

Independent Taxation Legislation - Stage 2

Age Concern Jersey

21st March 2024

Age Concern Jersey Submission

As you would expect our members do not like change. Our membership is primarily female and there is a bias towards their views in this submission.

In some marriages the woman handles the finances and whilst the income tax return is often sent to, and signed by, the husband it is the wife who completes the return and arranges to receive the necessary information.

Many of our members have never had to be involved in the completion and filing of the tax return, and some got quite angry when told that in later life this new task to contend with would be necessary. The presumption was that once again the government was doing what was best for them and not the people they serve.

Some members are computer literate, but many are not. Few could use Yoti without assistance and many are very nervous about submitting data over the Internet. Indeed we try and teach our membership to be very careful with personal data as they are highly vulnerable to scams.

Correspondence with our members would need to continue in paper form and an easily accessible tax advice desk would be required. It is assumed that the people that would receive a tax return for the first time in their lives would need it in paper format to do a paper return. There is a cost to this exercise that could outweigh the benefits.

Given that the changes will result in an additional £9,500,000 in Government revenue from those that will be worse off, an explanation of the change, clearing detailing the effect on the individual, will be a necessity. This would need to be explained and set out in a manner that is easily understood.

The majority of members are not happy about the change and many threatened to "throw into the bin" an tax firm received, as they have not filled out one for 70 years and are not starting now.

In terms of cohesion and control the issuing of separate tax firms is unlikely to achieve anything. If they are really interested in helping those in this type of relationship there are numerous better options available to assist the victims. A controlling bully can have as much undue influence over two tax forms as it can over one.

It was noticeable that many members are extremely trusting of the tax department inasmuch they cannot calculate their own liability and rely on the tax office getting it right.

To explain independent taxation to someone who has had little or no exposure to tax returns during their long lifetime could be very difficult. Age Concern Jersey would be against compulsory independent taxation as it would do more harm than good, and create an unacceptable administrative burden on those in later life who would struggle with the requirements.

Ben Shenton
Chairman Age Concern Jersey - Honorary