

Policy Briefing, 9 May 2012

## The Queen's speech

### A summary of the government's legislative plans for the year

Dear friends and colleagues in the voluntary and community sector,

In case you didn't have a chance (or didn't intend) to catch the Queen's speech on May 9<sup>th</sup> 2012, here is a quick summary of a few items that we found particularly interesting:

- Small donations bill: introduces a system of top-up payments similar to Gift Aid for small cash donations to charities. For donations of less than £20, charities will be able to claim back 25p for every £1 collected in the UK, capped at £5,000.
- A draft communications bill: to enable government to collect communications data like texts and emails from the public.
- The House of Lords: Reforms will be introduced to ensure that a majority of members are elected.
- Pension reform: The current full state pension is £107.45 a week, but can be topped up to £137.35 with pension credit. This will be replaced by a new £140 flat rate. The state pension age will rise to 66 for all by 2020, with plans to increase it to 67 between 2026 and 2028 - affecting people aged 52 or younger now.
- A Groceries Code Adjudicator will be established to enforce the Groceries Code (which makes sure the largest retailers, such as the big name supermarkets, treat their suppliers fairly).
- The commitment to overseas aid: The government has pledged to allocate a sum equivalent to 0.7% of GDP (reaching a key international donor target).
- Overhauling social care: [read more here...](#)

Read a longer extract covering all the various bills on the BBC news site:  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-17988236>

