



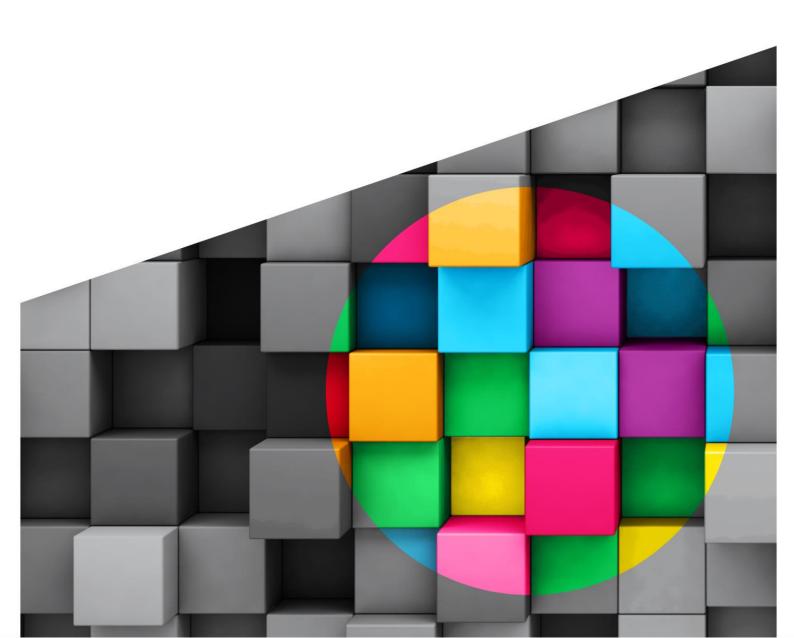






The Depiction of Older People in Ads

Qualitative and Quantitative Research Report March 2025





Contents

1.	Executive summary	4
1.1.	Summary of findings	5
2.	Introduction	8
2.1.	Research background	8
2.2.	Research objectives	g
2.3.	Research methodology	g
2.3.	1. Qualitative phase	g
2.3.	2. Quantitative phase	g
2.4.	Research sample	10
2.4.	1. Qualitative sample	10
2.4.	2. Quantitative sample	11
2.5.	Stimulus material	11
2.6.	Post-task	12
2.7.	Focus group discussion structure	12
2.8.	Quantitative survey structure	13
3.	Context	15
3.1.	Defining 'older people'	15
3.2.	Older people's experience of ageing	16
3.3.	The influence of advertising vs other spaces	18
3.4.	Targeting and omission	20
3.4.	1. Targeting	20
3.4.	2. Omission	21
4.	Attitudes to depictions of older people in ads	25
4.1.	Overall attitudes towards depictions of older people in ads	25
4.2.	Demographic differences in overall attitudes towards depictions of older people in ads	28
5.	Assessing harm and offence	32
5.1.	Potential impacts of depictions of older people in ads	32
5.1.	1. How harm and offence were assessed	32
5.1.	2. Overall quantitative findings on harm and offence	32
5.1.	3. Overall qualitative findings on harm and offence	34



5.2.	Positive portrayals	35
5.3.	Irritating portrayals	37
5.4.	Offensive portrayals	39
5.5.	Harmful portrayals	41
6.	Considerations for best practice when depicting older people in ads	44
7.	Conclusions and recommendations	46
8.	Appendices	49
8.1.	Qualitative advertising case studies	49
8.1.	Dusk Retail, '#DuskSayin Carlo': Positive Portrayal	49
8.1.	2. Land Rover, 'Defender Ryuichi Nagayama': Irritating Portrayal	50
8.1.	3. Strathmore Foods, 'When life takes the Ping!': Offensive Portrayal	50
8.1.	4. LinkedIn, 'Parents don't get B2B, LinkedIn does!': Harmful Portrayal	51
8.2.	Quantitative testing of adverts	53
8.3.	Additional quantitative charts	56
8.4.	Stimulus table	57
8.5.	Qualitative sample breakdown	64
8.6.	Quantitative sample breakdown	66
0 7	Quantitativo data tables	67



Executive summary

The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) is the UK's independent regulator of advertising. It applies the UK Code of Non-broadcast Advertising and Direct & Promotional Marketing and the UK Code of Broadcast Advertising (the Advertising Codes) written by the Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) and Broadcast Committee of Advertising Practice (BCAP)¹. The ASA ensures ads across all media are legal, decent, honest and truthful, and takes action when advertising is misleading, harmful, offensive or otherwise irresponsible.

The ASA's 2024–2028 strategy, *Al-assisted collective ad regulation*, sets out the following strategic decision:

We will prioritise protecting vulnerable people². Those will include children and financially vulnerable people, but we will also identify, and develop our understanding of other vulnerable groups, and people who are situationally vulnerable, who we will need to prioritise protecting, including by taking into account variations between the nations and regions. We will use various intelligence-gathering methods, including desk research, increased investment in public research and AI-assisted monitoring, to find out what ad related issues are the most important for us to tackle and which vulnerable people need protecting. And we will identify additional robust external indicators of our positive impact.

The UK Advertising Codes contain rules that require advertisers to prepare ads with a sense of responsibility and that prohibit ads from causing serious or widespread offence. As per these rules, particular care must be taken to avoid causing offence on the grounds of: age; disability; gender; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. The ASA has previously conducted research exploring gender stereotyping³ (2017) and racial and ethnic stereotyping⁴ (2022) in ads.

In recent times, the ASA has noticed an increase in discussions about the portrayal of older people in the media, including in advertising. As a consequence of this, and in order to understand the public's perspective on how older people are depicted in ads, the ASA commissioned Strat7 Jigsaw to conduct a mixed-methodology study.

The primary focus of the research was to understand to what extent, and how, certain depictions of older people in ads can give rise to offence and/or harm. The study combined qualitative (focus groups and one-to-one interviews) and quantitative (a survey of over 4,000 individuals) research, conducted across the four nations of the UK. The sample included participants from different locations and demographic groups, including a good spread of ages ranging from 16 to 75+ years. A detailed breakdown of the sample can be found in Appendix 8.5 and 8.6.

For the purposes of this research, 'older people' were defined as anyone at or above 55 years of age (55+). That definition was informed by an initial phase of desk research that considered various studies in this area, including those conducted by charities representing the interests of older people. However, both the ASA and Jigsaw acknowledge that this group represents a broad spectrum of

¹ https://www.asa.org.uk/codes-and-rulings/advertising-codes.html

² Vulnerability can derive both from membership of a particular group sharing certain characteristics (for example, children) or as a result of particular circumstances (for example, a recent bereavement or financial problem).

³ https://www.asa.org.uk/resource/depictions-perceptions-and-harm.html

⁴ https://www.asa.org.uk/resource/asa-summary-report-on-tackling-harmful-racial-and-ethnic-stereotyping-in-advertising.html



experiences, physical abilities, mental attitudes towards their own age and attitudes towards depictions of ageing in advertising. Throughout this research, we have taken great care to understand and highlight any relevant differences within this group, particularly within the subgroups of 55–64, 65–74 and 75+.

1.1. Summary of findings

Context

Older people (aged 55+) report feeling relatively positive about their age. The quantitative research showed that those aged 55+ are more likely to agree that 'age is just a number' and more likely to feel 'comfortable in their own skin' compared to younger cohorts.

In the qualitative research, those aged 55+ felt growing 'old' today looked very different compared to their parents' or grandparents' experiences, across two key factors:

Physically

older people are living longer and staying active for longer

Attitudinally

older people are working longer and feel better able to contribute to society and their local communities

There is a sense that current portrayals of older people in ads do not reflect the more positive reality of 'modern day' ageing.

The targeting of 'end-of-life' products towards older people and the omission of older people in advertising more generally, were spontaneously raised as issues across those aged 55+.

While those topics were not the primary focus of this research, they should not be considered as entirely separate to the portrayal of older people in advertising, because targeting and omission may work together to compound a sense of depictions of older people in ads being overly narrow.

Attitudes to depictions of older people in ads

Both qualitatively and quantitatively, there was acknowledgement that advertising can play a role in impacting personal and societal perceptions of older people. However, advertising was not seen as being as influential as other drivers, such as personal interactions, or depictions in the news or on television.

The study sought to explore demographic differences in attitudes towards the depiction of older people in ads. Both qualitatively and quantitatively, we found that the *age* of the respondent has a key influence on views about how older people are portrayed in ads. Similarly, when age intersected with gender, there were clear and consistent differences in views. Older age groups in general, and older women in particular, are more likely to think that older people are portrayed inaccurately and/or are underrepresented in ads.

Interestingly, the survey found that the UK population was more likely to agree that older people tend to be negatively stereotyped in advertising compared to the portrayal of other groups in society.

Assessing harm and offence

Given the subjective, and sometimes polarising nature of responses, reaching a consensus on the potential for ads to cause harm or offence can be challenging. However, we found there are certain themes that emerged more consistently across the study's quantitative and qualitative findings.



Based on the quantitative survey, the top two types of depictions that were most likely to cause *offence* were:

- using humour at the expense of older people
- showing older people as always poor or impoverished

Amongst participants in the qualitative stage, depictions were most likely to cause offence when they:

- felt dismissive of older people especially by a younger person. This felt particularly offensive
 where an older person was depicted as being less knowledgeable or capable because of their
 age
- depicted ageing as something to be fought especially in relation to appearance, and depictions of women
- **used humour at the expense of older people** especially if addressing 'taboo' topics (e.g. intimacy)

The survey found that the two types of depictions that were most likely to cause *harm* included those that:

- were felt to suggest older people had no purpose in life
- portrayed older people as being isolated or lonely

In the qualitative stage, participants thought the depictions most likely to cause harm were those that showed:

- ageing as a thing to be fought, especially in beauty advertising. Older women particularly felt these depictions could lead to low self-esteem
- older people as being isolated or lonely, including in charity advertising. While there was
 appreciation for the importance and seriousness of the messages these ads were trying to
 convey, these depictions could tap into underlying fears about isolation in later life and lead to
 feelings of hopelessness especially for those aged 75+
- older people as being less knowledgeable due to their age, especially if in direct comparison to a younger person. These depictions risk reducing the confidence required to try new things for fear of being 'mocked'

Tone also plays an important role in determining views towards depictions of older people.

Considerations for best practice when depicting older people in ads

The research found that the two most important features to consider when depicting older people in ads are authenticity and inclusivity.

Participants expressed a desire for advertisers to get closer to the reality of older peoples' lives and reflect these in the ads they produced.

In particular, participants felt advertisers should AVOID:

- relying on extreme or one-dimensional depictions of older people
- placing older people in situations where they are mocked for reasons related to age (i.e. jokes based on stereotypes) or portrayed as mixing solely within their own generations



Instead, advertisers should aim to INCLUDE depictions that:

- include 'real' older people (i.e. not just celebrities/airbrushed imagery), especially in beauty ads
- focus on the individual, placing their age in the background
- show older people mixing with younger people, their family, etc.
- portray a spectrum of experiences

Participants were, however, keen for the ad industry to retain a degree of creative freedom. A consensus emerged that these types of practical suggestions would be most effective in helping the industry to better understand and reflect older people in ads.



2. Introduction

2.1. Research background

The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) is the UK's independent regulator of advertising. It applies the UK Code of Non-broadcast Advertising and Direct & Promotional Marketing and the UK Code of Broadcast Advertising (the Advertising Codes) written by the Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) and Broadcast Committee of Advertising Practice (BCAP). The ASA ensures ads across all media are legal, decent, honest and truthful, and takes action where advertising is misleading, harmful, offensive or otherwise irresponsible.

The ASA is aware of an uptick in discussions about the portrayal of older people in the media (including in advertising) in recent times. Indeed, CAP played an active role in such discussions when providing oral evidence to the Women & Equalities Committee as part of their consideration of 'the rights of older people'5. To understand further the views of industry, consumers and key stakeholders on the portrayal of older people in ads, the ASA has considered a range of external commentary/studies, reviewed historic complaints data and engaged with three age-related charities.

This initial phase of investigation suggested there is concern about the perceived low level of visibility of older people in ads generally (particularly in the context of an ageing population), and the high level of visibility of older people in ads specifically associated with ageing. There is a general desire for better representation of the diverse ageing population (e.g. by ethnicity). There is also concern about the reported *bombardment* of advertising for certain 'end-of-life' products (such as funeral/cremation services) in formats which supposedly draw a higher proportion of older people than others (i.e. daytime TV), and the impact this could have.

The UK Advertising Codes cannot impose requirements or quotas on industry to include a particular type of person within an ad. Nor can the ASA, broadly speaking, prohibit advertisers from targeting ads at their intended audience. However, sections of this report focusing on the general representation (or omission) of older people in ads, and the reported *targeting* of certain ads at older people, are likely to provide the ad industry with important insights into the views of the public on these issues.

Another concern is the portrayal of older people in advertising, specifically those depictions that perpetuate certain stereotypes about older generations, i.e. older people as naive, 'technophobes' or only being portrayed in extremes (i.e. either in severe poverty and/or physical decline, or with considerable wealth and/or embarking on extreme physical activities, e.g. skydiving).

The UK Advertising Codes contain rules that require advertisers to prepare ads with a sense of responsibility and that prohibit ads from causing serious or widespread offence. As per these rules, particular care must be taken to avoid causing offence on the grounds of: age; disability; gender; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.

Therefore, the ASA commissioned Strat7 Jigsaw Research to conduct a mixed-methodology study to understand the public's perspective on the depiction of older people in ads. The focus of the research was to investigate the extent to which the depiction of older people in ads has the capacity to cause offence, and/or harm.

⁵ 17 April 2024, The rights of older people – Oral evidence - Committees, UK Parliament



2.2. Research objectives

The specific objectives of this research were to:

- · explore attitudes towards the depiction of older people in ads
- understand how, if at all, such ads impact public attitudes and actions including whether certain
 depictions in ads limit how individuals view themselves, or influence how they or others behave
 towards people, on the basis of their age
- explore which depictions of older people in ads have the potential to cause offence and/or harm and understand the role that advertising plays in perpetuating any stereotypes

2.3. Research methodology

A combined qualitative and quantitative approach was considered to be most appropriate given the objectives of the project. The project started with a qualitative study to explore views toward the topic, before conducting a survey to quantify some of the attitudes identified in the first stage.

2.3.1. Qualitative phase

The discursive nature of qualitative research is better suited for initial exploratory discussions, where the goal is to understand behaviours and attitudes, rather than simply describe them. It was felt, therefore, that starting the research with an exploratory phase would yield the richest findings.

The two most common methodologies in qualitative research are the group discussion and the one-to-one in-depth interview. Group interviews were selected as the primary qualitative method for this study as the interactive environment is a better forum to generate audience consensus and even identify potential solutions. The group sessions were conducted online to ensure greatest possible breadth and precision of sample coverage. These sessions lasted up to 90 minutes and followed a discussion guide agreed upon in advance with the ASA.

To ensure those who are less digitally confident and/or engaged were not excluded from the qualitative stage:

- participants were advised to ensure a friend or relative was available to support them joining the online group if needed, at the required time
- three one-to-one, in-person interviews were conducted. Those sessions lasted up to 60 minutes and followed the same discussion guide as was used in the group sessions

A short post-task was undertaken after the group interviews. More information about the stimulus is covered in Section 2.5 and the post-task, in Section 2.6.

Qualitative fieldwork took place between 19 November and 16 December 2024.

2.3.2. Quantitative phase

The inclusion of a quantitative phase is important for building an authoritative understanding of opinions across the UK and within specific demographic groups. Building on the findings from the qualitative phase, a large scale and representative quantitative study was undertaken. It was designed to deliver a robust evidence base which captured views across the full age spectrum as well the ability to examine intersectional subgroups, such as gender and ethnicity.

The quantitative phase was conducted as an online survey, delivering a nationally representative sample of 4,306 interviews with UK adults aged from 16 years and over.



Quantitative fieldwork took place between 8 and 12 January 2025.

2.4. Research sample

2.4.1. Qualitative sample

The objective of the qualitative phase is not to generate statistically valid findings but to ensure the sample is designed to capture the range and variety of potential responses. The appropriate sample size in a qualitative study should be sufficient to allow for confirmatory findings without generating overly repetitive data (saturation).

The project comprised a total of nine online focus groups each with between six and seven participants as well as three, one-to-one in-depth interviews with those who are less digitally confident, with a total of 60 participants being included across the qualitative phase.

The structure of the sample was designed to include respondents from across the age spectrum. Given the focus on the depiction of older people, and the objective to understand whether/how portrayal in ads can impact people, the qualitative sample was skewed towards representing views of older people. For this research, older people were defined as those aged 55 and over (55+). However, the ASA acknowledges that older people cannot be seen as one homogenous group. The sample was therefore designed to capture the spectrum of ages and experiences – splitting the 55+ age category into several sub-groups and ensuring analysis took that into account. More information about defining older people can be found in Section 3.1.

The nine groups were segregated by age and socio-economic group (SEG), to capture any potential differences deriving from these factors. The groups with older people were also segregated by gender to understand if views toward depictions of male and female characters differed for the audiences.

The nine groups comprised:

1 x group of 16-25-year-olds:

- mix of genders and
- mix of socio-economic groups

2 x groups of 55-64-year-olds:

- 1 x all-female group, in socio-economic groups C2DE
- 1 x all-male group, in socio-economic groups ABC1

1 x group of 26-44-year-olds:

- mix of genders and
- mix of socio-economic groups

2 x groups of 65-74-year-olds, including:

- 1 x all-female group, in socio-economic groups ABC1
- 1 x all-male group, in socio-economic groups C2DE

1 x group of 45–54-year-olds:

- mix of genders and
- mix of socio-economic groups

2 x groups of 75+-year-olds:

- 1 x all-female group, in socio-economic groups C2DE
- 1 x all-male group, in socio-economic groups ABC1



Additionally, the sample incorporated the following criteria:

- Locations: fieldwork was conducted across the four nations and included a mix of urban and rural locations
- Ethnicity: representation of ethnic minority groups was included in each group
- Views toward ageism: a mix of those who agree or disagree that ageism is an issue for older people to some extent in the UK
- **Disability:** representation of those with a long-term health condition or disability in the groups with participants aged 65 years and over

Full details of the sample achieved can be found in Appendix 8.5.

2.4.2. Quantitative sample

The objective of the quantitative phase is to generate statistically valid findings, representative of the wider UK population. The appropriate sample size in a quantitative study should be sufficient to allow for an assessment of the statistical differences between demographic and attitudinal groups, as well as a focus on findings at a sub-group level.

To meet that need, the quantitative phase delivered a large nationally representative sample of UK adults (referred to in this study as the UK population) aged from 16+, with a total of 4,306 interviews, including a boost among the older ethnic minority group (aged from 55+) to deliver 154 interviews and allow for greater analysis at that sub-group level. The final sample was then weighted to be fully representative of the UK population.

The overall sample included robust samples by:

Age group

- 16–54-years-old = 2,500
- 55–64-years-old = 736
- 65–years and over = 1,070

Gender

- Female = 2,198
- Male = 2,095

Ethnicity

- White = 3,663
- Ethnic minority = 604

Full details of the sample achieved can be found in Appendix 8.6.

2.5. Stimulus material

The ASA provided a broad range of advertising stimulus, covering a variety of brands, all of which included depictions of older people. Each group of participants in the qualitative phase saw a range of:

- products being advertised
- creative styles, for example, some more humorous, others more serious
- media types

 —TV, radio, digital, posters (OOH) and print



Thirty-four pieces of stimulus in total were used. A rotation was designed to ensure balanced coverage across the sample. Each piece of stimulus was shown and discussed approximately three times.

In the discussions, the stimulus was shared on-screen. Participants were asked to join the sessions using a laptop or tablet to ensure they could engage with the content properly.

The stimulus is referenced throughout this report and a summary of each ad can be found in Appendix 8.4. References to specific ads are denoted by the advertised brand name and a number corresponding to the ad in the stimulus table, for example, 'Cadbury, The Originals^{2'} refers to the Cadbury's ad listed as number 2 in Appendix 8.4.⁶

2.6. Post-task

As part of the qualitative phase, all focus group participants were asked to complete a short 15-minute online task following the group session⁷. The post-task was designed to ensure we captured:

- any subsequent thoughts on the depiction of older people in advertising
- changes of opinion since they participated in the group session
- thoughts or opinions not shared in the group session due to time constraints or discomfort with sharing in a public setting
- any additional thoughts on the intersection of age and other identity factors, such as race/ethnicity, gender or ability

2.7. Focus group discussion structure

The focus group discussions were designed to gain insight into participants' views toward how older people are depicted in advertising, and how participants respond to examples of a variety of depictions.

Being qualitative in nature, the sessions were somewhat flexible, allowing the conversation to be responsive to the attitudes and interests of the group. However, a consistent central flow was adopted.

- After introductions, the groups began with a brief exploration of attitudes towards advertising in general. This included understanding if they felt personally *represented* in ads and to what degree such inclusion mattered to them
- Much of the group discussion time thereafter was spent watching and responding to a range of
 different ads featuring varying depictions of older people. Discussions allowed for general and top
 of mind responses to the ad content, with initial light probing on the character portrayals,
 strapline/message of the ad and overall 'story' of the ad
- This was followed by more direct probes to explore participant attitudes towards the depictions of older people, including whether portrayals felt authentic or stereotypical and negative/positive; as

⁶ Titles have been assigned to each ad example to help identify and distinguish between them (e.g. The Originals). The titles of each ad are derived from the ad content and/or publicised labelling of the ad, rather than the official campaign name.

⁷ The post-task was conducted primarily via STRAT7 Jigsaw's survey-based Whycatcher platform. However, participants were allowed to opt into an email or postal survey, to allow for any participants who had low digital confidence to take part.



well as what impact those portrayals might have on how older people see themselves and how others see or act toward older people

- The discussion then focused more broadly on how older people are portrayed in ads in general (not just those shown in the group), and whether or not participants felt such advertising had the potential to cause 'offence' or 'harm' when it came to those portrayals
- The sessions finished with participants collaboratively discussing the role the ASA should and could play in regulating depictions of age and any specific changes they would like to see

As part of the discussions, participants were presented with the definitions:

Seriously offensive – any advertising that you would consider to be **upsetting**, **hurtful or insulting** to yourself or others.

Harmful advertising – any advertising that you would consider is capable of causing **social, moral, mental or physical** harm.

2.8. Quantitative survey structure

The quantitative survey was split into four sections.

The first section focused on how different groups of people are portrayed in advertising, with questions designed to explore:

- the level of impact that different spaces, including film, advertising, personal interactions and
 government policies have in influencing how people see each other and themselves. Together
 with how much of an impact they have in shaping the individual's and society's perceptions of
 people in older age groups
- general attitudes towards how people in different groups are portrayed in advertising and whether those portrayals are accurate, positive or negatively stereotyped
- whether older people are over or underrepresented in advertising
- perceptions of offence or harm relating to how ads portray and feature people in older age groups (55+); whether any examples can be recalled; and attitudes towards different themes in the depictions of older people in ads that could potentially cause offence or harm

Whenever we asked respondents about potential areas of offence or harm, we used the following definitions for clarity and to ensure that questions were being interpreted and responded to in a consistent way.

"When we talk about offence, we mean things that might be upsetting, hurtful or insulting."

"When we talk about harm, we mean things that could cause **social, moral, mental or physical** damage."

Section 2 of the questionnaire took the form of a creative evaluation of four different ads. The ads chosen were based on the findings from the qualitative phase and the ads that were most polarising and/or provoked the least clarity in views as to whether they could cause harm/offence. Three were TV/Video-on-demand ads and one was print. These were:

- Maltesers, 'Look on the Light Side'²³
- Land Rover, 'Defender Ryuichi Nagayama'¹⁷



- Strathmore Foods, 'When Life Takes the Ping!'14
- J D Williams, 'Feeling more girlfriend than grandma'9

Respondents were shown a maximum of two of the ads and asked questions to explore:

- how much they liked the ads, and how well they felt it portrayed people in an older age group and why
- how likely they felt the advert would be to cause offence or harm to people in older age groups and what elements of the ad could cause this offence or harm

See Appendix 8.2 for results of ad testing.

Section 3 explored age-related attitudes:

• agreement with a number of statements, such as, how comfortable they feel in their own skin and whether they would like to see more people of their age in ads

The final section contained 24 standard demographic questions.



3. Context

The targeting of 'end-of-life' products towards older people and the omission of older people in advertising more generally were more likely to be raised spontaneously as issues than particular depictions of older people in ads. However, there is still a sense that portrayals of older people in ads do not fully reflect the more positive reality of 'modern day' ageing, which for many comes with greater freedoms and wisdom as well as continued contributions to society.

3.1. Defining 'older people'

There is no clear or obvious universal threshold to determine when a person becomes old or older. Within culture, policy and personal experience lies a broad spectrum in which many or even most people can be considered to pass into a category of old or older. Culture and increasing good health constantly blur any such definitions. This research does not set out to find or create a universal threshold, nor was it likely to succeed in such a task. However, the ability to conduct such a project demanded some definitions and parameters, based around consensual perspectives.

For the purposes of this research, the ASA and Jigsaw defined 'older person' as anyone at or above the age of 55 (55+). That definition was informed by an initial phase of desk research which considered studies and reports in this area, including those conducted by charities representing the interests of older people. Importantly, the focus of the research is the depiction of 'older' people – our definition is not intended to suggest that being aged 55 or above is 'old'.

Both the ASA and Jigsaw acknowledge that this group represents a broad spectrum of experiences, physical abilities, mental attitudes towards their own age and attitudes towards depictions of ageing in advertising. Throughout this research, we have taken great care to understand and highlight any relevant differences within this group, particularly within the subgroups of 55–64, 65–74 and 75+.

In the qualitative research, many of those aged 55–74 did not personally see themselves as an older person, whilst those aged 75+ *were* more likely to see themselves as an older person. Nevertheless, all those aged 55+ could at least speak to their own experiences of ageing and how societal perceptions of older people could or do impact their own lives.



I think age is just a number. If you're better than mentally fit and if you're blessed with health, age is just a number.

Male, 65-74, C2DE



Although we may look older, none of us feel older. It's only when you catch sight of yourself in the mirror in the supermarket that you realise you look any older.

Female, 75+, C2DE





There's a quotation that sticks in my mind. It reads 'age is a matter of the mind. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter'.

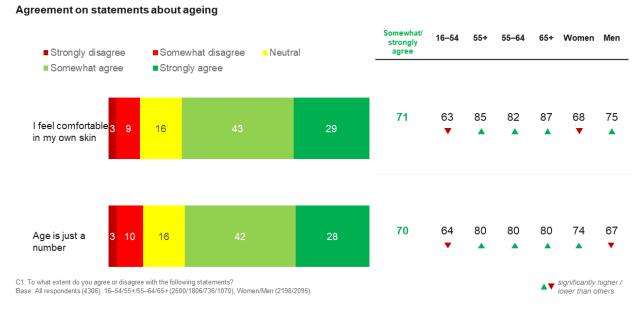
Male, 75+, ABC1

3.2. Older people's experience of ageing

Overall, older people report feeling relatively positive about their age.

In the quantitative research, older people are more likely to report 'feeling comfortable in their own skin', with 85% of those aged 55+ agreeing with this statement versus 63% of those aged under 55. Similarly, those aged 55+ were also much more likely to agree that 'age is just a number' (80% vs 64% for the under 55s). The full breakdown is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Percentage of respondents agreeing/disagreeing to statements about ageing



This sentiment was mirrored in the qualitative research, particularly amongst those in the 55+ cohort, who felt that the experience of ageing today looks and feels very different from how previous generations have experienced it. Several participants pointed toward their own parents or grandparents, commenting how their older relatives *seemed* far older at similar ages to their own – particularly in the decades between 1950 and 1970.

When shown ads that portrayed older people as frail, inactive and isolated, participants seemed to feel those representations would have been more accurate when depicting their *own* grandparents, but less so themselves today.

Several participants in the focus groups pointed out the physical differences between themselves and their older relatives. For example, saying older people are generally living longer and healthier lives, with medical advancements allowing many people to stay physically active later in life. This also translated into how they dress and present themselves, with several participants aged 55+ feeling



more able to 'dress younger' compared to their parents' or grandparents' generations whom they saw as 'always in a suit and tie'.

Some participants spoke about going skiing, horse-riding, cold-water swimming and staying out late socialising with younger generations. This physical wellbeing has translated into a more youthful state of mind, with many reporting feeling like '60 is the new 50'.



We might appear older, but I think most people are still pretty young at heart. We've got quite a lot to offer.

Female, 75+, C2DE



I belong to a swimming group called the Blue Tits, and we go out to swim in the sea all year round!

Female, 65-74, ABC1



There's a lot of older people who are very active and fit, often living a life that the younger ones do as well.

Female, 65-74, ABC1



I think society in general allows you to be younger. If I think of my dad at my age, he wore a shirt and tie his whole life. He was a smart guy, but I'll still go out in trainers and I'm not saying I am the trendiest person on the planet, but I think it's a lot more acceptable to dress younger.

Male, 55-64, ABC1

More people are also deciding to continue working later in life, full or part time, for reasons relating to finances, ease of remote working, and the sense of purpose they derive. For some, retirement has become a phased process of reduced working days, a shifting to less demanding roles, or even a career change. It has become a time of change but not necessarily retirement per se.



I am 65. Next year on my birthday, I will be 66. I'm still working. I'm the head of a technology department.

Male, 65-74, C2DE



I used to be a civil servant. Now I volunteer at the local hospital where I train and recruit staff for the Royal Voluntary Service.

Male, 75+, ABC1



Many feel they are contributing members of their communities for much longer. This includes in their professional lives as colleagues and mentors, and in their family lives as active grandparents or playing volunteer and support roles in the community.

Growing older is often considered a permission to reject conformity and embrace personal individuality. For that reason, depictions that box the ageing experience into one-dimensional and potentially outdated stereotypes can feel particularly inaccurate.



Some people will be old in spirit while they're still young. And others will be young in spirit when they're old.

Female, 75+, C2DE



We've done a lot of living. We've got a lot of experience, but we've also got a lot of living to do going forward. We have influence still.

Male, 75+, ABC1



I am nearly 71. I do all the washing and ironing for my husband and for my daughters and granddaughters. One is a policewoman and the other a young mother. They come over once a week and I make a roast beef dinner, do their washing, make sure they have tea and so on. I do a heck of a lot for my family, but all these ads only focus on young mothers. A lot of the time, it's the grandmothers doing the background work.

Female, 65-74, ABC1

3.3. The influence of advertising vs other spaces

As shown in Figure 2, a majority acknowledged that advertising could play a role in determining how people see themselves. However, it was considered to play a relatively smaller role when compared with other factors such as social media, television and news.

The survey found that 18% of those aged 16+ think advertising has a *high* impact on how people and others see themselves, compared with 53% thinking that social media had a high impact, and 30% thinking television had a high impact. There were also notable differences in the perceived impacts of different factors by age and gender. Younger people (aged <55) in comparison to those aged 55+, and women in comparison to men, were more likely to think that advertising and social media have an impact, while those aged 55+ are more likely to think the news/press has an impact.

Impact of different influences on how people see others and themselves



significantly higher /

Figure 2: Impact of different influences on how people see others and themselves

% Mod/High 16-54 55+ 55-64 65+ Women Men No impact ■ Low impact ■ Moderate impact ■ High impact Impact Social media 85 87 85 78 87 82 53 81 Television 30 80 79 83 86 80 83 77 **▼** News / Press 28 75 74 77 79 76 77 73 Personal 23 66 72 58 62 54 66 66 Advertisina 18 65 67 62 66 60 70 Government 34 42 16 58 59 57 56 58 58 59 policies 33 65 63 Film 56 57 A1. How much impact do you think the following have in influencing how people see each other and how they see themselves? Base: All respondents (4306). 16–54/55+/55–64/65+ (2500/1806/736/1070), Women/Men (2198/2095)

In the qualitative research, advertising was generally seen to reflect broader cultural norms and societal beliefs, but not necessarily determine them. There was a sense that ads in general tend to 'move with the times.' For example, it was felt that representation of a range of demographics (e.g. gender, race, sexuality) and appearances (e.g. body types) has improved in recent years in line with broader societal trends. This was raised as a particularly positive shift in the focus groups with 16-25year-olds.



It kind of makes me think back to when things like fashion weren't as inclusive. I think Victoria's Secret used to not be inclusive at all, but a few years ago they started to use plus sized models. Now you see this sort of representation across ads and media.

Mix gender, 16-25, Mix SEG



I have seen more representation even in things like JD ads. They show people with a huge range of disabilities, even more so than race at the moment.

Mix gender, 16-25, Mix SEG

There was also an acknowledgement in the focus groups that ads are a means of creative expression, designed to capture attention quickly, and often, ultimately to sell a product or service. Therefore, compared with longer forms of media, some of which were felt to have an educative and/or factual role (e.g. TV, news and press), ads were felt to be more likely to have greater freedom to trade in shorthand portrayals which, by definition, lack nuance, layers and a fully formed backstory.





Can we expect the advertising business, with its clear focus on making a profit, can we expect it to give an accurate comment on society and the various groups within that society? And I think that's a false expectation.

Male, 75+, C2DE



I think if you did an advert based on a middle-class person living a normal average life, it would be not memorable at all. I think part of advertising is to dangle that carrot that sort of says your life could be better if you had this or experienced this.

Male, 55-64, ABC1

3.4. Targeting and omission

When the topic of age in relation to advertising was initially brought up in the focus groups with those aged 55+, the two topics most frequently and spontaneously mentioned were:

- concerns about older people being inundated with targeted advertising for certain end-of-life products (such as funeral or cremation services), and
- broad omission of older people from ads for more general products

Although those conversations did not expressly deal with the issue of how older people were depicted in advertising, they did represent the most salient concerns of those aged 55+.

While those topics were not the primary focus of the research, they should not be considered entirely separate to the portrayal of older people in ads because targeting and omission may work together to compound the sense of narrow depictions of older people in ads.

3.4.1. Targeting

In the focus groups, participants generally acknowledged the commercial reasons behind the use of targeting in advertising. There was an appreciation for why different demographics might be targeted with certain products to align to their life stage and needs. Some (particularly those aged 16–44) welcomed the approach as it ensured ads felt relevant and valuable.

For respondents aged 65+, targeting of ads had clearer drawbacks because of a change in the types of products that were being advertised to them. In particular, those aged 65+ felt overwhelmed by the number of ads for end-of-life products they felt were targeted at them. This includes products such as:

- funeral and cremation service
- retirement /care homes
- life insurance





They are always advertising about cremation. Oh, my goodness. It is always about funerals.

Female, 75+, C2DE



It's always the same sort of ads. They are all about funerals and care homes.

Male, 65-74, C2DE

Some of those aged 65+ in the qualitative research felt this targeting implied a societal view of older people as 'past their time' and 'sitting around planning the end of their lives', both of which did not align with their lived reality.

There was also a concern amongst those aged 65+ that the volume of end-of-life ads with *depressing* tones could be harmful to certain groups of older people – for example, those who lived alone or with long-term health conditions. They served as a constant reminder of what many are trying to avoid thinking about.



It does worry me that we see a lot of these [funeral service ads]. Every time I go on the Internet, there's always something that comes up and it's like you don't want to be reminded about it, do you?

Male, 55-64, ABC1



You have to think about older people living on their own. They are watching TV and that's all they see. All these things about funerals. That seems like the biggest advertisement for older people. That's all I see now.

Female, 75+, C2DE

3.4.2. Omission

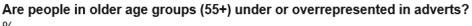
Qualitatively and quantitatively, poor representation and inclusion of older people in advertising was considered an issue – particularly so for those aged 55+.

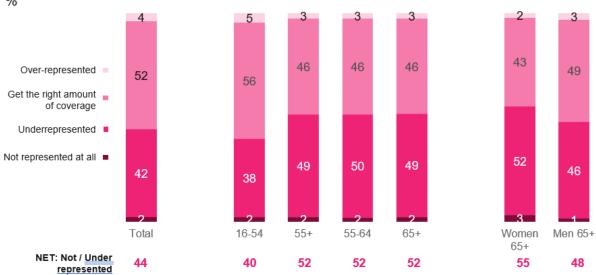
When it comes to the representation of older people in ads, 42% of the UK public feel older age groups (55+) are underrepresented in ads (see Figure 3).

- Those aged 55+ are more likely to think that older people are underrepresented in adverts compared to younger people.
- Two in five (40%) of those aged 16–54 think that people in older age groups are underrepresented or not represented at all. This rises to 52% of those age 55+ and 55% of women over-65.



Figure 3: Views toward representation of older age groups (55+) in ads





A4. Do you think people in older age groups (55+) are under or overrepresented in adverts?

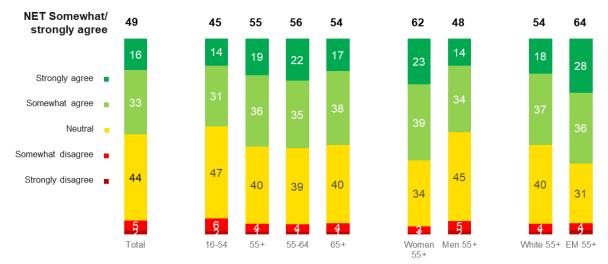
Base: All respondents (4306). 16–54/55+/55–64/65+ (2500/1806/736/1070), Women 65+ (535), Men 65+ (535)

Around half (49%) of people in the UK agree that they would like to see more people of their own age in adverts for a wide range of different products (Figure 4). This is 10 percentage points higher for those aged 55+ (55%) compared with those 16–54 (45%).

It is notable that certain groups, such as older women (aged 55+) and older members of ethnic minority groups (denoted as EM 55+ in Figure 4) are much more likely to want to see people of their own age in adverts than the general population (62% and 64% respectively). See Figure 4 for a full breakdown.

Figure 4: Views toward wanting to see better representation of ones' age in a range of ads

I'd like to see more people of my age in adverts for a wide range of different products



C1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? I'd like to see more people of my age in adverts for a wide range of different products' Base: All respondents (4306). 16–54/55+/55–64/65+ (2500/1806/736/1070), Women 55+ /Men 55+ (893/912), White 55+ (1649), EM 55+ (154)



The qualitative research revealed a sense that older people are only represented in certain categories of advertising. This was felt across all age groups.

For participants aged 16–44, the reference point for older people in advertising was charity ads. There was a sense that beyond this, older people were not well represented. It was felt that the focus on representation of older people in charity ads, which felt 'sad' in their tone, gives the impression that all older people are 'frail', 'lonely' and 'unwell'.



Whenever I think of older people in ads, I think of an old person in charity ads when they are wanting donations. It's never older people with hobbies or things to do.

Mix gender, 26-44, Mix SEG

In the focus groups, participants over 55 years old, particularly women, spontaneously mentioned feeling underrepresented in ads. For some, this triggered and reinforced a feeling that women were generally considered *invisible* or *irrelevant* in society – a feeling that felt exacerbated as women aged. This issue generated considerable anger in the female groups.

In particular, they felt as though ads that might traditionally include women such as beauty and fashion ads, rarely if ever included depictions of older women. Most perceived fashion and beauty ads to prioritise young models or older celebrities rather than real, older people.

That was felt to reinforce a societal perception of older women as not aspirational or 'desirable' enough to be featured. It also has the potential to limit the products older women felt they are permitted to wear or use, based on their age.



Perfume advertising always seems to feature skinny 20-year-old models. Why can't they just show something normal? It makes you feel invisible.

Female, 65-74, C2DE



You never see older women in ads. It's always slim, young and glamorous people. I do seriously think they believe that life ends when your pension starts. We are not represented other than in death or cremation ads.

Female, 75+, ABC1

Omission of older people more generally (both men and women) from ads for 'everyday' products was also referenced in the qualitative research, but often with less hostility. The examples given included the perceived lack of older people in technology ads, or even ads for washing up liquid. Not only could this omission reinforce stereotypes of older people as not interested or capable of using certain products, such as modern technology, but it also felt as though businesses were missing out on a significant market with substantial spending power.





Do the advertisers not realise that they are actually missing out on a group of people who have the spending power?

Female, 75+, ABC1



We also have an element of tech savviness. I look things up on social media, I keep in touch with my friends via WhatsApp, I follow people on Instagram. I would like to be included in some of these conversations about technology and I don't find that I am. Whenever I watch a tech ad, like the Apple Watch ad that is out at the moment, it shows lovely *young* women swimming in the sea.

Female, 65-74, ABC1



In the soap or washing powder ads, they are always showing young women with their babies or young children. They never show older people using these products or doing the washing or anything like that.

Female, 65-74, ABC1



Attitudes to depictions of older people in ads

Advertising is felt to have some influence on perceptions of older people, but less so than other influences, such as personal interactions, or depictions in the news and on television. There was a feeling however that older people are negatively stereotyped in ads, and generally the older one gets, the more likely they are to feel that this is the case.

4.1. Overall attitudes towards depictions of older people in ads

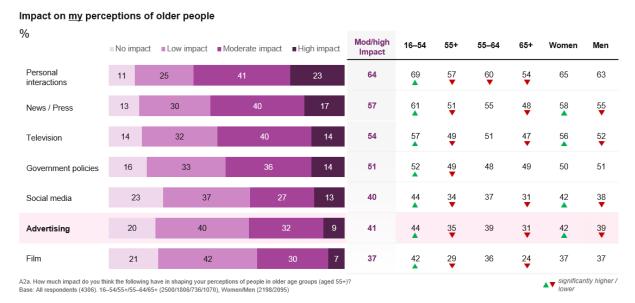
Both qualitatively and quantitatively, there was acknowledgement that advertising can play a role in impacting societal perceptions of older people.

However, advertising was not seen as a significant attitudinal driver in this regard. The qualitative research showed that advertising is not taken as seriously as other influences, given its predominantly commercial purpose, and is usually 'taken with a pinch of salt', sometimes reflecting and reinforcing attitudes, but not determining them.

As Figure 5 shows, personal interactions, the news/press, and television, were all felt to have more of an impact on people's personal views of older people compared to advertising.

Younger people (aged 16–54) are more likely to think that their perceptions of older people could be impacted by different types of influences, compared to older people themselves (age 55+). This is true for all types of potential influence, including for advertising.

Figure 5: Impact of ads on personal perceptions of older people



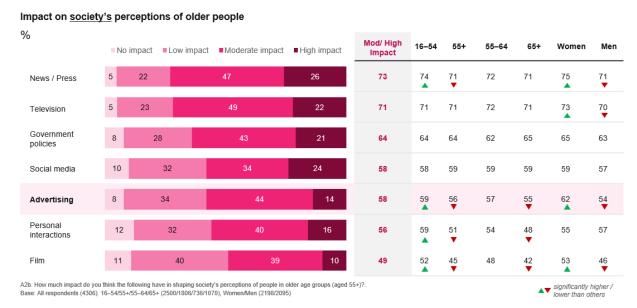


When looking at the potential to impact societal perceptions of older people, the influence of ads is more pronounced (Figure 6).

A majority (58%) of adults believe that advertising has a moderate or high impact on society's perceptions of older people.

This is higher than those who feel it has an impact on personal perceptions but is some way behind the news/press (73%), television (71%), Government policies (64%). However, it is the same as social media (although more people thought social media could have a *high impact* compared to advertising). Compared with the impact on *personal* views (Figure 5), all drivers, except for personal interactions, were deemed to have a greater influence on *societal* views.

Figure 6: Impact of ads on societal perceptions of older people



Participants in the qualitative research felt ads played a role in reinforcing how people see (and potentially act towards) ageing and older people both at an individual and societal level. Participants in the focus groups felt this was driven by two elements.

- The ubiquity of ads in everyday life. Repeated exposure to certain depictions could perpetuate
 certain perceptions of older people over time, including an older persons' views towards oneself
 and one's own confidence.
- The historic politicisation of depictions of certain demographics, particularly women.
 Depictions of women combined with depictions of age can raise specific concerns about the unequal standards placed on women vs men.

There was a general sense in the qualitative research, especially amongst those aged 65+, that depictions in ads have not yet caught up with modern day ageing (discussed in section 3.2). Depictions rarely felt relatable or authentic.

Many across the age groups, but especially those aged 65+ in the focus groups, felt the ad industry was 'out of touch' with the reality of ageing, presenting older people in extremes. Whilst participants acknowledged that the extremes could be representative of the lives of *some* older people, these portrayals were not considered accurate reflections of the lives of *most* older people.

Respondents mentioned ads depicting extremes such as older people being shown as either:



- socially excluded (not mixing with or contributing to family life, local communities or society), or socialising but only with other older people and/or doing activities stereotypically associated with older people (e.g. playing boules, knitting)
- particularly frail and physically inactive (e.g. in a wheelchair or using a mobility scooter), or very active, taking part in extreme activities (e.g. skiing or skateboarding)
- in severe financial hardship (e.g. living in poverty, struggling to pay for heating/hot water), or extremely wealthy (e.g. going on expensive holidays, cruises and/or living in luxurious retirement villages)
- for women specifically: frumpy and unfashionable (e.g. in stereotypical portrayals of older women) or airbrushed and 'youthful' looking (e.g. in beauty or fashion ads)



I think when you're young, you think an older person just sits around, has got white hair, goes to the shop and plays bingo. And then as you get older and get to that age, you realise it's not true.

Female, 65-74, ABC1



It feels like ads are exaggerating sometimes. There are ads showing older people who are really rich. It's as if they are showing what we should be aiming for. Why can't they just show the mass market rather than just rich, elderly people?

Male, 65-74, C2DE



[Ads portray older people as if] Life's over for them. Just stick them in a room and forget about them. Annoying and clueless.

Female, 75+, C2DE



The adverts that include elderly men tend to portray them as doddery, old grandfathers; sort of incapable. I don't believe that fully reflects the 60- and 70-year-olds today. It might have done a generation ago, but I think 60- and 70-year-olds are a lot more active than people were in the past.

Male, 65-74, C2DE



I mean, not every old person is extremely poor. Lots of older people have spent their life building up reserves but these ads make out that all older people are poor.

Female, 55-64, C2DE



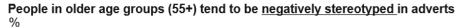
4.2. Demographic differences in overall attitudes towards depictions of older people in ads

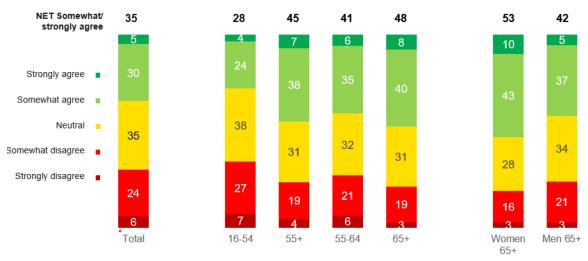
Through the robust sampling used in the design of both stages of the research, the study sought to explore demographic differences in overall attitudes towards the depiction of older people in ads.

Qualitatively and quantitatively, age came out as the overarching influence on how people feel about how older people are portrayed in ads. Similarly, when age intersected with gender, there were clear overarching differences in views. Older age groups in general, and older women in particular, are more likely to think that older people are not portrayed accurately and/or are underrepresented in ads⁸.

Figure 7 shows that just over a third (35%) of adults in the UK agreed that older people tend to be negatively stereotyped in ads. This rises to almost half (48%) of those aged 65+. It is also notable that women aged over 65 (53%) are more likely to agree that older people tend to be negatively stereotyped in ads than men aged over 65 (42%).

Figure 7: Views toward stereotyping of older people in ads





A3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about how people are portrayed in advertising? People in older age groups (55+) tend to be negatively stereotyped in adverts Base: All respondents (4306). 16–54/55+/55–64/65+ (2500/1806/736/1070), Women 65+ (535), Men 65+ (535)

Interestingly, a higher proportion of adults in the UK agree that older people tend to be negatively stereotyped in advertising compared to the portrayal of other groups in society (Figure 8).

The survey found that people were more likely to agree that older people tend to be negatively stereotyped (35%) than agreed that women tend to be negatively stereotyped (29%), that men tend to be negatively stereotyped (24%) or that ethnic minorities tend to be negatively stereotyped (21%).

The older one is, the more likely they are to agree that older people tend to be negatively stereotyped (41% of 55–64s, rising to 48% of 65+). This trend is mirrored across the other demographic categories, with:

• women more likely to feel women tend to be negatively stereotyped (35% vs 29% overall)

⁸ Survey respondents were presented with the following definitions: When we say 'portrayed', we mean the way in which people are shown. When we say 'represented' we are talking about how much/how often people are shown.



- those who identify as being from an ethnic minority more likely to feel that ethnic minorities tend to be negatively stereotyped (39% vs 21% overall)
- men more likely to feel men tend to be negatively stereotyped (32% vs 24% overall)

Figure 8: Views toward various statements about how people are portrayed in ads

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about how people are portrayed in advertising?



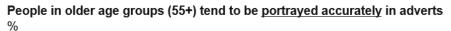
A3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about how people are portrayed in advertising? [group] tend to be negatively stereotyped in adverts. Base: All respondents (4306). 16–54/55+/55–64/65+ (2500/1806/736/1070). Ethnic minority/White (604/3663). Women/Men (2198/2095)

When considering whether portrayals of older people feel accurate in ads, almost half (47%) are neutral, whilst just under a quarter (24%) agree and 30% disagree (Figure 9).

Older age groups (55+) are more likely to *disagree*; just under a quarter (24%) of those aged 16–54 disagree with the statement, compared with 41% amongst the 65+ age group. This rises further for women over 65, with 44% disagreeing that older people are portrayed accurately in ads.



Figure 9: Accuracy of portrayal of older age groups (55+) in ads





A3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about how people are portrayed in advertising? People in older age groups (55+) tend to be portrayed accurately in adverts Base: All respondents (4306). 16–54/55+/55–64/65+ (2500/1806/736/1070), Women 65+ (535), EM 55+ (154)

Beyond the overarching differences by age, and by age intersected with gender, there were other instances where differences were found across other demographics in the survey, rather than at an overarching or consistent level. These differences are highlighted throughout the report when relevant.

The qualitative research found similar differences by age and where age intersected with gender. However, there were also some interesting differences and similarities to note based on:

- age intersecting with social grade older focus group participants from lower socioeconomic
 groups (C2DE) were more sensitive to and offended by ads portraying positive stereotypes with a
 focus on wealth. For example, always showing older people as wealthy and able to afford luxury
 holidays or retirement homes. For some, those portrayals implied that meaningful old age was
 dependant on wealth
- age intersecting with disability or chronic illness older focus group participants with a
 disability or chronic illness could feel similarly alienated where ads portrayed older people as
 'extremely' active or athletic. There was an overall sense that older, disabled people were
 generally less represented
- ethnicity the ethnicity of respondents did not have a significant impact on views qualitatively.
 There was a sense that:
 - those from an ethnic minority and over 55+ found age unifying over and above ethnicity
 - under-55s felt slightly more sensitive to the need for ads to reflect diverse physical appearances, but that in general, representation had improved or was moving in the right direction





I've got osteoarthritis in both knees. In ads, everybody's always fit, young and healthy, and I just don't fit into that.

Female, 55-64, C2DE



For me [ads showing older people as wealthy] are a bit of a fantasy world. I can't imagine people in the UK actually having that sort of life.

Male, 65-74, C2DE



I don't really see people with my hair texture [in beauty ads]. I find that with hair dye, I've obviously got curly Afro hair, but whenever they advertise hair dye products, it's never really my type of hair.

Mix gender, 16-25, Mix SEG



I'd like to see more representation of Pakistani women because I feel like certain products just look different to use compared to other ethnicities, so it would just be quite nice to see.

Mix gender, 16-25, Mix SEG



5. Assessing harm and offence

Given the subjective, and sometimes polarising nature of responses, reaching a consensus on the potential for ads to cause harm or offence can be challenging. However, there are certain themes that emerge as more likely to have the potential to cause harm (e.g. showing older people as purposeless) or cause offence (e.g. using humour at the expense of older people). This demonstrates that respondents were able to distinguish between the perceived impact of particular depictions. Tone also plays an important role in determining views towards depictions of older people.

5.1. Potential impacts of depictions of older people in ads

5.1.1. How harm and offence were assessed

The issues of ads having potential to cause harm and offence were explored both qualitatively and quantitatively.

In the qualitative research (which came before the quantitative), we used a wide range of ad stimuli, featuring a variety of product categories, brands, depictions and tones.

• This was designed to explore how people naturally spoke about the portrayals and provided depth to our understanding by enabling references to specific elements across a variety of ads

In the quantitative survey, we started by asking participants for their views on whether different ways older people may be depicted in ads had the potential to cause harm, offence or irritation, or was something they felt would have no impact. Fifteen themes were tested in total.

- We then tested four ads which were identified as the most polarising in the qualitative research, to gain an overarching understanding of public views toward the portrayals of older people in these ads (see Appendix 8.2. for more detail)
- The quantitative research was designed to allow us to look at any differences emerging at an overall level and across groups, including across the full spectrum of ages

It is important to note that advertising evokes subjective responses and what is offensive to some, may simply be irritating to others. We have tried to signpost where such inconsistencies emerged but there are considerable overlaps between these categories as will become clear when looking at the quantitative and qualitative findings below.

5.1.2. Overall quantitative findings on harm and offence

The survey results highlighted variations in views on whether a particular depiction had the potential to cause harm, cause offence, be seen as irritating or have no effect, depending on the *type* of depiction looked at (Figure 10). At least a quarter of respondents felt each of the depictions had the potential to cause offence – rising to almost half of respondents in a number of cases. There was a wider range of views when considering the potential for a particular depiction to cause harm. The number of participants who considered that a depiction could cause harm ranged from 8% (being shown as *grumpy*) to 32% (showing older people as having *no purpose in life*). This demonstrates that respondents were able to distinguish between the perceived impact of particular depictions.



For certain types of portrayal, such as *only mixing with older people and not with those from younger age groups*, *doing unrealistic things* and being portrayed as *always being rich or wealthy*, the impacts were felt to be low, with the majority feeling that these were just irritating or having no effect (Figure 10).

The survey found that for close to half of UK adults, the following depictions had most potential to cause offence:

- using humour at the expense of older people (49%)
- showing older people as always poor or impoverished (48%)
- showing older people as frail or physically weak (47%)
- showing older people as not understanding or being able to use technology (47%)
- others being dismissive of older people (46%)
- older people as forgetful (46%)

For around half of respondents aged 55 and over the following types of depiction had the most potential to cause offence (Figure 11):

- showing older people as always poor or impoverished (51%)
- using humour at the expense of older people (50%)
- others being dismissive of older people (50%)

The survey found that the portrayals considered to have the highest potential to cause harm, were (Figure 10):

- those that showed older people as having no purpose in life (32%)
- older people as being isolated or lonely (27%)
- showing ageing as something to be fought against (22%)
- others being dismissive of older people (22%)
- showing older people as powerless (22%)

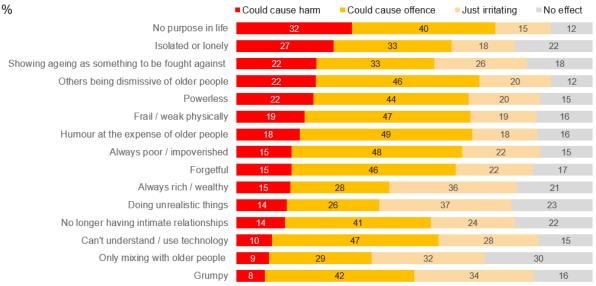
These figures remain broadly similar when looking at views of respondents aged 55+ (Figure 11) with the same proportions feeling that showing older people as having *no purpose in life* and being *isolated or lonely* could be harmful. However, older age groups when compared to the younger age groups felt that portrayals of *no longer having intimate relationships* or *showing ageing as something to be fought* were potentially less harmful.

Compared to younger age groups, those aged 55 or over were in all cases less likely to say depictions had 'no effect', but also more likely to say that the depiction was 'just irritating'.



Figure 10: Overall proportion feeling a variety of depictions could cause irritation, harm or offence, or have no effect

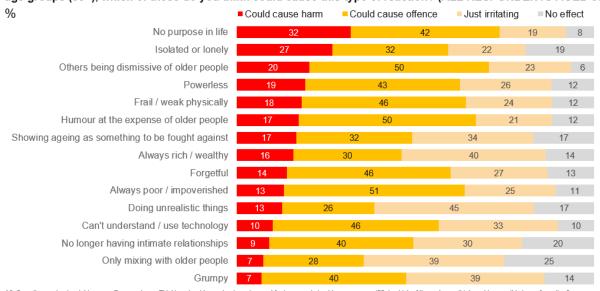
Sometimes adverts might cause offence or harm. Thinking about how adverts portray and feature people in older age groups (55+), which of these do you think could cause this type of reaction?



A6. Sometimes adverts might cause offence or harm. Thinking about how adverts portray and feature people in older age groups (55+), which of these do you think could cause this type of reaction? Base: All respondents (4306).

Figure 11: Proportion of respondents aged 55+ who feel a variety of depictions could cause irritation, harm or offence, or have no effect

Sometimes adverts might cause offence or harm. Thinking about how adverts portray and feature people in older age groups (55+), which of these do you think could cause this type of reaction? (ALL RESPONDENTS AGED 55+)



A6. Sometimes adverts might cause offence or harm. Thinking about how adverts portray and feature people in older age groups (55+), which of these do you think could cause this type of reaction? Base: All respondents age 55+(1806).

5.1.3. Overall qualitative findings on harm and offence

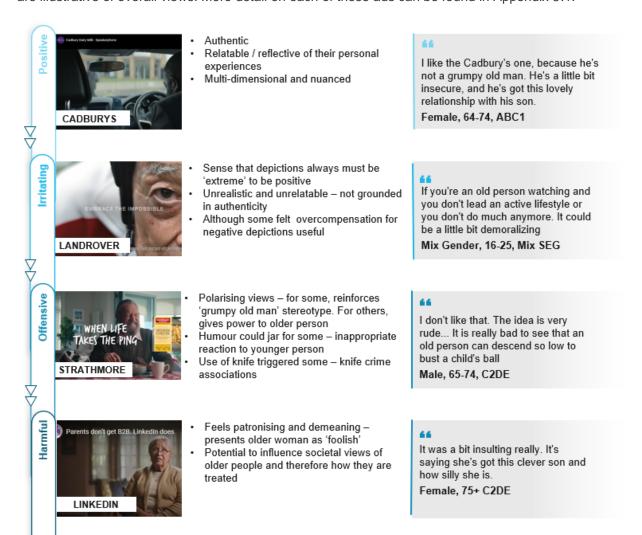
As mentioned at the start of this section, in the qualitative research, participants' views were grounded in specific advertising examples. The examples shown included a range of depictions including those that might be considered more stereotypical and negative, as well as those that might be seen as more positive (a full list of ads shown can be found in Appendix 8.4).



Having a range of ads enabled respondents to compare depictions and therefore take a view on which felt positive or irritating, as well as whether they had potential to cause offence or harm.

A diverse range of responses was a significant challenge in the qualitative research with views varying widely. The most consistency could be found in views by age group (especially amongst those aged 55+), as well as amongst women. These views are referenced throughout this section.

Given the subjectivity, views toward portrayals of older people in ads fell on a spectrum, rather than having clear-cut lines. The spectrum below is illustrative of changing views toward ads depending on where they fell on the spectrum. These are not the only ads that were felt to fall into each category but are illustrative of overall views. More detail on each of these ads can be found in Appendix 8.1.



The overall themes are explored in greater detail in sections 5.2 to 5.5.

5.2. Positive portrayals

Discussions in the qualitative phase found that ads that felt like they portrayed a positive depiction of older people possessed several common features, including one or more of the following.

• Placed focus on the person, and not their age. This included ads where older people were shown as being part of a wider intergenerational friendship group or family scene and/or doing a wide range of activities and not just activities associated with being older (for example, the



Nescafe, 'Azera Iced Frappé' ad³³ which showed an older woman in one of the frames alongside many other people, but did not focus on her or her age).

This also included ads that were felt to show an authentic, nuanced and layered individual with a focus on them as a human being, not them as an older person. For example, the Cadbury Dairy Milk, 'Speakerphone' ad²⁷, was felt to show a relatable older male who was experiencing a new phase of fatherhood, with his son shown in a more 'caring' or supportive role. Some also appreciated the way the ad addresses the topic of older people still being active members of the workforce, and the challenges and discrimination they might face as part of that.



I like the Cadbury's one, because he's not a grumpy old man. He's a little bit insecure, and he's got this lovely relationship with his son.

Female, 65-74, ABC1



He was portraying a father who has experience and respect. I liked that.

Male, 75+, C2DE

• Focused on the positives and freedoms that many feel come with ageing. This included depictions of older people where they are clearly comfortable in their own skin, confident, and less conforming (for example the Dusk Retail, '#DuskSayin Carlo' ad²⁶).

Some also appreciated depictions of older people showing the perspective or wisdom many feel comes with ageing, counteracting the stereotype of older people as 'foolish' (for example, the Saga, 'Experience is Everything' ad³⁰).



I mean, she [in the Dusk ad] was dressing how she wanted to dress, you know, her living room looked interesting. She had lots of different works of art and things like that that she's collected over a while. And Carlo was just a bit of proof that we can still have fun!

Female, 65-74, ABC1



[In the Dusk ad], she was very comfortable in her own skin and with what she had around her and her choices, wasn't she? She was very much in charge of her own environment and that came across.

Male, 55-64, ABC1

• Actively subverted stereotypes or addressed taboos, without going 'too far' so that it felt 'gimmicky' or lacking in credibility. This included ads with depictions of older people as being active (but not in extreme sports), wearing more 'youthful' clothes such as sparkly dresses (for example, J D Williams, 'Rewriting the narrative for midlife women' ad⁷), wearing a bikini (for example, JD Williams, 'Admit it, this age thing suits you' ad⁸), or using technology confidently. Focus group participants under 55 years of age particularly appreciated this depiction as it felt authentic and had potential to instil confidence in older women.





I love that. I just absolutely love that. I think it's great. It's really positive to see an older woman in a bikini.

Female, 75+, C2DE

5.3. Irritating portrayals

Some ads were perceived to be irritating and frustrating but fell short of potentially causing offence or harm in the eyes of participants – these ads could more easily be 'brushed off'.

The survey found that the portrayals most likely to be considered irritating were ones that depicted older people as:

- doing unrealistic things (37%)
- always rich/wealthy (36%)
- grumpy (34%)
- only mixing with older people (32%)
- can't understand/use technology (28%)⁹

This sentiment was mirrored in the qualitative discussions when looking at specific example ads. Several themes materialised.

• Ads that relied on outdated stereotypes – for example, 'old men are grumpy' or 'older people do not understand technology'. For some people, those depictions felt one-dimensional and unimaginative but did not necessarily have the potential to cause offence or harm.

Whether or not an ad that included those stereotypes felt 'irritating' or offensive often relied on the storytelling. For example, the Amazon Echo, 'Sharing is Caring' 16 ad opened with a stereotypical portrayal of an older man struggling to work his smart speaker. However, by the end of the ad, many felt the older man had regained agency as he had learnt how to play songs and order things using the speaker.



Yeah, I think if like my dad, for example, saw that [Amazon Echo ad], I don't think he'd be too offended, but I think it would just be a bit of an eyeroll situation.

Mix gender, 26-44, Mix SEG

⁹ A6. Sometimes adverts might cause offence or harm. Thinking about how adverts portray and feature people in older age groups (55+), which of these do you think could cause this type of reaction? Base: All Respondents (4,306).





I like the ending, but I felt it really underlined old people as being unable to do things and looking a certain way at the beginning which is a bit annoying more than anything.

Female, 75+, C2DE

Ads that did not reflect authentic lives of older people – for example, where an ad only showed older people mixing or socialising with other older people and doing activities associated with older people (for example, Retirement Villages promotional video⁶), or depictions of older people as lonely, frail or weak. These depictions do not feel aligned to the lived reality of older people who feel they are working for longer and often playing an active role in family or community life.

Whether or not an ad including these types of depictions felt irritating rather than offensive often depended on the relevance of that depiction to the product. Whilst irritating, participants could appreciate ads may need to use these depictions if advertising products targeted specifically at older people (e.g. a retirement home or mobility scooter), or where the brand had a serious or important message to convey (for example, the Age UK, 'Know what to do'¹ ad, which includes depictions of frail or lonely older people as part of a campaign).



If their excitement in a day is having a game of grass bowls, then it's not something I want to sign up to.

Female, 55-64, C2DE

• Ads that felt superficially positive to the extent that it became 'gimmicky' or completely lacking in credibility – for example, where advertisers only depict older people at the 'extreme' positives of the various spectrums such as older people having to be extremely active or having to have ample material wealth to have a meaningful life. Whilst irritating for some, these ads did not feel harmful or offensive to most as they often felt these depictions were well-intentioned, either by trying to subvert a stereotype or address a taboo topic.

The Land Rover, Defender Ryuichi Nagayama¹⁷ ad was an example of where subverting the stereotype can feel *too far* for some people, and some felt the link between the age of the character being portrayed and the product being advertised was tenuous, and therefore gimmicky. There was some frustration that advertisers felt they must show the extreme of a 90-year-old playing rugby to convey their point.



I don't get why they have included an older person in the Land Rover ad. It's just showing a really active older person, and then straight to a car. I struggle to correlate the two.

Mix gender, 16-25, Mix SEG



5.4. Offensive portrayals

Discussions around whether or not a portrayal had the potential to cause offence, was often the most polarising discussion.

Offence feels subjective; where someone draws the line depends on their own individual history, culture, beliefs and experiences. There were several instances in the focus groups where one or two participants felt a portrayal was offensive, but others in the group found it funny or light-hearted. This can make it challenging to categorise types of depictions as conclusively offensive.

Nevertheless, as mentioned in Section 5.1.2, the survey found there were some types of depiction that provoked the most sensitivity with regards to having the potential to cause offence, including ads which:

- use humour at the expense of older people (49%)
- show older people as always poor/impoverished (48%)
- show older people as always frail/weak physically (47%)
- show older people as unable to understand/use technology (47%)
- show others being dismissive of older people (46%)¹⁰

These themes were mirrored in the qualitative research when exploring specific ad examples, including ads that:

were dismissive of older people – especially by a younger person. This felt particularly
offensive where an older person was depicted as being less knowledgeable or capable because
of their age (for example, Volkswagen, 'Electric, the Volkswagen way' ad¹⁵). Not only do these
depictions feel at odds with how many feel knowledge and experience intertwines with age (i.e.
many associate ageing with gaining wisdom and perspective) but can also feel demeaning and
mocking of older people



These ads feel degrading and patronising. They imply that older people lack knowledge and capacity to learn new skills and reinforce the belief that older people contribute less to society.

Female, 65-74, ABC1

 depicted ageing as something to be fought – especially in relation to appearance, and depictions of women in particular. There was a sense (especially amongst women aged 65+) that depictions of older women used in ads for beauty products (especially anti-ageing related) could feel patronising.

These depictions were felt to imply that ageing is always a negative process and that women are not going to look or feel good unless they try to *fight* the process. For example, many felt the JD Williams, 'Feeling more girlfriend than grandma' ad⁹ aimed to show an atypical and positive

¹⁰ A6. Sometimes adverts might cause offence or harm. Thinking about how adverts portray and feature people in older age groups (55+), which of these do you think could cause this type of reaction? Base: All Respondents (4,306).



portrayal of an older woman in bright, colourful and 'trendy' clothes. However, the tagline 'Feeling more girlfriend than grandma' irritated some as it was felt to imply that being a 'grandma' was negative and should be 'fought' rather than 'embraced'. Several women also felt offended that these depictions could be interpreted as telling women what they need to do in order to feel good



It's as though all ads aimed at women are trying to tell you what you should aim for, and you should look like, and how brilliant you should be rather than just making the most of what you've got.

Female, 65-74, ABC1

I think [ads about looking young] are very patronising. It's saying that you should admire to look young when frankly, I embrace my wrinkles and bald head. You know; I'm just me.

Male, 65-74, C2DE

• used humour at the expense of older people – especially if addressing 'taboo' topics. Whilst some found these depictions refreshing and a positive attempt to address taboo topics in a less serious space, others felt it was inappropriate and offensive (for example, the Malteser, 'Look on the Light Side, Companion' ad²³)



I didn't like the language they use there [in the Maltesers ad]. I have no idea what they were implying, and I found it offensive. They could do better. I think it makes older people look like creeps. It's so wrong.

Male, 65-74, C2DE

As well as these areas, tone played an important role in determining whether a depiction in an ad was considered offensive – particularly where a humorous tone was used.

In the views of some, the use of humour can help to make 'light' of the ageing process. Being able to laugh about getting older could feel refreshing and reflective of discussions many older people (especially those aged 65+) have with their peers, day-to-day. Some also appreciated humour as a clever tool for advertisers to push certain societal barriers, subvert stereotypes and/or make overall stereotyping feel more acceptable.

For example, many appreciated the use of humour in the Alternative Planning Company, 'Meet Maureen and Brenda'⁴ ad. While it showed two women who could be seen to be 'stereotypical' older ladies, the tone made light of their age and the topic of funerals. This felt refreshing, particularly when compared to other end-of-life ads which could feel dour and unexciting. Several participants spontaneously referenced Pure Cremation ads as examples of more typical end-of-life advertising due to the brand's use of soft tones and serious approach to the topic.



Comedy would always get me. Every time. Always. You know, you can get away with murder if it's comical.

Female, 75+, C2DE





This is the only funeral ad that I've seen that has a bit of fun in it. They are usually all so morbid.

Male, 55-64. ABC1

However, for others, using humour in depictions of older people specifically can go too far. It can reflect a wider feeling that it is too easy to present older people in a humorous light, and so they would prefer a balance of 'real' depictions, whilst avoiding a comedic vs tragic binary.

Some also found it offensive where humour was used at the expense of the older person being depicted as it can feel 'mocking' or 'derisive', portraying older people as the 'useful idiot' (for example, LinkedIn, 'Parents don't get B2B, LinkedIn Does' ad¹²). These instances can provoke the strongest emotional reactions and could feel highly offensive.



The LinkedIn ad is putting the elderly in a bad light. They should show a bit more respect to the elderly. We're not all clueless, you know.

Male, 65-74, C2DE

5.5. Harmful portrayals

There are some areas where respondents felt a depiction had potential to cause harm. This was primarily where an ad might be able to influence how someone sees themselves, or how society might see and treat older people.

As mentioned in Section 5.1.2, the survey results found that the themes that could cause harm were ones where ads show:

- older people as having no purpose in life (32%)
- older people as isolated or lonely (27%)
- ageing as a thing to be fought (22%)
- others being dismissive of older people (22%)
- older people as powerless (22%)¹¹

These views were mirrored in qualitative discussions when reviewing specific ad examples, such as:

beauty ads that showed ageing as a thing to be fought – especially for women. These
depictions could cause harm, from the perspective of some women, who felt these ads reinforced
unrealistic beauty standards, promoting airbrushed or celebrity depictions as the 'gold standard'
for ageing. Many felt this could put pressure on older women to look a certain way, driving a
narrow definition of beauty as an older person (for example, the L'Oreal, 'Look as young as you
feel' ad¹⁰).

¹¹ A6. Sometimes adverts might cause offence or harm. Thinking about how adverts portray and feature people in older age groups (55+), which of these do you think could cause this type of reaction? Base: All Respondents (4,306).



Women aged 65+ recognised a potential for these ads to cause harm to women more generally (not just older women). Many were in fact, less concerned about potential to cause harm to themselves, given they feel comfortable in their own skin and accepting of the ageing process. However, they recognised potential harm to younger women, especially those going through the menopause who may be experiencing the process of ageing in a more pronounced way.

Showing ageing as a thing to be fought could lead to low self-esteem



I think the L'Oreal ads could maybe be a little bit harmful because I've had friends who've been in tears when going through the menopause because they feel as though they are not themselves anymore. They're going through this huge physical change in their life. I just wish it was a bit more realistic.

Female, 65-74, ABC1



I can imagine some older women seeing beauty ads, and thinking 'the goal for woman is to look 20 years younger'. As if that is what will make you feel happier. This could be quite harmful because it forces an ideal on older women. It's kind of pushing the idea that they should aim to look young.

Mix gender, 16-25, Mix SEG

ads that showed older people as being isolated or lonely – especially for those aged 75+.
 Some felt these depictions were often the bleakest, having the potential to tap into underlying fears about how one might experience later years in life and potentially leading older people to feel hopeless about the future.

Whilst there was appreciation for the importance and seriousness of the messages these ads were trying to convey when these depictions were used in charity advertising, the combination of these depictions and omission of older people from other types of ads was felt to have the potential to cause harm. For a number, it also felt like a misrepresentation of reality



When older people are in the adverts, they're always like sad, older people. They never show the humour or happy side. It's always a sad, lonely person that's cold in the winter.

Mix gender, 16-25, Mix SEG

ads that showed older people as being less knowledgeable (due to their age) – especially if put in direct comparison to a younger person. Most felt these depictions were demeaning, patronising and unfair on older people (for example, the LinkedIn, 'Parents don't get B2B, but LinkedIn does' ad¹²). Some felt they had potential to cause harm to the confidence and self-esteem of older people as it could put older people off trying new or different things through fear of being mocked

Interestingly, 16–24-year-olds were more likely to think the following portrayals could be potentially harmful.

• Showing 'ageing as a thing to be fought' (30% 16–24-year-olds thought this potentially harmful vs 22% on average).



- 'Being portrayed as frail/weak' (24% vs 19%).
- 'No longer having intimate relationships' (20% vs14%)¹².

Whilst we do not have conclusive evidence either way, this difference may be tied to younger audiences being more tuned into the topic of depictions in advertising and the potential impacts they might have on one's self-confidence more broadly, especially given the prevalence of social media (Figure 2 explores the demographic differences when asked about the influence of advertising on how people see themselves). Participants in the qualitative research more readily discussed the need for representation of a range of demographics in ads.

¹² A6. Sometimes adverts might cause offence or harm. Thinking about how adverts portray and feature people in older age groups (55+), which of these do you think could cause this type of reaction? Base: All Respondents (4,306) /16–24 (448)



6. Considerations for best practice when depicting older people in ads

The research found that the two most important features to consider when depicting older people in ads are authenticity and inclusivity. Participants expressed a desire for advertisers to get closer to the reality of older peoples' lives and reflect these in the ads they produce. However, they also appreciate the need for ads to be creative and engaging.

Toward the end of each of the focus group sessions, participants were asked to consider the issue of older age depictions on a more holistic level and consider any changes they would like to see in the depictions of older people in ads.

Respondents were keen for the ad industry to retain a degree of creative freedom. A consensus emerged that providing practical guidelines, which played an educative role, would be most effective and help the industry to understand better today's 'older people'.

On that basis, participants generated a range of advisory content that fell into three buckets. These can be described as **avoid**, **include and consider**:

Advertisers should AVOID reliance on:

Extreme/one-dimensional depictions of older people, who are ONLY:

- frail, weak, incapable
- portrayed as foolish, out of touch, digitally illiterate
- lonely, purposeless, incapable of contributing
- engaging in stereotypical activities (for example, playing bridge, lawn bowling, cruises)
- universally wealthy

Placing older people in situations where they are:

- mocked for reasons related to age (i.e. jokes based on stereotypes)
- portrayed as mixing solely within their own generations

Advertisers should aim to INCLUDE depictions:

- of 'real' older people (i.e. not just celebrities/airbrushed imagery), especially in beauty ads
- that focus on the individual, placing their age in the background
- of older people mixing with younger people/their family, etc.
- that portray a spectrum of experiences and avoid binaries/extremes, including older people with different:
 - levels of physical prowess and ability



- financial and working status
- genders and ethnicities
- tech literacy levels, portrayed naturally not showcased (as if an exception)

Advertisers may want to CONSIDER:

- involving older people in the creative process in some way (formal or informal) ensuring that the experience and reality of modern older age was part of the process
- careful use of 'positive stereotypes' going too far can be counter-productive
- challenge omission indirectly by encouraging greater inclusion of older characters in ads for products they are not often associated with, such as fashion, technology and everyday items (e.g. washing up liquid)
- minimising the impact of 'targeting' in end-of-life ads, by:
 - incorporating a range of storytelling techniques and voice-overs (i.e. not relying on softspoken narrators)
 - avoiding dour or bleak tones
 - avoiding overcrowding the same media (e.g. afternoon TV)



Adverts should include everybody, not just certain age groups. They should not just pick out young people. Older people have got a lot to offer

Female, 75+, C2DE



There should be an equal amount of elderly people who don't know how to work technology, and then older people who are often doing sports and elderly people who are planning their funeral.

Mix gender, 44-55, Mix SEG



7. Conclusions and recommendations

Overall, there is a sense that ageing is changing and that the media, including the ad industry has not yet 'caught up' with portraying older people in an authentic and meaningful way. The older one gets, the more likely they are to agree with this sentiment. While advertising is not considered to have as much of an impact on personal or societal perceptions of older people compared to other areas of influence, it still has a role to play. This is felt more for certain portrayals, which are felt to have greater potential to cause offence (e.g. using humour at the expense of older people) and harm (e.g. showing older people as having no purpose in life).

How older people are depicted in ads has some role to play in shaping personal and societal views

Depictions of older people in advertising is not seen as a top-of-mind concern. Indeed, targeting and the omission of older people in ads are more spontaneously raised as issues by those aged 55+ before addressing specific portrayals or depictions.

When looking at the potential impact of different influences on how people see others and themselves, other media formats were felt to be more influential than advertising. Advertising was felt to have more of an influence on societal perceptions of older people than on personal perceptions of older people, with 58% of the UK public feeling advertising could have a moderate/high impact on society's perceptions of older people. Although, in context, advertising is not considered as influential as news/press (73%), television (71%), Government policies (64%), and is felt to have the same influence as social media (58%).¹³

There is a sense that older people are negatively stereotyped in ads – more so than women, men or ethnic minorities

Just over a third (35%) of the UK population agreed that older people tend to be negatively stereotyped in ads. This rises to almost half (48%) of those aged 65+.14

There is a feeling that the ad industry does not fully understand the lives of older people, feeling portrayals are many years out-of-date, often more accurate of their parents, and that advertisers are too ready to resort to the use of stereotypes.

Overall attitudes to depictions of older people in ads can vary by demographic

There was some variation in responses across the sample.

As a rule, the older someone is, the more likely they are to feel that older people are not portrayed accurately in ads. Just under a quarter (24%) of those aged 16–54 disagree that people in older age

¹³ A1. How much do you think the following have in shaping society's perceptions of people in older age groups (aged 55+)? Base: All Respondents (4,306).

¹⁴ A3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about how people are portrayed in advertising? 'People in older age groups (55+) tend to be negatively stereotyped in adverts' Base: All respondents (4,306), 65+ (1,070)



groups tend to be portrayed accurately in adverts. This compares with 41% amongst the 65+ age group. 15

Age when intersected with gender also has an important influence on views both qualitatively and quantitively. For example, the survey showed that women aged over 65 (53%) are more likely to agree that older people tend to be negatively stereotyped in ads than men aged over 65 (42%). ¹⁶ Likewise, in the focus groups, older women were more likely to express strong disapproval — especially when looking at fashion and beauty, where depictions rarely felt authentic and could have an impact on self-esteem. The portrayal of women seems a more political subject, as it is often seen as reminiscent of discrimination experienced throughout their lives.

Impacts of negative depictions fall on a spectrum

There are certain themes that emerge as more likely to have the potential to cause harm (e.g. showing older people as purposeless) or cause offence (e.g. using humour at the expense of older people) and others that are more likely to be perceived as irritating or having no effect. This demonstrates that respondents were able to distinguish between the perceived impact of particular depictions.

Quantitatively, those depictions that use humour at the expense of older people (49%) or which show older people as always poor or impoverished (48%) have the greatest potential to cause offence.

Qualitatively, offensive portrayals are often seen to present one-dimensional or demeaning picture of older peoples' knowledge/skills, appearance and intimate lives.

Quantitatively, those depictions that show older people as having no purpose in life (32%) or as being isolated or lonely (27%) have the most potential to cause harm. These proportions remain the same for those aged 55+.¹⁷

Qualitatively, depictions that show ageing as a thing to be fought, older people as lonely or isolated and older people as being less knowledgeable (due to their age) are considered most likely to cause harm.

It should be noted that, while there were high degrees of polarisation when discussing these topics, the examples tested in the research can provide important insights for the ad industry into the types of portrayal which are more or less likely to cause offence or harm.

Tone of voice plays a role

Tone could impact the acceptability of a portrayal – and could be polarising.

A comedic tone could make stereotypes feel more acceptable but also *jar* if the joke felt at the expense of the older person.

A sad or tragic tone felt appropriate for some when communicating a serious message but for others these depictions could perpetuate perceptions of older people as lonely/sad/purposeless, irrespective of the good intentions behind the ad.

¹⁵ A3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about how people are portrayed in advertising? 'People in older age groups (55+), tend to be portrayed accurately in ads' Base: All respondents (4,306), 16-54/65+ (2,500/1,070)

A3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about how people are portrayed in advertising?
 People in older age groups (55+) tend to be negatively stereotyped in adverts' Base: Women 65+ (535)/ Men 65+ (535)
 A6. Sometimes adverts might cause offence or harm. Thinking about how adverts portray and feature people in older age groups (55+), which of these do you think could cause this type of reaction? Base: All Respondents (4,306)/ 55+ (1,806)



Authenticity and inclusivity are the two most important factors to consider

The research found that the two most important features to consider when depicting older people in ads are authenticity and inclusivity.

Qualitatively, there was a clear desire for portrayals to reflect *real* lives of older people, whilst appreciating the creativity of ads.

Specifically, participants want advertisers to avoid extreme or one-dimensional depictions of older people, and where *positive stereotypes* are used, advertisers should consider if it goes *too far*.

Overall, participants want to see *real* older people in ads for products they are not often associated with, placing a focus on the individual rather than on their age.



8. Appendices

8.1. Qualitative advertising case studies

8.1.1. Dusk Retail, '#DuskSayin Carlo': Positive Portrayal



Focus is not on the age of the character, but on her personality and flamboyancy, demonstrating an older person who is truly 'comfortable in her own skin'.

The Dusk Retail ad was one of the ads that had the most positive reception in the qualitative research. Every group that saw this ad appreciated its depiction of an older woman and felt it represented how they view the mental process of ageing.

The portrayal felt authentic, layered and relatable. The older lady emulates confidence, showing someone who is genuinely comfortable in her own skin and not afraid to be 'different' or push boundaries – both in style and demeanour.

Participants appreciated the use of humour in this ad. It was not used at the expense of the older person and felt reflective of their own experiences of making light of ageing.



I thought she was great as a character. Really quirky, quite liberated, arty, expressing herself; just not really caring. She just free.

Male, 55-64, ABC1



I love it, she is saying what she wants and doing what she wants. She's growing old slightly disgracefully, which is lovely. I've got quite a few friends like that. It is realistic.

Female, 65-74, ABC1



8.1.2. Land Rover, 'Defender Ryuichi Nagayama': Irritating Portrayal



For some, the portrayal was aspirational and exciting, for others, superficially positive which was felt to be more annoying than anything else.

The Land Rover ad was a good example of an ad that could cause irritation, rather than offence and harm.

Some appreciated the use of an older person in the ad as it felt inspiring and different, helping to offset any perceptions based on negative depictions (e.g. all old people are frail, immobile, or unwell).

Others felt mildly exasperated that it felt like 'yet another' example of advertisers feeling they must go to 'extremes' when portraying older people. It was considered superficially positive and therefore inauthentic, choosing to focus on a 'one in a million' 90-year-old playing rugby, rather than showing 'regular' older men.

The link between the rugby player and Land Rover also felt strenuous which could lead some to feel it was unnecessary.



If you're an old person watching and you don't lead an active lifestyle or you don't do much anymore. It could be a little bit demoralizing

Mix Gender, 16-25, Mix SEG



It's just unrealistic for 90-year-olds to be playing rugby...and driving an expensive Defender!

Male, 75+, ABC1

8.1.3. Strathmore Foods, 'When life takes the Ping!': Offensive Portrayal



Polarising – some liked the agency of the older man in the portrayal, others found it stereotypical of 'grumpy old men' which felt offensive.

The Strathmore Foods ad was a good example of the subjectivity of humour and its link to offence.

Several participants enjoyed the humorous tone taken in the ad. Not only did it go some way to show older people still have a sense of humour, but also that older people still have 'spirit' or 'feistiness' that is not usually shown in ads.

However, others felt the humorous tone and portrayal could cause offence as it reinforced stereotypes of older people as grumpy and intolerant of younger generations. The focus on the older man living alone and eating a ready meal, was also felt to imply that all older people are lonely and isolated.



There were other, underlying concerns about the themes in the ad including intergenerational conflict, knife crime and vindictiveness.



I don't like that. The idea is very rude... It is really bad to see that an old person can descend so low to bust a child's ball.

Male, 65-74, C2DE



I don't think it's funny. It would be better for the older man to just have a conversation with the young boy to say, just because I'm old, doesn't mean you can call me grandad.

Female, 75+, C2DE

8.1.4. LinkedIn, 'Parents don't get B2B, LinkedIn does!': Harmful Portrayal



Focus is entirely on her age (in her apperance and mentality); feels demeaning with potential to impact an older persons' confidence and societal views toward older peoples' ability to use tech.

The LinkedIn 'Parents don't get B2B' ad was considered the most likely to cause harm. Across the groups, participants felt it positioned older people as less knowledgeable and/or capable because of their age.

The voice-over of the interviewee exacerbated this feeling, coming across as 'mocking' and 'demeaning' in their tone, and the questions they asked. For example, the interviewer asked, 'Does he make these clouds?' and 'Have you ever seen these clouds', knowing they are talking about different 'clouds' to the clouds the older person is thinking about.

For some, this ad could potentially cause 'harm' as it could impact on older peoples' confidence and willingness to try new technology. It also was felt to have the potential to impact society's view and treatment of older people. For example, a societal assumption that older people 'won't get it' just because of their age.



I think this makes you feel rubbish about yourself. If you think other people think you're stupid and that's how you come across, I don't think that's good for self-esteem.

Female, 55-64, C2DE





This ad feels degrading and patronising. It implies older people lack knowledge and capacity to learn new skills and reinforces the belief that older people contribute less to society.

Female, 65-74, ABC1



8.2. Quantitative testing of adverts

In the quantitative survey, four ads were tested:

- Maltesers 'Look on the Light Side, Companion'²³
- Land Rover 'Defender Ryuichi Nagayama'¹⁷
- Strathmore Foods 'When Life Takes the Ping!'¹⁴
- JD Williams 'Feeling more girlfriend than grandma'9

Each ad was examined in four dimensions:

1. Likeability

How did they feel about the ad overall?

2. Portrayal

How well did the ad portray older people?

3. Offence

How likely is the ad to cause offence to older people?

4. Harm

How likely is the ad to cause harm to older people?

Of the four ads tested in the quantitative survey, the Strathmore Foods ad (also discussed in the qualitative research case study shown in the previous section) was the most negatively viewed in terms of portrayal of older people and seen as the most likely to cause offence or harm.

Summary of Ads tested Land Rover Strathmore JD Williams Maltesers ①1 Likeability: How did they feel about the ad? [Dislike a lot / little] 37 ▲ 29 🔻 [Like a lot / little] Portrayal: How well did the ad portray older people? 22 🔻 27 19 ▼ 38 🔺 [Very / Quite poorly] 57 29 ▼ 39 🔻 [Very / Quite well] 03 Offence: How likely is the ad to offend older people? 22 16 ▼ 28 🔺 n/a [Very / Quite likely] 53 63 ▲ 46 ▼ [Not at all / Not very likely] 04. Harm: How likely is the ad to cause harm to older 8 🔻 11 14 🔺 n/a 65 🔺 [Very / Quite likely] 67 60 ▼ [Not at all / Not very unlikely] Colours of significance arrows are green towards positivity and red towards negativity. JD Williams ad was only tested on the first two dimensions. Various questions. Base: Mattesers (1432), Land Rover (1422), Strathmore (1452), All respondents (4306)



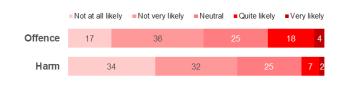
MALTESERS



Feelings about ad / Portrayal of older people

■ Dislike a lot ■ Dislike a little ■ Neutral ■ Like a little ■ Like a lot Likeability ■Very poorly ■Quite poorly ■Neutral ■Quite well ■Very well Portrayal Dislike Poor Portraval Younger (16-54) 20 🔻 16 🔻 Older (55+) 39 🔺 41 🔺 (55-64) 30 30 46 🔺 (65+)49 🛕 Ethnic minorities 26 23 27 Women 28 Men 28 23

Likelihood to cause offence / harm to older people



Net likely	Offence	Harm
Younger (16-54)	16 ▼	8
Older (55+)	32 🔺	10
Older (55–64)	23	8
Oldest (65+)	37 🔺	12 🔺
Ethnic minorities	28 🛕	11
Women	23	7 ▼
Men	21	10 🔺

Significance arrow colours have been matched to show green as positive performance and red as negative performance. B1. You are now going to be shown an advert, and we would like to get your reactions. Overall how do you feel about this advert? B2. How did you think this advert portrayed people in an older age group? When we say 'portrayed', we mean the way in which older people are shown. B4. Thinking about this advert, how likely or unlikely is it to cause offence to people in older age groups (55+)? B3. Thinking about this advert, how likely or unlikely is it to cause offence to people in older age groups (55+)? Base: Maltesers (1432), Maltesers 16–54/55+/55–64/55+(832/600/245/355), Maltesers Ethnic minority (204), Maltesers Women/Men (735/693)

significantly higher / lower than others (green is more positive)

LAND ROVER

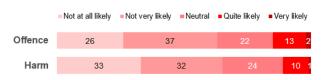


Feelings about ad / Portrayal of older people



■ Dislike a lot ■ Dislike a little ■ Neutral ■ Like a little ■ Like a lot

Likelihood to cause offence / harm to older people



Younger (16–54) 13 ▼ 10 Older (55+) 19 ▲ 12 Older (55–64) 12 9 Oldest (65+) 23 ▲ 14 ▲ Ethnic minorities 18 14 Women 17 10 Men 14 12	Net likely	Offence	Harm
Older (55–64) 12 9 Oldest (65+) 23 ▲ 14 ▲ Ethnic minorities 18 14 Women 17 10	Younger (16–54)	13 ▼	10
Oldest (65+) 23 ▲ 14 ▲ Ethnic minorities 18 14 Women 17 10	Older (55+)	19 🔺	12
Ethnic minorities 18 14 Women 17 10	Older (55–64)	12	9
W omen 17 10	Oldest (65+)	23 🔺	14 🔺
	Ethnic minorities	18	14
Men 14 12	Women	17	10
	Men	14	12

Significance arrow colours have been matched to show green as positive performance and red as negative performance. B1. You are now going to be shown an advert, and we would like to get your reactions. Overall how do you feel about this advert Pott advert portrayed people in an older age group? When we say 'portrayed', we mean the way in which older people are shown. B4. Thinking about this advert, how likely or unlikely is it to cause offence to people in older age groups (55+)? B5. Thinking about this advert, how likely or unlikely is it to cause offence to people in older age groups (55+)? Base: Land Rover (1422), Land Rover 16–54/55+/55-64/65+ (832/590/244/346), Land Rover Ethnic minority (197), Land Rover Women/Men (27/693)

significantly higher / lower than others (green is more positive)



STRATHMORE FOODS

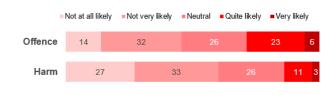


Feelings about ad / Portrayal of older people

■Dislike a lot ■Dislike a little ■Neutral ■Like a little ■Like a lot Likeability 12 ■Very poorly ■ Quite poorly ■ Neutral ■ Quite well ■ Very well Portrayal 12

Net negative	Dislike	Poor Portrayal
Younger (16–54)	25 ▼	31 ▼
Older (55+)	38 🔺	47 🔺
(55–64)	30	41
(65+)	43 🔺	51 🔺
Ethnic minorities	22 🔻	30 ▼
Women	33 🔺	41 🔺
Men	27 ▼	34 ▼

Likelihood to cause offence / harm to older people



Net negative	Offence	Harm
Younger (16–54)	24 ▼	12 ▼
Older (55+)	34 🔺	17 🔺
(55–64)	29	15
(65+)	38 🔺	19 🔺
Ethnic minorities	28	19 🔺
Women	30	15
Men	27	13

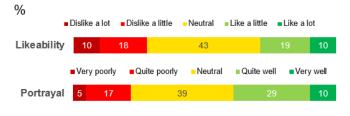
Significance arrow colours have been matched to show green as positive performance and red as negative performance. B1. You are now going to be shown an advert, and we would like to get your reactions. Overall how do you feel about this advert? B2. How did you think this advert portrayed people in an older age group? When we say 'portrayed', we mean the way in which older people are shown. B4. Thinking about this advert, how likely or unlikely is it to cause offence to people in older age groups (55+)? B5. Thinking about this advert, how likely or unlikely is it to cause harm to people in older age groups (55+)? Base: Strathmore (1452), Strathmore 16–54/55+/55–64/65+ (836/616/247/369), Strathmore Ethnic minority (203), Strathmore Women/Men (736/709)

significantly higher / lower than others (green is more positive)

JD WILLIAMS



Feelings about ad / Portrayal of older people



Net negative	Dislike	Poor Portrayal
Younger (16–54)	29	21 🔻
Older (55+)	27	24 🛕
(55–64)	25 ▼	21
(65+)	29	26 🔺
Ethnic minorities	27	21
Women	31 🔺	23
Men	26 🔻	21

Significance arrow colours have been matched to show green as positive performance and red as negative performance. B7. You are now going to be shown an advert, and we would like to get your reactions. Mercal-Bow do you feel about this advert? B8. How did you think this advert portrayed people in an older age group? When we say 'portrayed', we mean the way in which older people are shown.

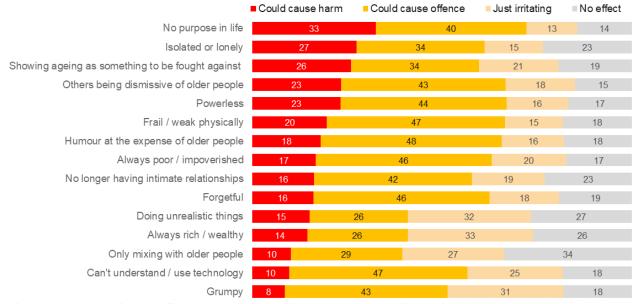
Base: All respondents (4306). 16–54/55-456-64/65+ (2500/1806/736/1070). Ethnic minority (604), Women/Men (2198/2095)

significantly higher / lower than others (green is more positive)



8.3. Additional quantitative charts

Sometimes adverts might cause offence or harm. Thinking about how adverts portray and feature people in older age groups (55+), which of these do you think could cause this type of reaction? (RESPONDENTS AGED 16-54)



A6. Sometimes adverts might cause offence or harm. Thinking about how adverts portray and feature people in older age groups (55+), which of these do you think could cause this type of reaction? Base: All respondents aged 16-54 (2500).



8.4. Stimulus table

No.	Advertiser	Title of Ad ¹⁸	Medium	Sector	Date	Description
1	Age UK	Know what to do	TV/Cinema	Charity	Mar-2023	The ad starts by showing several older people in different frames, chatting on the phone and sitting on the bus with other people. The music is upbeat. The music then cuts, and the same older people are shown alone. The ad then focuses in on one of the older women who is shivering whilst sitting on the phone to Age UK. She says, 'I'm so cold, I don't know what to do anymore'.
2	Cadbury	The Originals	Digital	Food & Drink/ Charity	2020	Various older people share what they would prefer to be asked about. Some mention their personal stories, while others highlight significant experiences, such as travelling the world or joining the circus.
3	Pure Cremation	Neighbours	TV/ Broadcast	Funeral/ Cremation	Jan-2023	Animated ad where an older woman informs her son and granddaughter that her funeral plans have arrived. Her neighbour, an older woman as well, expresses concern and asks if everything is alright. The older woman shows her a brochure from pure cremation detailing her funeral plan.
4	Alternative Planning Company Ltd	Meet Maureen and Brenda	TV /Broadcast	Funeral/ Cremation	2023	Shows two older women at a funeral service, visibly displeased with the choice in entertainment. They both agree that this is a result of poor planning and claim that this will not be the case for their funerals.
5	Phoenix	I'm not ready for bridge games and bowling greens	Press	Financial Products	Nov-2022	The ad features an older man wearing a work uniform and sitting in a workshop. The text reads "I'm not ready for bridge games and bowling greens", and that "retirement isn't ready for me".
6	Retirement Villages	Promotional video	TV/ Broadcast	Property	Oct-2024	Various older people taking part in different activities such as outdoor games, cards, hiking, gardening and spending time with their families.

¹⁸ Titles have been assigned to each ad example to help identify and distinguish between them (e.g. The Originals). The 'titles' of each ad are derived from the ad content and/or publicised labelling of the ad, rather than the official campaign name.



No.	Advertiser	Title of Ad ¹⁸	Medium	Sector	Date	Description
7	JD Williams	JD Williams - Rewriting the narrative for midlife women	TV/ Broadcast	Fashion	Oct- 2023	Four older women in separate frames; One woman narrates while posing for photos, another dances, a third models lingerie, and the fourth stands on a dinner table with a drink in hand. All appear confident and are stylishly dressed.
8	JD Williams	Admit it, this age thing suits you.	Digital	Fashion	2024	An image of an older woman posing for a photo on the beach in a purple bikini, with the strapline 'Admit it, this age thing suits you'.
9	JD Williams	Feeling more girlfriend than grandma	ООН	Fashion	2023	Several images of older women dressed stylishly posing for photos in different frames, with the strapline 'Feeling more girlfriend than grandma'.
10	L'Oreal	Excellence Creme- Look as young as you feel	TV/ Broadcast	Health & Beauty	Sep- 2023	Two older women compare before and after pictures of themselves showcasing their transformation after using a hair product. One claims that they feel younger and the other exclaims how the product takes only 30 minutes to work.
11	L'Oreal	Perfect Age Rosy Day Cream	TV/ Broadcast	Health & Beauty	2024	Two older female celebrities try a skin-care product and speak positively about their age. The text 'We look great for our age' is revised by putting a line through 'for our age'.
12	LinkedIn	Parents don't get B2B.I LinkedIn does	Digital/VOD	Recruitme nt	Nov-2023	An older woman is asked to describe what her son does for a living. She claims her son sells invisible clouds to a cloud company. Cut to the LinkedIn homepage with narrator claiming that parents don't get B2B, but LinkedIn does.
13	Barclays Bank	Barclaycard radio	Radio	Financial Products	Dec-2022	Radio ad claiming that Barclaycard can help people manage life costs. It emphasizes that said costs could be more 'ordinary', like buying new jeans or 'not-so ordinary' like repairing 'nan's dentures'.
14	Strathmore Foods	When Life Takes The Ping! Mr Wilson & His Car	TV/ Broadcast	Food & Drink	Sep-2021	An older man is washing his car when a child kicks a muddy football over the fence, landing on his vehicle. He shouts, 'Oi, grandad, give my ball back'. Jump cut to him happily eating a microwave meal with the muddy football now punctured with a table knife beside him.



No.	Advertiser	Title of Ad ¹⁸	Medium	Sector	Date	Description
15	Volkswagen	Electric the Volkswagen way	Broadcast	Motoring	Aug-2023	A woman picks up her dad in her brand-new car. On the drive home, he says he is glad she didn't get an electric car. When they get home, he adds that he is happy she got a Volkswagen. She smiles and plugs it in to charge.
16	Amazon	Amazon Echo - "Sharing is Caring "	TV/ Broadcast	Retail	2019	An older man named Tom is reading a newspaper in his living room. A younger man explains that he has set up an Amazon Echo for him, which can help with tasks like playing music, checking the weather, and more. At first, Tom seems reluctant to use the device, but by the end of the ad, he asks Alexa to play the song "Valerie," which the younger man had previously been humming during his visit.
17	Land Rover	Defender Ryuichi Nagayama	TV/ Broadcast	Motoring	Sep-2023	An older man waters his plants as he claims that people think he should be at home gardening. He states that he is 90, still young and not attempting to slow down. Jump-cut to him playing rugby with other older men on an open field with text reading 'Embrace the impossible'. The final jump-cut shows a Land Rover riding up a steep incline, with the word 'Defender' boldly displayed.
18	Amazon	Amazon - Joy Ride	TV/ Broadcast	Retail	Nov-2023	Three older women watch children play on a sledging hill, appearing to reminisce about their youth. One of the women decides to rekindle that joy by ordering seat cushions from Amazon, enabling her and her friends to relive their sledging memories.
19	Brompton Bicycles	Brompton - I'm Getting On	ООН	Travel	2020	Three older people, pose for pictures with their bikes. The strapline reads 'I'm getting ON', with the ON taken from the end of 'Brompton'.
20	Tesco	Tesco Food Love Stories Sue's 'Dive In' Crispy Pork Noodles	TV/ Broadcast	Retail	2022	A group of older women get ready for a swim in the sea. One of them talks about how crispy pork noodles have become a special tradition for them over the years. After their swim, they all come together to share lunch by the beach.



No.	Advertiser	Title of Ad ¹⁸	Medium	Sector	Date	Description
21	Zoopla	Nana's Cottage Just ask Zoopla	TV/ Broadcast	Property	Dec-2022	An older woman sits at the table with her grandson and his partner, expressing how wonderful it is to meet her. The grandson's partner offers to take the dirty dishes to the sink and comments on how amazing the grandmother's home is. She then wonders aloud how much it's worth, insinuating it would fetch a good price if the grandmother was to pass on. There is an awkward silence among the three before the scene transitions to an exterior view of the house, with a narrator suggesting, "If you want to know, just ask Zoopla.
22	Scottish Government	Rethink Dementia		Governme nt	2024	Various individuals share their reactions upon learning about a loved one's dementia diagnosis. One person mentions they began speaking less. Another stopped engaging in their usual activities. A third notes they started behaving differently. The narrator emphasizes that supporting someone with dementia by helping them stay connected and socially active can significantly improve their well-being. The ad concludes with the message: "It's time to rethink dementia."
23	Maltesers	Look on the Light Side, Companion	TV/ Broadcast	Food & Drink	April 2023	A grandson walks into the family living room, introducing an older man named Gerard, holding a bag of Maltesers as his grandma's "companion." A family member asks, "companion?" The grandmother answers that he calls him that because he does not want to imagine them intimate with each other. The older man smiles and greets everyone while eating a Malteser. The ad ends with the message: "Look on the light side" alongside a pack of Maltesers.
24	Replens	Sex never gets old	ООН	Health & Beauty	2020	Several images of older couples photographed nude, holding hands and kissing. 'Touch never gets old' and 'Sex never gets old' are displayed in bold print over images. In smaller print, 'A long-lasting intimate moisturiser for long-lasting sex life' is displayed alongside the Replens logo.



No.	Advertiser	Title of Ad ¹⁸	Medium	Sector	Date	Description
25	Irn Bru	Let's Just Agree It Tastes Prom	TV/ Broadcast	Food & Drink	Mar-2022	A young man, dressed for prom, waits at the bottom of the stairs with his father, as he drinks a can of Irn Bru. A girl about his age descends, and he says, "You look prettier than a can of Irn Bru." She smiles and replies, "I love its cream soda taste." He disapprovingly corrects her, "It's not cream soda." Just then, an older woman in the same dress comes down the stairs, saying, "It's lemony." Finally, a much older woman comes down the stairs via a stairlift, declaring, "It tastes like ginger." The boy chooses her as his prom date. The ad ends with them photographed kissing and words in bold written 'Let's just agree it tastes gorgeous' with two cans of Irn Bru underneath.
26	Dusk Retail	DUSK.com #DuskSayin Carlo	TV/ Broadcast	Retail	Oct-2023	Older woman sits on couch drinking tea claiming that she originally thought about traditionally shopping for furniture but instead decided to buy directly from dusk.com to have money left over to pay Carlo. A much younger man, presumably Carlo, walks in shirtless to re-fill her tea. When Carlo leaves, she smiles at the camera and says, 'Dusk Saying.' Ad ends with screen showing furniture from dusk and hashtag 'DuskSayin' at the bottom.
27	Cadbury Dairy Milk	Speakerphone	Multi	Food & Drink	2021	An older man sits in his car when his son calls to ask how his first day went. He reluctantly replies that it was good, before adding that everyone just seemed younger. His son responds that it is an indication of experience, and he wishes he was like him. Older man smiles before the son tells him he got him something in the glove box. He opens the glove box and finds a big bar of Cadbury chocolate. The ad ends with the narrator saying, "There's a glass and a half in everyone."



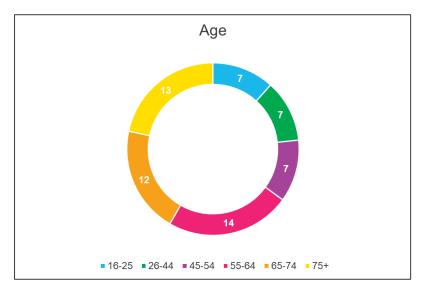
No.	Advertiser	Title of Ad ¹⁸	Medium	Sector	Date	Description
28	Warburtons	Warburtons, it can wait	TV/ Broadcast	Food & Drink	2021	A delivery truck with Warburtons branding pulls into the parking area. Jump cut to an older man sitting at his desk, eagerly watching the clock until it strikes 3pm. He happily opens a loaf of Warburtons bread, butters it, and just as he's about to take a bite, his assistant interrupts to excitedly mention George Clooney is on the phone. Older man looks to screen dismissively and slams it shut claiming that it can wait.
29	Amazon	Delivering a show-stopping season	TV/ Broadcast	Retail	2024	An older man works as a caretaker at a musical theatre. After the show, he quietly sings to himself as he cleans different parts of the theatre. Meanwhile, his co-workers secretly order a blazer for him from Amazon. They set up the stage and sit in the theatre to watch him perform. The ad ends with the Amazon logo.
30	Saga	Saga - Experience is Everything	TV/ Broadcast	Financial Products/ Leisure	Sep-2022	Nicholas Farrell walks through an art museum, pondering aloud, "What does 'old' mean?" He suggests that it depends on how people choose to see things—he compares an old wine bottle, not as old but revered; a worn-out leather jacket, not old but vintage; and an old car, which he calls a classic. He then drives away in the car, wearing sunglasses and the leather jacket. Cut to him sitting in a fancy bar, being served a drink in a glass before saying 'Don't call me old fashioned, just pour me one'.
31	Magnum	MAGNUM – Get Old or Get Classic	TV/ Broadcast	Food & Drink	2022	An older man flies in and lands at "The Pleasure Residence." At the reception, he's handed a key with an M logo and as he looks up the hotel staircase, he sees an older woman going up on a stairlift. Throughout the ad he observes other older guests enjoying various activities—painting, playing with a giant chessboard, etc. A waiter offers him a Magnum chocolate bar, but before he can take it, an older woman playfully grabs it and feeds it to him. The ad ends with the narrator saying, "You can get old, or you can get classic."

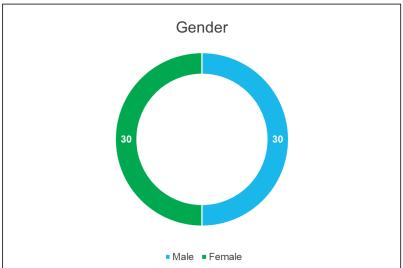


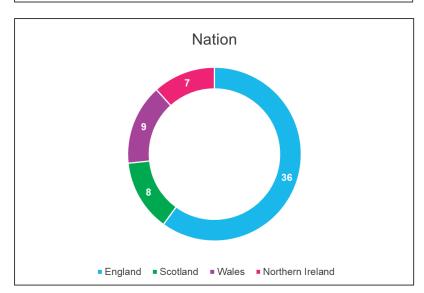
No.	Advertiser	Title of Ad ¹⁸	Medium	Sector	Date	Description
32	What3Words	'Neighbours'	TV/ Broadcast	Location Services	Apr-2022	Benjee rings the doorbell of his next-door neighbour, Gwen, an older lady. He asks if she's seen any of his parcels, mentioning that their addresses can be hard to find. As he speaks, Benjee notices Gwen's partner in the background, wearing clothes that subtly suggest they might be his. He glances down and sees Gwen wearing trainers that look like his own. Gwen quickly slams the door, saying, "I'll let you know if anything arrives."
33	Nescafe	Nescafé Azera Iced Frappé	Digital	Food & Drink	2023	Narrator states that if one doesn't have a shaker, it's no problem, all you need is Nescafé Azera, milk, ice and a little imagination. Ad shows clips of various people shaking their coffee in bottles, including an older woman who records herself shaking coffee in a sparkly bottle while dancing. The ad ends with a man drinking a glass of iced coffee.
34	Cornetto	Walls "Cornetto Classico"	TV/ Broadcast	Food & Drink	Aug-2021	A young girl sings "Just one Cornetto" while holding an ice cream cone. Various family members keep playfully snatching it away. An older woman, determined to get the cone, falls off her mobility chair in the process, crashing into the living room table. The mother manages to grab the ice cream, casually stating that there's more in the freezer. The ad ends with the whole family having their own ice cream cones together in the living room.



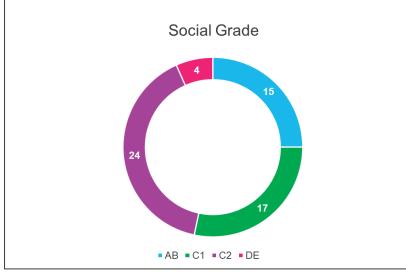
8.5. Qualitative sample breakdown

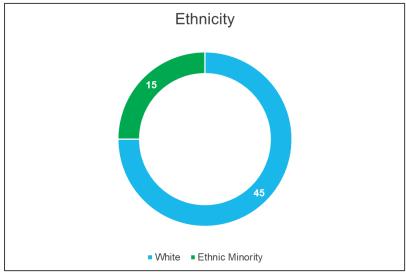


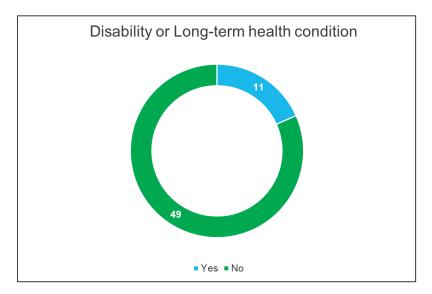














8.6. Quantitative sample breakdown

Breakdowns of unweighted sample sizes from the quantitative survey are shown below. Nationally representative quotas were used for age, gender, region, social grade, and ethnicity. The final sample was weighted to be representative of the UK population. Weights were applied to the final survey sample based on the 2021 Census data for gender, age, social grade, ethnicity and region. Tenure and working status weights were based on 2019 PAMCO - a random probability F2F survey conducted annually with 35,000 adults.

Age by	Gender	
	Male	Female
16-24	203	242
25-34	298	332
35-44	306	362
45-54	376	369
55-64	377	358
65+	535	535

Age by Et	hnicity	
	White	NET: Ethnic minority
16-24	265	173
25-34	520	108
35-44	559	104
45-54	670	65
55-64	629	105
65+	1020	49



8.7. Quantitative data tables

		Gender	9			AGA			-			Ane & Gender				A GA So	ial Grade			Age & Fth	icity	
	Total	Male	Female	16-54	55-64	65-74	75+	55+	65+ Mal	Male 16-54	Female 16- 54 Mal	Male 55+ Female 55+	le 55+ Male 65+	65+ Female 65+	ABC116-	C2DE 16- 54	ABC155+	C2DE 55+	16-54 White	16-54 Minorit y 5	55+ White	+Minorit y
Unweighted base	4306	2095	2198	2500	736	604	466	1806			2	ı	l	i	_	-	t	856	İ	ı	1649	1 25
Weight of base Q.A3 People in older age groups (55+) tend to be portrayed accurately in adverts	4306	2078	22.14	2648	671	530	457	16.58							1586	1062	8 12	846	2091	516	152 6	129
NET: Disagree	29%	28%	31%	24%	34%	41%	42%	38%	4 1%	23% 2	25% 3	35% 41	41% 38%	% 44%	24%	24%	40%	37%	24%	22%	39%	24%
Neutral	47%	47%	47%	%09	43%	44%	36%	42%	40%	49%	51% 4	43% 40	40% 42%		20%	24%	41%	42%	24%	46%	41%	45%
NET: Agree People in older age groups (55+) tend to be negatively stereotyped in adverts.	24%	26%	22%	26%	23%	15%	22%	20%	.48%			22% 18	8% 20%		26%	25%	49%	2 1%	24%	32%	49%	31%
NET: Disagree	30%	32%	29%	34%	27%	22%	21%	24%		36% 3	33% 2	25% 22	22% 24%	% 19%	35%	33%	25%	22%	35%	33%	24%	23%
Neutral	35%	36%	35%	38%	32%	34%	30%	31%	31%	37% 3	39% 3	34% 29	29% 34%		37%	39%	29%	34%	37%	41%	31%	40%
NET: Agree People in older age groups (55±) tend to be portrayed positively in adverts	35%	33%	36%	28%	4 1%	47%	49%	45%	48%	27% 2	29% 4	41% 49	49% 42%	%23%	28%	27%	46%	44%	28%	26%	46%	37%
NET: Disagree	22%	22%	23%	44.4	28%	31%	33%	30%	32%	. 18%	17% 2	28% 32	32% 30%		42%	18%	32%	28%	18%	15%	31%	1% 1
Neutral	47%	47%	47%	47%	44%	49%	47%	47%	48%	47% 4	47% 4		46% 47%	% 49%	45%	49%	45%	48%	47%	45%	47%	48%
NET: Agree People from ethnic minority groups tend to be. negatively stereotyped in adverts.	31%	31%	31%	36%	28%	20%	49%	23%	20%	36%	36%	25% 21	21% 23%	% 47%	38%	33%	22%	24%	35%	39%	22%	35%
NET: Disagree	48%	21%	46%	44%	%99	25%	20%	22%						% 51%	44%	44%	%89	%2%	49%	28%	21%	32%
Neutral	34%	28%	34%	31%	27%	30%	35%	30%	32%	26% 3	35% 3	30% 31	31% 31%		30%	33%	78%	32%	31%	31%	30%	34%
NET:Agree Women tend to be negatively stereotyped in adverts	21%	21%	21%	25%	,16%	13%	15%	15%	44.%	25% 2	24%	15% 14	4% 13%	% t5%	26%	22%	43%	%91	20%	41%	13%	34%
NET: Disagree	38%	45%	30%	36%	43%	41%	36%	41%	39%		27% 4	45% 36	36% 46%	32%	37%	34%	45%	39%	38%	29%	41%	32%
Neutral	33%	32%	34%	33%	31%	34%	37%	34%	35%	31%	35% 3				31%	37%	34%	34%	32%	35%	33%	40%
NET: Agree M en tend to be negatively stereotyped in adverts	29%	22%	35%	31%	25%	25%	27%	26%	26%		38% 2	21% 31	31% 21%	34%	33%	29%	25%	27%	30%	36%	25%	27%
NET: Disagree	39%	31%	47%	40%	39%	38%	37%	38%							45%	38%	40%	36%	40%	40%	38%	44%
Neutral	37%	38%	36%	36%	35%	39%	42%	38%		36%	37% 4		36% 42%	.,	34%	40%	36%	40%	36%	36%	38%	34%
NET: Agree	24%	32%	16%	24%	26%	23%	21%	24%	22%		16% 3	31% 17	7% 29%	% 16%	24%	23%	24%	24%	24%	24%	24%	22%
Q.A4 Do vou think people in older age groups (55+) are, under or overrepresented in adverts?																						
Not represented at all	5%	2%	5%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%		5%		3,			5%	2%	2%	5%	2%	3%	2%	%
Underrepresented	45%	38%	45%	38%	20%	24%	47%	49%							37%	39%	23%	46%	37%	38%	20%	48%
Get the right amount of coverage	%2%	% 75	49%	%99	46%	45%	47%	46%	_				4	4	27%	%	43%	48%	%99	22%	46%	49%
Overrepresented	4%	2%	3%	2%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%	%9	4%	3% 2,	2% 3%	% 2%	4%	2%	2%	4%	2%	4%	3%	3%
A CONTRACTOR OF THE CONTRACTOR	ò	, 020	ó	òòò	, 406	òòò	,du	4004	è		•				ò	ò	ò	ý	ò	òó	400/	,00
Could cause narm	% i	%/-	%1.7	%0Z	8 3	%07	92.0	% 20	% !						%07	%07	% 2	%/1.	%07	8 8	% 20	8 8
Could cause off ence	47%	45%	48%	47%	44%	45%	20%	46%	47%			45% 47		% 48%	48%	45%	46%	46%	49%	43%	46%	38%
Just Intaining	92.9	20% 40%	% 6	5 6 6 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9	752,	24%	20%	24%	%QZ	0.70	% ± %		23% 26%		δ. 5 6, 6, 6, 6, 6, 6, 6, 6, 6, 6, 6, 6, 6, 6	\$ \$	24%	24%	0 ½	2 4 %	24%	70% 4EB,
Isolated or lonely	e, 2	ς Ω	ę 2	9 0	0,00	8	2	8	ę						8,00	7 1/0	8	ę 2	8	e 12	8	ę 2
Could cause harm	27%	24%	30%	27%	27%	29%	24%	27%	26%			23% 31	31% 22%		26%	30%	28%	25%	28%	25%	27%	25%
Could cause off ence	33%	31%	35%	34%	31%	32%	35%	32%	33%	30%	37% 3	32% 33	33%	% 34%	35%	31%	31%	34%	35%	32%	32%	34%

Page 67



		Gender	er			Age			-		A	Age & Gender				Age & Socia	Grade		4	de & Ethnicity	2	
	F	1	- I	ç	0					_	Female 16-		Η.	0	ABC116-	C2DE 16-	Η.	-	16-54 16	ļ -	- 1	55+ Minorit
Moidhful book	10tal	Male	- remaie	10-54 26.40	55-64	65-74	457	55+ 48-F0	65+ Male	42E3 42	, ا	55+ remale 55-	55+ Male 55+	- remaie 65+	94	,	ABC135+	<u></u>	Σ	Š.	e	> 8
A digital passed	2000	200	± 77	0107	- 20	200	ò i	000						0000	000	200	210	2 3				N 00
Just irritating	18%	20%		15%	%02	21%	25%	25%	_					20%	% <u>9</u>	14%	23%					%6
No effect No longer having intimate	22%	25%	49%	23%	22%	%61	16 <i>%</i>	19%	42%	27% 20	20% 21%	% 17%	20%	15%	22%	25%	18 %		23% 23	22% 1	19% 1	%82
relationships																						
Could cause harm	14%	13%	14%	1 6%	41%	%6	4%	%6	8%		17% 8%		%2	%6	16 %	46%	%6	%6	17% 16			40%
Could cause offence	4 1%	37%	45%	45%	39%	41%	41%	40%				% 43%		42%	43%	39%	41%					36%
Just irritating	24%	792	21%	.61	78%	31%	33%	30%						78%	%61	46,	31%	30%		21% 3		27%
No effect Humour at the expense of	22%	24%	20%	23%	22%	20%	19%	20%	19%	26% 20	20% 21%	% GL %	46%	20%	21%	26%	%GL	22%	23% 24		20% 2	792
older people																						
Could cause harm	18%	15%	20%	48%	44%	%61	16%	17%				% 20%		21%	.8%	18%	16 %	18%				% #4
Could cause offence	49%	46%	24%	48%	49%	46%	21%	%09		45% 5		% 20%	49%	24%	49%	46%	21%	48%	49% 4	45% 4	49% 5	21%
Just irritating	18%	19%	18%	16%	22%	%6L	24%	21%				% 20%	, 22%	20%	17%	42%	22%	21%	15% 2			24%
No effect	16%	20%	12%	18%	12%	74%	40%	12%	12%	23% 13	13% 15%	%6 %	16%	8%	16 %	21%	11%	13%		20% 1	12% 1	11%
No purpose in life																						
Could cause harm	32%	28%	36%	33%	34%	33%	78%	32%	31%	27% 37	37% 28%	% 35%	29%	33%	33%	32%	32%		33% 30	30% 3	32% 2	76%
Could cause offence	40%	40%	4 1%	40%	4 1%	42%	43%	42%	42% 3	39% 40	40% 42%	% 42%	, 42%	45%	41%	38%	41%	42%	41% 33	35% 4	4 1% 4	44%
Just irritating	15%	17%	14%	13%	16%	48%	23%	19%	20%			% 17%		20%	74%	13%	%61	18%	12% 20	20% 1		21%
No effect Others being dismissive of older people	12%	15%	%6	%#	40%	%8	%9	%8	1 4	18% 11	10%		%8	5%	42%	18%	%2	%6		15%	%8	%6
Could cause harm	22%	18%	%97	23%	22%	20%	18%	20%			28% 17%	% 23%		22%	23%	24%	22%		24% 20	20% 2		18%
Could cause offence	46%	45%	47%	43%	49%	%09	25%	%09			•		•	23%	45%	4 1%	48%	23%				21%
Just irritating	20%	22%	18%	18%	22%	22%	%97	23%	24% 2	21% 16	16% 25%	% 21%	26%	22%	%6J	18%	25%	22%	18% 2			25%
No effect Only mixing with older people and not with those	12%	15%	%6	15%	7%	%2	4 %	%9	1 %9				%8	4%	13%	17%	%9	%2		16%	%9	%9
Could cause harm	%6	%8	10%	10%	%	%2	%2	%2		10% 10		%6	%5	%6	40%	40%	%2					%
Could cause offence	29%	27%	3.1%	29%	29%	29%	27%	28%	28% 2		31% 26%	.,	.,	30%	30%	29%	27%	30%	30% 28	29% 2	28% 3	32%
Just irritating	32%	31%	32%	27%	37%	41%	41%	39%						39%	28%	25%	42%					35%
No effect	30%	34%	27%	34%	27%	23%	25%	25%		38% 30	30% 29%	% 22%	, 26%	22%	31%	37%	24%				25% 2	27%
Doing unrealistic things																						
Could cause harm	14%	13%	42%	15%	13%	*44	11%	13%						12%	74%	16%	74%					40%
Could cause offence	76%	24%	27%	792	23%	798	30%	798	27% 2	24% 28	28% 24%	% 27%	26%	78%	27%	25%	24%	28%			25% 2	28%
Just irritating	37%	38%	37%	32%	44%	45%	45%	45%	45% 3		32% 45%			44%	34%	30%	47%				45% 4	41%
No effect	23%	25%	20%	27%	20%	15%	14%	17%		29% 24	4% 20%	% 14%	17%	13%	25%	78%	16 %	18%	27% 24	24%		20%
Powerless																						
Could cause harm	22%	48%	25%	23%	21%	.6	%4	49%						20%	24%	22%	21%					17%
Could cause offence	44%	41%	46%	44%	43%	45%	46%	43%						45%	44%	43%	45%					.5%
Just irritating	20%	22%	18%	16 %	23%	28%	28%	26%	.0		15% 27%			27%	46 %	%4	27%	25%	16% 16		25% 3	31%
No effect	15%	49%	41%	17%	13%	11%	40%	12%	11% 2	22% 12	78 12%	%6 %	14%	8%	16 %	18%	40%	14%		17% 1		11%
Always poor / impoverished																						
Could cause harm	15%	15%	16%	17%	14%	74%	41%	13%	. 42%	17% 17	17% 12%	% 14%	11%	14%	46%	18%	74%	13%	16% 23	22% 1	13% 1	16%



		Gender	Jer			Age			_		Ac	Age & Gender				Age & Socia	Grade			Age & Ethnicity	oitv	Γ
	Total	Male	Female	16-54	55-64	65-74	75+	55+	65+ Male	Fema Male 16-54 5	Female 16- 54 Male 55+	55+ Female 55+	55+ Male 65+	Female 65+	ABC116- 54	C2DE 16- 54 ABC155+		C2DE 55+	16-54 1 White Min	16-54 Minorit y 55-	hite	55+Minorit y
Weight ed base	4306	2078	2214	2648	671	530	457	1658		1253 13	1382 826	3 832	477	609	1586	1062	812	846		516	1526	129
Could cause offence	48%	45%	21%	46%	47%	49%	%29	51%	53% 4	42% 50	50% 48%	% 23%	21%	22%	47%	45%	49%	25%	48%	4 1%	51%	49%
Just irritating	22%	23%	21%	20%	25%	27%	24%	25%	_					24%	22%	16%	27%	24%		19%	76%	24%
No effect	15%	47%	12%	17%	13%	40%	%8	11%	9%	20% 1	15% 13%	%8 %	11%	%/	15%	20%	40%	42%	. 41%	18%	11%	41%
Always rich / wealthy																						
Could cause harm	12%	14%	42%	4 7%	16 %	15%	47%	16%			15% 15%	%4 4%		%82	15%	%	47%	15%		%6	16%	12%
Could cause of fence	28%	28%	28%	26%	28%	32%	32%	30%						32%	79%	28%	30%	31%		22%	31%	26%
Just irritating	36%	34%	38%	33%	41%	41%	39%	40%	40%	31% 3	35% 38%	% 43%	38%	41%	34%	32%	40%	41%	34%	30%	40%	42%
No effect Showing ageing as something to be fought. against rather than embraced	2 1%	24%	49%	26%	15%	%	7%	%	12%	75 %65	24% 17%	,00%	%9	%6	26%	27%	% 52	%4%	73%	40%	13%	20%
Could cause harm	22%	%Д	27%	26%	49%	17%	13%	17%	15%	20% 3	3 1% 13%	% 20%	12%	18%	27%	24%	18%	16%	27%	24%	42%	18%
Could cause of fence	33%	32%	35%	34%	33%	78%	35%	32%	32%	33% 3	35% 30%	35%	30%	34%	34%	33%	31%	34%	34%	34%	32%	31%
Just irritating	26%	28%	24%	21%	31%	37%	35%	34%	36% 2	23% 16	19% 36%	% 32%	38%	34%	22%	20%	34%	33%	20%	24%	34%	34%
No effect	18%	23%	44%	49%	18%	46%	17%	17%	77%	25% 1	15% 2.1%	, 13%	20%	13%	17%	23%	17%	17%	. 19%	18%	42%	16%
Grumpy																						
Could cause harm	%8	%	%6	%8	%8	%9	%	%						%/	%6	%8	%	%9		10%	%/	%9
Could cause of fence	45%	38%	45%	43%	37%	45%	40%	40%						45%	42%	44%	42%	39%		39%	4 1%	35%
Just irritating	34%	34%	33%	31%	39%	35%	42%	39%	_		29% 38%	%68 %		38%	32%	28%	39%	39%		32%	38%	46%
No effect Can't understand / use. technology	16%	20%	13%	%	,te	13 %	%	%	13%	22% #	18%	, 10%	9 2%	%01	47%	20%	72%	15%	. 18%	%61	14%	13%
Could cause harm	40%	%6	11%	40%	40%	40%	11%	40%	41%	9% 1	11% 9%	, 11%	%6	42%	%6	11%	11%	40%	10%	10%	41%	%9
Could cause offence	47%	43%	%09	47%	46%	51%	42%	46%	42% 4	43% 50	50% 44%	% 49%	45%	48%	49%	45%	47%	46%	49%	39%	46%	45%
Just irritating	28%	30%	27%	25%	32%	30%	39%	33%	34% 2	26% 24	24% 35%	% 32%	35%	33%	25%	25%	34%	33%	24%	28%	34%	3 1%
No effect	15%	18%	12%	%81	12%	%6	%8	40%	86	22% #	15% 12%	%8 %	40%	%2	47%	%61	%8	42%	17%	23%	%6	18%
Forgettul																						
Could cause harm	45%	14%	41%	, 1e %	17%	13%	11%	74%						44 %	15%	17%	44 %	44.%		16%	14%	14%
Could cause offence	46%	43%	46% ************************************	46%	44%	46%	48%	46%						20%	47%	46%	46%	45%		39%	46%	46%
Just irritating	22%	24%	20%	18%	24%	28%	31%	27%						26%	49%	17%	28%	26%		22%	28%	22%
No effect O.Cl To what extent do you. agree or disagree with the following statements? Age.	<i>4</i> 2%	20%	44%	%6	%	13 %	%	%8	%	23%	16% 15%	, 44%	% 4	%6	%	20%	75 % 24	%	18% **	23%	13%	18%
NET: Disagree	13%	42%	41%	16%	%6	%6	%8	%6	%6	19% 13	13% 10%	%/ %/	40%	%8	47%	15%	%6	%8	15%	20%	%6	40%
Neutral	46%	18%	45%	20%	11%	42%	11%	11%	11%	22% 18	18% 12%	, 11%	11%	11%	49%	20%	11%	42%	18%	25%	41%	45%
NET: Agree <u>Lfeel comfortable in my own</u> <u>skin</u>	%02	%19	74%	64%	80%	79%	81%	%08	80%	99 %09	%82 %69	% 82%	%62	81%	64%	92%	%08	%08	%29	25%	8 1%	75%
NET: Disagree	12%	40%	14%	16 %	%8	2%	2%	%9						%9	15%	18%	2%	%		10%	%9	%9
Neutral	46%	45%	18%	21%	40%	40%	%/_	%6			23% 8%			40%	49%	24%	%6	40%		22%	%6	12%
NET: Agree I'd like to see more people of my age in adverts for a wide range of different products	74%	75%	% 89	93%	82%	85%	%88	85%	%2.8	67%	59% 88%	% 85%	%06	83%	%99	%89	%98	83%	62%	%89	85%	%2%
NET: Disagree	%2	%6	%9	8%	2%	2%	%9	2%	%9	7 %01	7% 7%	4%	%9	2%	%6	%/	%9	2%	%/	%6	2%	%9



Female 16-54		¥	Age			<u></u>	}	Age & Gender	ender				Age & Social Grade	al Grade			Age & Ethnicity	_	
- 1						_	Female 16-					ABC1 16-	C2DE 16-			16-54	16-54	4,	55+ Minorit
	55-64	65-74	75+	£	65+	Male 16-54	54	Male 55+	Female 55+	Male 65+	Female 65+	25	25	ABC155+	C2DE 55+	White	Minorit y	55+White	^
2648	671	530	457	1658	987	1253	1382	826	832	477	609	1586	1062	812	846	2091	516	1526	129
47%	39%	4 1%	39%	40%	40%	20%	4 5%	45%	34%	47%	33%	45%	20%	40%	39%	49%	39%	40%	31%
45%	%99	24%	22%	22%	24%	40%	49%	48%	62%	47%	62%	46%	43%	%	%95	43%	21%	24%	64%
25%	36%	4 5%	45%	41%	44%	27%	23%	43%	38%	47%	41%	23%	28%	43%	38%	792	%61	45%	24%
35%	33%	3 1%	30%	32%	31%	37%	34%	32%	31%	31%	31%	36%	35%	31%	32%	35%	37%	32%	32%
40%	30%	24%	27%	27%	25%	36%	44%	24%	31%	23%	28%	45%	37%	25%	30%	39%	44%	79%	43%

weigned lose a weigned lose a Mercra that show aconia. Of Inv acon impost the wav. I saw well and my life. NET. Disagree. Neutral









THANK YU

STRAT7 Jigsaw, a trading division of STRAT7 Limited 3rd Floor, 53 Parker Street London WC2B 5PT

