

Thanks to everyone who contributed to our Listening & Engagement Exercise survey

We were very pleased with the response to the Listening & Engagement Exercise survey which closed in December. We heard from a very wide range of voices – people who draw on care and support, paid and unpaid carers, organisations, charities and faith groups. The responses will shape the Commission’s thinking and we will share what we have heard later in the spring. Thank you to all who gave their time and insights to participate in the survey.

Rich insights from Round Tables

Alongside the written inputs into the Listening and Engagement Exercise, we have held a series of round tables in partnership with organisations to hear from people with lived experience. We have invited participants to discuss and share their views on these key questions:

1. If care and support was the way you want it to be, what would it look like
 - a) now? b) In 20-30 years' time; and
2. What needs to change so that care and support becomes the way it should be?

In late November, we heard from Learning Disability England, which brings people and organisations together to create a movement for change where people with learning disabilities, families, friends and paid supporters come together on an equal basis. As a membership organisation, LDE's members work together to build a world where people with learning disabilities have good lives with equal choices and opportunities as others.

Livability, with whom we met in December, is a charity committed to enabling people with disabilities to live the life they want to lead, working to change what is unlivable and helping people to tackle the barriers they face and create a livable life. In November 2021, Livability launched its Quality Forum, a group of people from Livability's Adult Services to examine and discuss the care and support they receive. Commissioners met with members of the Quality Forum.

In January, we met IMPACT Assemblies and the Disabled People's Organisation forum:

IMPACT Assemblies: IMPACT stands for 'IMProving Adult Care Together', a £15 million UK centre for implementing evidence in adult social care, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Health Foundation. IMPACT brings together key stakeholders to share learning and co-design its work in inclusive and diverse 'IMPACT Assemblies', made up of people who draw on care and support, carers, practitioners, managers, policy-makers, commissioners, providers and researchers. The Commission hosted this round table in partnership with IMPACT, meeting with the two English IMPACT Assemblies.

The Disabled People's Organisation forum: The Disabled People's Organisation forum ("DPO") emerged when the Minister for Disabled People, Justin Tomlinson MP, brought together stakeholders through the Disability Unit. The DPO's policy aims include increasing general taxation to fund social care, with care delivered locally, and with a new legal right to independent living based on the UN Convention. Groups represented at the round table included: Disability Rights UK, Disability Positive, Reclaiming our Futures, Inclusion London, Bristol Independent Living.

In February we met with Carers UK who brought together a group of unpaid carers, with a specific focus on how their faith affects their approach to caring, and how supportive their worshipping communities have been in enabling the participation of themselves and the person they care for.

We are very grateful to these organisations for the time they gave to us, and for providing such invaluable insights.

Policy experts speak at Commission Meetings

At the January meeting of the Commission we heard from two policy experts who gave their perspectives on the challenges and opportunities associated with social care reform.

Jon Glasby, Professor of Health and Social Care at the University of Birmingham, and Director of ‘IMPACT’ – the new UK centre for implementing evidence in adult social care – explored the different rationales for reforming adult social care, focusing on the social and public expectations that the state will provide for people who require care and support, enabling them to have greater control and choice over their services and to remain independent for as long as possible.

Natasha Curry, Deputy Director of Policy at the Nuffield Trust, talked about the lessons that could be learned from Germany and Japan. Both these countries reformed their systems 20-30 years ago, putting in place the building blocks of a fundamentally different system from that currently prevailing in the UK. The Commission heard that in England by contrast with Germany and Japan, the debate about social care is quite narrow, with a focus on funding, people selling their homes, and ‘vulnerable’ people who need care, rather than, as in Germany and Japan, a broader focus on individuals who need care, lack of supply and choice, and some concerns about the quality and cost of care.

In February, we heard from **John Kennedy**, a freelance consultant in social care, who has extensive experience in the care sector gained at amongst other organisations, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

John was invited to address the Commission in view of his experience overseeing a review into adult social care in Northern Ireland. In December 2016, he was appointed, alongside Des Kelly OBE, to form an Expert Advisory Panel established to provide an independent perspective on possible solutions to meet the challenges facing the adult care and support system in Northern Ireland. After conducting a range of interviews, John said it became clear to them that there was no one thing that would solve the problem, but that there were measures that could bring about a more coherent system, giving people more choice about the care and support they receive.

Given the context of Northern Ireland, where health and social care are run through five trusts, there was no immediate parallel with the social care system prevailing in England. However, the themes that emerged from “Power to People”, as the report was called, and as John described them, resonated with the members of the Commission as they listened to and questioned him:

Community and carers: the report recognised carers as the absolute bedrock of society, despite getting little support or recognition.

- Workforce: the status and parity of esteem of the role of care giver
- Lack of progress – Commissioners and regulators as drivers of what is provided, rather than consumers, leading to complex regulations which are hard to navigate.
- Attitudes and language – ageism, ableism and sexism are all at play. Social care is seen as something that is about 'other' people, rather than an issue that affects us all.

Blogs and media

Just after Christmas the Guardian published articles about the Archbishop of Canterbury's reflections on social care and the emerging work of the Commission.

[Provide social care on par with NHS or education, says Justin Welby | Social care | The Guardian](#)

[A social care 'covenant': how might archbishop's plan work? | Social care | The Guardian](#)

Read why Anna Severwright joined the Commission in ["Where is Love?" and her reflections on the Commission's round table events so far.](#)

Heléna Herklots explores how current language and systems erect barriers to good outcomes for those who draw on care and support and those that provide it, and what the Commission is considering by way of remedy in ["How complexity and jargon get in the way of good care".](#)

Jon Glasby has written a blog for us ["Nothing new under the sun"](#) setting out his reflections on taking the long view of social care reform in this country.

Commission Chair, Anna Dixon, was interviewed on UCB Radio in December talking about the work of the Commission and the Listening and Engagement Exercise.

What's happening next?

The Commission is focusing in coming months on identifying examples of the vision in practice and through its work streams engaging further with those who commission and deliver care, churches and faith communities and others in the sector.

The Commission is meeting in person at the home of the Archbishop of York in March. We will also be taking the opportunity to meet with local organisations, including the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and Innovations in Dementia, and meeting with local vicars. We will be holding

meetings over the coming months with relevant stakeholders, and continue to shape our thinking. We would be delighted to hear from you, so please do get in touch if you would like to have a conversation about your work and the Commission.

Spreading the word

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