

## **Summary of Office of the Public Guardian proposals to take forward the recommendations made by Age Concern in their research report - 'Doing the Right Thing'**

Age Concern conducted some research on behalf of the Public Guardianship Office (PGO) looking at the information needs of our customers.

As a result of the findings, we have already introduced some changes into the way the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) communicates with its customers. Whilst we intend on ensuring that we meet the needs of all our customers, some of the recommendations are better dealt with through signposting to other information or organisations who are better placed to assist. We will however accommodate the needs of all customers (existing and future) as far as reasonably practicable.

Many of the recommendations made were already being carried out at the PGO, and we are pleased to note that they are useful to our customers. Listed below is the work that will continue or will be introduced into the OPG as part of the research carried out.

### **Structure & format of information**

- New guidance will be structured to help all groups of users interact effectively with the OPG/PGO
- New forms are being tested for ease of use
- Checklists and other methods will be used as memory aids where appropriate
- Stakeholders have been consulted on OPG literature
- New literature will be available in a range of formats, including Easy Read and other languages

### **Guidance on how to keep information**

- Where possible, decision makers will be signposted to external organisations who may be able to help, as this is not a role for the OPG

### **Guidance for specific situations**

- Information on benefits advice will continue to be sent out
- We will consider what other information will be helpful for Deputies and Attorneys and signpost queries accordingly, or commission material as appropriate
- Useful contact details will be available on the OPG website

### **Improvements to the website**

- The OPG website will be regularly updated to contain current information
- The website address will be listed on all publications
- The website will be structured in a more customer-centric way
- All recommendations for improvements to the existing site will be taken forward with the new OPG site

### **Support groups & forums**

- Consideration to be given to the continuation of the existing support groups and setting up other similar groups

### **Reaching Out magazine**

- Consideration will be given to having a similar magazine for Attorneys

**Simplifying application forms & processes**

- The complexity of the forms is due to the statutory information requirements set out in the Mental Capacity Act
- LPA forms went through a formal consultation process, and have been through a professional company to ensure ease of use

**Financial institutions**

- The OPG will continue working with the British Banking Association to assess how the new legislation is working in practice
- It is intended that customer guidance on interaction with banks will be produced