has been highly valued. Without these resources many of the campaigning issues would not have happened in local boroughs. It was particularly striking that local organisations were able to adapt the resources to their local situation, although there was frustration at times that limited internal capacity and a priority to deliver services prevented some local Age UKs from participating.

One way forward is for AUKL to explore opportunities for working with a few boroughs where the campaign issues crossed borough boundaries, particularly when issues focused on central or outer London. The East London operating group of 3 borough Age UKs provides one example of a working structure.

- 6.5** Communicating with and influencing multiple stakeholders to give older people a more positive and less stereotypical presence remains a challenge, which is hard to solve. One way forward may be to further develop resources for more effective use of social networking. Sites such as facebook, twitter and other emerging methods can spread messages very quickly - the 'viral effect' - as well as provide valuable feedback loops to campaigners.
- 6.6** The concept of a regional campaign volunteer group with campaign champions is a good one and would help to build further capacity at local level. It promotes co-production and it would benefit from more development in the future. It also provides an opportunity to bring forward the voices of older people who are seldom heard.

APPENDIX 1: Evaluation Questions

1. Through the 'Reaching to be Heard' project, to what extent have the 36 London Borough Age UKs/Age Concerns increased their awareness of older people's issues at a local and national level? What has been the distance travelled and has this varied between organisations?
2. If so, how has this increased awareness been achieved? What were the most effective mechanisms that brought about the change?
3. As a result of 'Reaching to be Heard', to what extent have the 36 London Borough Age UKs/Age Concerns developed a more strategic and co-ordinated approach to campaigning and influencing on older people's issues? What worked in creating the change? What hindered it?
4. To what extent has the 'Reaching to be Heard' project increased awareness of older people's priorities within key London regional statutory bodies, policy-makers, academic institutions and voluntary sector organisations which have an influence in older people's lives?
5. Which priorities were most and least successful in increasing awareness among stakeholders? Did the issues vary between stakeholders and in which case, who? Were there other stakeholders that emerged who needed to be influenced?
6. To what extent has the "Reaching to be Heard" project succeeded in involving older people directly in prioritising issues of importance to them and their peers?
7. What was the most successful method for engaging older people and hearing their views? Which older people took part? Were the views of diverse groups of older people included?
8. What has changed as a result of the 'Reaching to be Heard? Why did those changes occur and what drove the changes?
9. What was the unique contribution of Age UK London in the changes that occurred?

APPENDIX 2: Age UKs Chief Executives focus group discussion guide

Evaluation Questions

- *Through the 'Reaching to be Heard' project, to what extent have the 36 London Borough Age UKs/Age Concerns increased their awareness of older people's issues at a local and national level? What has been the distance travelled and has this varied between organisations?*
- *If so, how has this increased awareness been achieved? What were the most effective mechanisms that brought about the change?*
- *As a result of 'Reaching to be Heard', to what extent have the 36 London Borough Age UKs/Age Concerns developed a more strategic and co-ordinated approach to campaigning and influencing on older people's issues? What worked in creating the change? What hindered it?*

Approximate time 20-30 minutes

The group will be moderated at a medium level to allow discussion

Introduction and welcome:

Mention survey

- My name, thanks etc
- Check verbal consent – raise hand
- Recorder
- Confidentiality of data
- Timings of group
- Final report in January to AUKL

Starter discussion question

Individual question:

1. Everyone to introduce themselves and ask if they have been involved with any of the AUKL campaigns

Guiding discussion questions

2. How central is campaigning to your organisation's activities? Where does it fit with your other priorities?

- Why are local campaigns useful? In what way?

3. What is the difference between AUK and AUKL campaigns in supporting you? How do you choose? Is the *source* of the materials/ support important?

4. Can you give me an example of something that has changed as a result of the AUKL campaigns?

- more aware of older people's issues at a local and national level
- reached a diverse group of older Londoners
- increased campaigning activity in your Age UK
- older people's involvement in campaigning

5. What new partnerships/alliances have you made as a result of campaigning activities?

6. What has been most useful in supporting your campaigning?

- Where are the tensions/barriers?

Closing question

8. How do you see Age UK London's campaigning role going forward in the future?

Thanks etc

APPENDIX 3: Stakeholder Interview Guide

Evaluation Questions

- *To what extent has the 'Reaching to be Heard' project increased awareness of older people's priorities within key London regional statutory bodies, policy-makers, academic institutions and voluntary sector organisations which have an influence in older people's lives?*
- *Which priorities were most and least successful in increasing awareness among stakeholders? Did the issues vary between stakeholders and in which case, who? Were there other stakeholders that emerged who needed to be influenced?*

***Explain about evaluation and when the report is due**

***Discuss confidentiality**

1. In what ways have you been involved with AUKL? What do you see as their key role in London?
2. How did you hear about AUKL Campaigns? Which ones have you been involved in? Can you distinguish between Age UK campaigns and AUKL campaigns and is it important?
3. What has changed for you/your organisation as a result of the campaign(s)?
4. Have you developed any new partnerships/alliances as a result? If so, which ones?
5. Can you give me an example of how being involved in the campaign increased your understanding of older people's issues? Has that included the needs of diverse groups of older people?
6. What would help you in the future to be more aware of older people's concerns in the capital?

Thank you for your time