



## **PRESS RELEASE**

30 September 2011

### **DUNCAN QUERIES LOGIC OF GOVERNMENT RESEARCH CUTS**

Social Policy Association (SPA) President and former Chief Government Social Researcher Sue Duncan has warned that the UK government risks sacrificing a strategic approach to its own policy information needs for short-term savings. She adds that “evidence to help inform decision-making is more vital than ever” in a time of scarce resources.

Writing in the October edition of Research Magazine ([www.research-live.com](http://www.research-live.com)) on the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Government Social Survey, Duncan welcomes the recent launch of the Birth Cohort Study which, she says “could be read as recognition of the value of large-scale ‘investment’ surveys.”

However, she also observes that such examples are thin on the ground, and questions the logic of research cuts in the wake of the cancellation of the Citizenship Survey. Overall, she proposes that whilst it is inevitable that research takes its share of overall cuts in public spending, Ministers should bear in mind the cost of failed policies – rather than simply that of good research.

Sue has worked in the public sector for over 30 years – notably with the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury, and in social policy departments such as the Department for Work and Pensions, and Communities and Local Government. Currently an independent consultant in social research and professional practice, she is a Visiting Professor at the Universities of Bristol and Lincoln, an Academician of the Academy of Social Sciences and a Fellow of the Market Research Society. She is co-author, with Hugh Bochel, of *Making policy in theory and practice* (Policy Press, 2007).

The SPA promotes the study of social policy and advances the role of social policy research within policy making, practice and wider public debates. The majority of the Association's members are teachers and researchers in social policy and applied social science within UK higher education, complemented by a significant and growing number of members from other European, Asian and Australasian countries.

'Why policy research is more important than ever', by Sue Duncan, can be found at <http://t.co/77aZXbXQ>.

Ends (330 words)

### **Notes for editors**

The Social Policy Association is open for membership to academics and practitioners working in social policy, and to others with an interest in UK and international social policy. Individual members receive the *Journal of Social Policy* and *Social Policy & Society* free of charge. For more information visit [www.social-policy.org.uk](http://www.social-policy.org.uk).

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