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AGE CONCERN RESPONSE TO THE GOVERNMENT'S PRINCIPALS OF PENSION REFORM

Gordon Lishman, Director-General of Age Concern England said:

"We strongly support the key principles for pension reform. Fundamental reform rather than incremental change is the right way to achieve a fair pension system that will meet the needs of an ageing population.

Pensions is a key issue for older voters. All the parties are starting to talk about how they will convince this powerful group that they will deliver for them if elected.

Age Concern agrees that the principles of reform must tackle pensioner poverty, give everyone the chance to build a decent retirement income, give a fair deal to women and carers, be easy to understand and involve broad consensus. Reform should also build trust in the system and not expect the individual to carry all the responsibility and risk of saving.

The Government shouldn't spend too long talking as there are already clear ideas on the table of how it can achieve lasting change. This could be though a solid universal pension or an increased basic state pension of at least £105 per week. There also needs to be less reliance on means-testing and clear incentives and rewards for saving.

Protecting the poorest and achieving fairness for ordinary working people must lie at the heart of pension reform."

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