

# **Building a society for all ages – consultation response**



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Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions by  
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## Foreword

People are living longer: one in four children born today will live beyond 100. Our longer, healthier lives are cause for celebration but they do raise a number of challenges – in particular how we can encourage people to plan for, and stay active and involved in their later lives.

In July 2009, we published *Building a Society for All Ages*, the Government's strategy for addressing these opportunities and challenges. This set out a coordinated package of strategic reforms including a major programme of pensions reform, legislation to ensure age equality, and options for reform of care and support. It also announced a programme of initiatives to enable people to prepare for and live well in later life. This package as a whole will support the changes that we all need to make so that we can live longer, healthier and more active later lives.

These initiatives were developed through debate and discussion with organisations in the private and voluntary sectors and members of the public. We consider it vital to their success that members of the public and other interested bodies should continue to be able to shape their development and implementation. To support this, we included a number of consultation questions in *Building a Society for All Ages*. We also held discussion events with the UK Advisory Forum on Ageing and over 600 members of the public across England and Wales.

This consultation response provides a summary of what we have heard both in written responses to the consultation questions and at consultation events. It also provides an update on how the initiatives set out in the strategy have developed as a result of this feedback.

In particular, thanks to the constructive engagement of organisations from a number of sectors, we are publishing alongside this document **A Good Place to Grow Older – A National Commitment** to support a local response to the challenges and opportunities of our ageing population. We hope that this Commitment will help national and local government and their partners do more to listen to and address the needs of today's older people and prepare for our ageing future.

Our thanks go to the many people and organisations who have given their time so generously to our discussions over the past few months. We hope that you will continue to take part in our collective endeavour to build a true society for all ages.



Angela Eagle.

**Angela Eagle MP**



Phil Hope

**Phil Hope MP**



Lord McKenzie

**Lord McKenzie**

## Summary of consultation findings & next steps

1. We received 345 written responses to the consultation on *Building a Society for All Ages* and around 600 people participated in discussion events. This is a brief summary of the main findings and next steps in delivering the strategy.

### Consultation responses

2. To tackle negative stereotypes associated with getting older, there was a strong desire to see more older role models in the media showcasing **positive images of later life** and for the public sector in particular to tackle **age discrimination in all its services**.
3. Many people wanted **greater choice about whether or not to work longer. Some supported the removal of the default retirement age (DRA)** and many wanted greater support to get back into work or change career in later life. They also wanted support to ensure that they stayed active and connected in and outside the workplace.
4. **Good local service delivery** for people of all ages was a priority for many respondents who felt that more should be done to promote joining up existing services and ensure commitment to the delivery of the strategy at a local level.
5. People welcomed moves to provide more information about ageing throughout life, but **particularly in the run up to and in retirement**. They wanted information available online to be supplemented by telephone and face to face advice. There was a strong call for information to be kept local and relevant.
6. **Having sufficient financial support** and **early intervention** were both recognised as being vital in helping people live independently for longer in later life.

### Next Steps Delivered

7. A review into ending age discrimination and **promoting age equality** in health and social care was published in October 2009. The review recommended that the ban on age discrimination in health and social care should be implemented in health and social care at the same time as in other sectors (for which 2012 had been proposed). It is now our intention to bring the ban into force in all sectors in 2012.<sup>1</sup>
8. **The call for evidence on the future of the DRA ended on 1 February 2010. We will be making an announcement on the outcome of the review in due course.** In *Building Britain's Recovery: Achieving Full Employment*<sup>2</sup> published in

<sup>1</sup> If you would like to respond to the consultation please visit [http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH\\_108887](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_108887) or contact the Age Consultation Team at Room 602, Department of Health, Richmond House, 79 Whitehall, London SW1A 2NS.

<sup>2</sup> [www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/welfare-reform/legislation-and-key-documents/building-britains-recovery/](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/welfare-reform/legislation-and-key-documents/building-britains-recovery/)

December 2009 we announced **new employment measures specifically aimed at people over 50 who need extra support.**

9. We have now co-produced **A Good Place to Grow Older – a National Commitment** with national bodies which represent a whole range of local service deliverers and key government departments. The Commitment sets out a number of specific pledges which its signatories have committed to adopt and translate into action to deliver the strategy at a local level.
10. The £2.9m **‘Get Digital’** programme will soon provide around 7,800 people in sheltered housing with access to computers and the training they need to make the most of the new technology on offer.
11. The **Pre-Budget Report** announced a package of measures to provide financial support for today’s pensioners and the **Personal Care at Home Bill** will guarantee free personal care for 280,000 people and, will also help around 130,000 people who need home care for the first time to regain their independence.
12. Many of the policies in this document are devolved in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales with each of the countries having their own ageing or older people strategies. It is the benefit of devolution that the devolved administrations can tailor their policies to meet the specific needs of their countries. We will continue to work closely with the devolved administrations in particular where matters are reserved, whilst recognising the varying responsibilities across the different parts of the United Kingdom and taking opportunities to learn from each other’s successes in areas where different approaches have been taken.

# Creating a society for all ages

## Consultation responses

1. We asked<sup>3</sup> people for ideas about how to make greater progress in changing attitudes towards ageing. There was a strong desire to see more older role models in the media showcasing **positive images of later life** and for the public sector to tackle **age discrimination in its services**.

*“My granny was an old lady at 55 – she wore a pinny and had grey hair. I’m now 55 and I have highlights and nail extensions!” (West Midlands consultation event)*

2. **Good local service delivery** for people of all ages was a priority. Respondents felt the National Agreement<sup>4</sup> should promote joining up existing services. Many organisations emphasised the importance of promoting collective ownership of the strategy and securing commitment to its delivery at a local level.
3. We have heard, very clearly, the message that there should be **‘nothing about us without us’** – that older people should be engaged in the design of products and services and the built environment.
4. Responses called for there to be greater opportunities for **intergenerational activity** and identified Criminal Records Bureau checks as a potential barrier.

*“In our town... there was a Bowling competition between teams of over 50s, over 70s, a business team, a mayor’s team and two teams from the local junior school. No one had ever played before and all were laughing and joking together at the end. There was also a blind person in one of the teams. More togetherness brings more understanding!” (Individual response)*

<sup>3</sup> Consultation question 10. We want to improve attitudes towards ageing across society. What more could be done to challenge outdated stereotypes and tackle negative perceptions about being old? Can you share good examples of where this is already happening in your local community?

<sup>4</sup> Consultation Q8: How can we ensure that the National Agreement will make a real difference to delivery partners working together to better deliver services for an ageing population?



## Developments since publication of the strategy

5. We consulted last summer on the detail of how the age discrimination measures that will be introduced by the **Equality Bill** will work in practice. These will include a ban on age discrimination in the provision of services and, as part of the specific equality duties, engagement of older people in the design of new policies and processes.
6. Policy statements summarising the responses to these two consultations were published by the Government Equalities Office in January. These set out areas that we don't propose to include in the age discrimination ban – such as discounts for pensioners and group holidays for older people – because these are examples of beneficial discrimination rather than harmful discrimination. The intention is to bring both the Equality Duty and the age discrimination ban into effect using secondary legislation, in 2011 and 2012 respectively.
7. A review into ending age discrimination and **promoting age equality** in health and social care was published in October 2009. It made a number of recommendations and a consultation on these is open until 15 February 2010.<sup>5</sup>
8. We have now co-produced **A Good Place to Grow Older – a National Commitment** with, for the first time, key government departments and national bodies which represent a whole range of local service deliverers. The Commitment sets out a number of specific pledges which its signatories have committed to work with local leaders to adopt and translate into action at a local level. A copy of the Commitment is attached as an annex to this response and we will also be working with the signatories to drive through its implementation.
9. We will support the delivery of the National Commitment and improving performance of services at a local level. We will be working with the **Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA)** to develop a range of measures to help local authorities find their own innovative solutions to improve local services for older people. These will include embedding the good practice learned from LinkAge Plus.<sup>6</sup> It will assist local authorities in developing strong, local leadership, to build constructive partnerships and develop joined up services, tailored to the particular needs of their local areas.
10. Joan Bakewell's role as a government-appointed independent Voice of Older People<sup>7</sup> is one example of how we have promoted older people's issues in the media and Older People's Day continues to provide a chance each year on 1st October to highlight the contribution that older people make in their community.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> If you would like to respond to the consultation please visit [http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH\\_108887](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_108887) or contact the Age Consultation Team at Room 602, Department of Health, Richmond House, 79 Whitehall, London SW1A 2NS

<sup>6</sup> [www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/ageing-society/resources-good-practice-reports/linkage-plus](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/ageing-society/resources-good-practice-reports/linkage-plus)

<sup>7</sup> Joan Bakewell's Annual Report: [http://www.equalities.gov.uk/pdf/299763\\_GEO\\_VoiceOfOlderPeople\\_acc.pdf](http://www.equalities.gov.uk/pdf/299763_GEO_VoiceOfOlderPeople_acc.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Celebrated on 1 October every year and supported by Government, many local authorities and charities now

11. The **UK Advisory Forum on Ageing** was created in July 2009 to provide a direct link between Government Ministers, older people and the organisations that represent them. Regional Forums have now been set up and play an active role in ensuring that older people are involved in implementing the strategy at national, regional and local level.
12. As part of the age-friendly design programme we are now sponsoring the Royal College of Art and the Design Business Association's **2010 Inclusive Design Challenge**, which brings older people and design companies together to work on ideas for inclusively designed goods and services. The winner of the 2010 challenge will be announced on 4 March. We will continue to promote the inclusive design agenda.
13. **Generations Together**, a £5.5m fund designed to test different kinds of intergenerational activity has now chosen 12 projects from around the country to be funded for 2 years. Successful initiatives range from plans to use Portsmouth's nautical and maritime heritage to bring together older and young people to programmes addressing widening gaps in tolerance between young and older people in Wakefield.<sup>9</sup> We will continue to identify opportunities to promote and support such activity.
14. During 2010, the new Vetting and Barring Scheme that will complement the current Criminal Records Bureau checks carried out for volunteers working with children and vulnerable adults will come into operation. This will make the system more accessible and easy to use.<sup>10</sup> In particular registration with the new scheme will be one-off and last for life no matter how many different schools or organisations an individual might volunteer with in the future.

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use the day to provide opportunities for older people to find out about and try opportunities available to them and to run events with an intergenerational theme.

<sup>9</sup> For more information about the programme and the successful bids please visit [www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn\\_id=2009\\_0140](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2009_0140)

<sup>10</sup> More information on the new scheme along with FAQs and myth busting can be found at: [www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/safeguardingandsocialcare/safeguardingchildren/vettingandbarringscheme/vettingvadbarring/](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/safeguardingandsocialcare/safeguardingchildren/vettingandbarringscheme/vettingvadbarring/)

## 2

## Preparing well for later life

## Consultation responses

1. We announced two information and advice projects in the strategy. The **‘one stop shop’** – a service designed to help people plan for later life and **Active at 60** – a service to let people know about the opportunities and entitlements available as they approach later life. We asked people what types of information they would like to see as part of the one stop shop<sup>11</sup> and at what stages in life it would be most useful to receive such information.<sup>12</sup>
2. Consultation feedback told us that the current name of ‘one stop shop’ has led to some confusion about what the service would be and emphasised the **importance of supplementing online information** resources with telephone and face-to-face advice services. Many people suggested that the website should be promoted to organisations that already provide information so that they can signpost people to reliable, up-to-date material. The types of information people most wanted to see on the site were: money, career, housing, care, health and staying active.
3. The majority of people felt that there should be an increased emphasis on providing information and advice to people who are approximately five years away from retirement. We also asked for feedback on how and from whom people would prefer to receive this information.<sup>13</sup> Preferences ranged from hard copy leaflets to newspapers, TV and local media. People stressed the importance of information on local opportunities.

*“Need more regular information in local free newspapers about activities and opportunities in later life.” (AgeWell Wednesbury)*

4. There were three preferred sources of information: the **Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) or another Government department; local or county councils; or local or national charities.** At consultation events, many participants said that they preferred to source information informally through friends and family but recognised that these people may not be the experts.

<sup>11</sup> Consultation question 1. There will be a new ‘one stop shop’ to bring together information and services for people planning ahead, what else would you like to see?

<sup>12</sup> Consultation questions 2. At what stages in your life is it most useful to receive information about opportunities and entitlements?

<sup>13</sup> Consultation question 3. How would you prefer to receive information about these opportunities and entitlements? Who would you prefer to receive this information from?

## Developments since publication of the strategy

5. The **‘one stop shop’** will be given a new name. The service will include web content on Directgov which will provide an overview of the main areas. It will also signpost customers to more comprehensive information and advice elsewhere on the internet.<sup>14</sup>
6. Some of the services that link to the ‘one stop shop’ offer advice over the **telephone and face-to-face**. We will provide training to advisors in these services to help them to identify customers who might benefit from assistance in planning more holistically for their later life so that they can refer them directly to a service that can provide expert advice in the area they need.
7. **Active at 60** will bring together information about a range of **national opportunities and entitlements** and communicate this widely. Working in partnership, we will develop a communications campaign that encourages people to make active plans for their retirement, giving them the information they need in the way that they want to receive it so that they can make the most opportunities available.
8. To consider the best way to provide the local information that people have asked for, we are working with several Local Authorities to develop the potential for using **‘smart’ card technology** to better connect people in later life with their local services. We will encourage other local authorities to consider using smart cards in their areas at a good practice event in March.
9. ‘Smart’ cards are designed to give people access to a number of services and opportunities using only one piece of identification – currently people in some areas have separate cards for their bus pass and library card. However a number of places have been trialing the use of these ‘smart’ cards and they are demonstrating real benefits for local people. Active at 60 will support further testing in two areas of the country.

### ‘Smart’ cards

In Bracknell Forest, people over 60 can use smart cards to access a number of council services – including the library, bus travel, certain sports facilities such as swimming – and to get discounts from over 100 local businesses. An additional benefit of the scheme is that people no longer need to travel into town to register for free bus travel. Instead it is possible to register for any service that is available with the card at any location that uses them. This is of particular benefit to people with mobility or transport problems.

<sup>14</sup> This will include other information on Directgov, Moneymade clear and First Stop , and new services such as the NHS Mid-LifeCheck and the Adult, Advancement and Careers Service

## 3

## Living well in later life

## Consultation responses – a flexible retirement

- I. We asked people what more could be done to make sure businesses understand the benefits of recruiting and retaining employees aged over 50 and how can we encourage people to think about working for longer if they want to. A number of respondents and many participants felt strongly that the decision about whether or not to work longer should be a real choice for the individual but suggested a number of ways that this choice could be promoted:
  - Removing the Default Retirement Age (DRA) so that employers are not able to make people retire at 65;
  - Employers could offer and allow more **flexible working packages** including working part time and from home;

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*“Instead of focusing on how to ease people out of the workplace when they reach a certain age, employers could refocus their sights on the benefits to be gained from an ageing workforce, providing a strong role model for the younger employee.” (Lewisham Pensioners Forum)*

- More support provided to people doing manual jobs so that they have a better opportunity to consider and take up **retraining and career change options**;
- More **positive attitudes from employers** towards older workers would encourage them to work longer. One example of good practice suggested was the CBI and the TUC both of whom have champions that promote carrying on working past State Pension age;
- More and earlier information about pension entitlements would help people to evaluate their options prior to retirement;
- Dispelling myths that older people are less reliable and block jobs for younger people. It is often argued that there is a limited number of jobs in the economy and that older people staying in work block younger people from jobs. However, there is strong evidence that this is not true, and in fact an increase in the employment of older workers can actually lead to an increase in job opportunities for younger people.

*“With so many young people needing jobs as well I find it difficult to justify forcing people to work longer” (individual respondent)*

## Developments since publication of the strategy

2. The call for evidence on the future of the DRA ended on 1 February 2010. We will be making an announcement on the outcome of the review in due course. In the Pre-Budget Report in December we announced that we will build on our successful Age Positive Initiative, by introducing a **National Guidance Initiative** to help employers create new, flexible, job opportunities for older workers.
3. The 'one stop shop' will include signposts to detailed **information about people's options for working longer** available through Directgov at the Build a Better Future website.<sup>15</sup>
4. In *Building Britain's Recovery: Achieving Full Employment*<sup>16</sup> published in December 2009 we announced **new employment measures specifically aimed at people over 50 who need extra support:**
  - Additional time and training for Jobcentre Plus advisers
  - New specialist back to work support for the over 50s
  - Widening access for over 50s to work trials
  - Enabling people over 50 with significant barriers to employment to get access from the start of their claim to the extra support (including training, recruitment subsidies and self employment support) normally available after 6 months of claiming benefit
5. We also announced in the Pre-Budget Report that from April 2011, people over 65 will be able to access **Working Tax Credit** if they work 16 hours or more per week (rather than having to work at least 30 hours a week, as currently, unless they qualify for the 50+ return to work Credit).

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## Consultation responses – staying active and keeping connected

6. We asked a consultation question about what helped people to stay mobile and active after they stopped driving.<sup>17</sup> There was almost universal praise for the **bus pass**, although there were some concerns about its limitations and variations in how different areas were using the scheme.
7. Many people mentioned the importance of access to the wide range of alternative and supplementary transport options, including:
  - **taxi vouchers**
  - **'Dial a ride'** and other community transport schemes
  - Mobility aids such as walkers and scooters

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<sup>15</sup> [www.direct.gov.uk/betterfuture](http://www.direct.gov.uk/betterfuture)

<sup>16</sup> [www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/welfare-reform/legislation-and-key-documents/building-britains-recovery/](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/welfare-reform/legislation-and-key-documents/building-britains-recovery/)

<sup>17</sup> Consultation question 9: When you stopped driving, what helped you stay mobile and active in you community. What options would have helped?

- The **Blue Badge scheme** for those with disabilities
  - **Buddying schemes** for those not familiar with public transport
  - Promotion of **car sharing and car pooling**
8. Many respondents said that they do still drive and plan to continue to do so. Some had attended local driving refresher courses and had found these very helpful and there was a demand for greater access to similar schemes. Some respondents mentioned the high cost of car insurance in older age and expressed hope that the new Equality Bill would help to address this.<sup>18</sup>

*“I’m still driving but I applaud the initiative to help me stay driving. I have my bus pass but quite honestly the only thing that would make me give up my car would be a National Off-peak Travel Pass with a concession for car hire/taxi use at my destination.” (Individual respondent)*

9. Many responses cited **good physical health** as the cornerstone of their mobility and independence and pointed out how important it was to have ‘something to go to’ and services that enabled them stay connected with friends and family – for example telephone and access to computers.

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## Developments since publication of the strategy

10. The £2.9m **‘Get Digital’** programme will be delivered by the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education and Digital Unite and will provide around 7,800 people in sheltered housing with access to computers and the training they need to make the most of the new technology on offer. The scheme will also link up with local schools to encourage intergenerational learning activities and community involvement.
11. We launched a **Transport Solutions for Older People**<sup>19</sup> resource guide in October 2009 to help local authorities understand the transport needs of older people. Options can include extending community transport schemes by using brokerage schemes to ensure that under-utilised vehicles are put to good use at all times and improving provision of route planners and accessibility planning.
12. The **Active at 60 programme** will encourage people to get out and about and explore what is available, such as free swimming and access to national museums, to help them to remain, or to get more, active. We will also highlight the importance of good health and the benefits of screening programmes, free eye tests and opportunities for taking part in physical activity.

<sup>18</sup> Government Equalities Office ran a parallel consultation on the age-related regulations in the Bill between June and September 2009 and a response was published in January.

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/inclusion/older/transportolutions.pdf>

13. **Befriending services** for older isolated people enabling them to remain active and stay independent for longer were recommended by several respondents. We will explore working with the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation to promote understanding of the benefits of this kind of activity.
14. We will shortly be announcing the ***Safe and Confident Neighbourhoods strategy***. This will ensure that the specific crime/antisocial behaviour needs of each neighbourhood, including those particular to older people, are addressed. We are also working with Age Concern and Help the Aged, Neighbourhood Watch groups and others to specifically address older people's fear of crime.



# 4 The right support for those who need it

## Consultation responses – older people at the heart of families

1. The desire for ongoing financial support as a way of enabling older people to live well in later life and to cope when their support needs increase continued to be an underlying message in the responses. Measures to help people stay in control of their lives and live independently for longer were also welcomed by many participants.
2. A small number of people felt that with an increasingly healthy ageing population the age at which people receive other pensioners benefits should go up, although some people pointed out that this was not fair on communities with much lower life expectancies.
3. We specifically asked what else is needed to enhance and support the role of grandparents<sup>20</sup> and Ministers held a Grandparents Summit in November 2009 to explore these issues in more detail.
4. Many people suggested that Government should do more to recognise the varied roles that grandparents and older role models within the community play. Where grandparents play a particularly significant role in their grandchildren's upbringing there was a strong message that that they should receive formal **recognition and support** in this role.
5. Many people felt strongly it was not generally appropriate for the state to become more routinely involved in the relationship between grandparents and their families. Some pointed out that many people who are not grandparents in any formal sense had important relationships with younger people.
6. However some suggested that it might be appropriate for some targeted measures of assistance to be offered to grandparents who suffer financially as a result of their caring responsibilities.

## Developments since publication of the strategy

7. We will continue to ensure that older people have the financial support they need to enjoy the opportunities of later life. In the recent Pre-Budget Report we announced:
  - **Basic State Pension** – Despite negative inflation the standard rate of the basic State Pension will increase by 2.5% to 97.65 a week from April 2010, an increase of £2.40 a week;
  - **Winter Fuel Payment** – the current payment of £200 a year for qualifying households with someone aged 60-79 and £300 for households with someone aged 80 and over will

<sup>20</sup> Consultation question 4. What else is needed to enhance and support the role of grandparents?

be increased again this year by an extra £50 for 60-79 year olds and an extra £100 for households with someone aged 80 and over:

- **Pension Credit** – To provide additional support for those who need it most the Pension Credit standard minimum guarantee will increase by £2.60 a week to £132.60 for single pensioners and by £3.95 a week to £202.40 for couples. This will ensure that those on the lowest incomes benefit from the increase in the basic State Pension;
- **Cold Weather Payments** – extending the increase in Cold Weather Payments to £25 a week for winter 2009-10;
- **Warm Front** – Additional £150m for next year's (2010/11) Warm Front Scheme. This takes funds to £345m next year; with this funding; we expect to be able to help up to an additional 75,000 households; and
- An increase in the amount of help provided by energy companies from £150 million currently to £300 million a year by 2013-14. These resources could provide discounts for an additional one million households.

8. The Pre-Budget report announced that the eligibility age for pensioner benefits currently available at age 60; such as concessionary fares and free NHS prescriptions, will rise alongside the female State Pension Age which increases from 60-65 between April this year and 2020.
9. The **Partnerships for Older People Projects** (POPPs) programme is intended to support investment in preventative services for older people in ways that can make a real and practical difference. This ranges from providing support with shopping, gardening and collecting prescriptions to preventing hospital admission and facilitating timely discharge from hospital through rapid response, rehabilitation and rehabilitation services.
10. Current POPP projects are successfully helping to improve the quality of life for older people in five key areas: mobility, washing/ dressing, usual activities, pain and anxiety. The interim evaluation found that POPP pilot sites had a demonstrable effect on reducing hospital emergency bed-day use when compared with non-POPP sites. The results show that for every £1 spent on POPP, an average of £0.73 will be saved on the per month cost of emergency hospital bed-days.<sup>21</sup> The National Evaluation of the POPP programme was launched on 18 January and we will be building on this learning to encourage the roll out of similar services in the future. The evidence base for investment in prevention that has emerged through the evaluation has meant that all but a few of the POPP projects have secured mainstream funding.
11. A number of ministers from across Government held a Grandparents Reception in December 2009 to celebrate a group of inspirational grandparents and their grandchildren.

<sup>21</sup> [www.dh.gov.uk/prod\\_consum\\_dh/groups/dh\\_digitalassets/@dh/@en/@pg/documents/digitalasset/dh\\_089539.pdf](http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/@pg/documents/digitalasset/dh_089539.pdf)

12. *Support for All: the Families and Relationships Green Paper*<sup>22</sup> was published in January 2010 and recognises the importance of older generations in family life. Amongst other things, it removes a legal hurdle for grandparents applying for contact with their grandchildren. As announced in the April 2009 Budget, in 2011 **National Insurance credits for grandparents** will be available for those who care for members of their family aged 12 or under for more than 20 hours a week was widely welcomed.

## Consultation response – support for carers

13. We specifically asked people what kind of support they had found useful when caring.<sup>23</sup> In response, there was a clear message that well-signposted access to reliable **information and advice** was vital, particularly when people first become carers. People also welcomed opportunities for regular breaks – in particular **respite care**. A number of people mentioned the difficulties of **balancing working and caring** responsibilities and benefits offered by employers who were offered more flexible working patterns.

## Developments since publication of the strategy

14. In November 2009 the **Personal Care at Home Bill** was introduced in Parliament. The Bill will help around 400,000 people with the highest care needs. It guarantees free personal care for 280,000 people – including those with serious dementia or Parkinson's disease – and, will also help around 130,000 people who need home care for the first time to regain their independence. The legislation is intended to be the first step toward a new National Care Service.
15. The Directgov website<sup>24</sup> and Carers Direct<sup>25</sup> provide carers with accessible and reliable information. Specific information and guidance on benefits for carers can be obtained from a variety of sources, including Directgov, the Carers Allowance Unit, the Benefit Enquiry Line,<sup>26</sup> and Jobcentre Plus offices.
16. The national Carers strategy<sup>27</sup> is currently testing innovative and personal ways in which breaks may be provided at 25 sites across the UK.
17. There are a number of initiatives designed to support carers who work:
- **Employers for Carers** service<sup>28</sup> designed to help employers retain staff with caring responsibilities

<sup>22</sup> [www.dcsf.gov.uk/supportforall/](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/supportforall/)

<sup>23</sup> Consultation question 5. What support have you found helpful when you have been caring for others?

<sup>24</sup> [www.direct.gov.uk/caringforsomeone](http://www.direct.gov.uk/caringforsomeone)

<sup>25</sup> For more information on the services provided by Carers Direct please see their website [www.nhs.uk/Carersdirect/Pages/CarersDirectHome.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/Carersdirect/Pages/CarersDirectHome.aspx) or Call Carers Direct on 0808 802 0202

<sup>26</sup> 0800 882 200

<sup>27</sup> [www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_085345](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_085345)

<sup>28</sup> For more details about Employers for Carers, how to join and what services are available please visit [www.employersforcarers.org](http://www.employersforcarers.org), email [employers@carersuk.org](mailto:employers@carersuk.org) or telephone 020 7378 4975

- **Care Partnership Managers** in Jobcentre Plus (JCP) to break down the barriers that carers may face in return to paid employment, and representing carers' employment interests
- Extending JCP's programme eligibility to all carers who work less than 16 hours a week and paying for the cost of replacement care whilst the carer is undertaking approved employment activity.

## NEXT STEPS

18. A lot more work has been undertaken since the strategy was published and the detail of all these changes can be found in the implementation plan at on the *Building a Society for All Ages* website.<sup>29</sup> Hard copies of this document can be obtained by contacting the Age Stakeholder Team using the contact details below. Regular progress reports will also be made at meetings of the UK Forum on Ageing.
19. More information about specific projects being implemented as part of the strategy, including advice about the opportunity to get involved can also be requested by contacting:

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The Age Stakeholder Team  
Department for Work & Pensions  
Level 5, Caxton House  
Tothill Street  
London SW1H 9NA  
Email:allages@hmg.gov.uk

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<sup>29</sup> [www.hmg.gov.uk/buildingasocietyforallages](http://www.hmg.gov.uk/buildingasocietyforallages)

# A Good Place to Grow Older – A National Commitment

## **A Good Place to Grow Older – A National Commitment to support a local response to the challenges and opportunities of our ageing population.**

This document sets out a new commitment from central government and national organisations to encourage and support Local Strategic Partnerships to develop their areas as *good places to grow older*. We set challenges for ourselves and the departments, agencies and organisations that we represent, and call upon Local Strategic Partnerships to mirror our pledges.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 People in the UK are living longer than ever before. Over the last century, average life expectancy has increased by thirty years and will continue to increase. Fifty years ago one child in ten could expect to live to be 100, today it is one in four.<sup>1</sup> And the baby boomers, who have boosted the working age population in recent decades are now reaching retirement age. This has meant that in 2007, for the first time in the UK, there were more people over State Pension age than children. An ageing society is no longer coming tomorrow – it is here with us today.<sup>2</sup>
- 1.2 Our ageing society presents real opportunities, but also raises challenges for all levels of Government and partner organisations. It is now more important than ever to recognise the needs and aspirations of increasing numbers of older people, and to commission and deliver services in the most effective way. It is vital that national and local government and their partners listen to and address the needs of today's older people, and prepare for the future.
- 1.3 *Building a Society for All Ages*, the Government's strategy for our ageing society recognises the fact that people living longer is a cause for celebration. It identifies the need for a major cultural shift to build a society where a person's role, value and contribution are not defined by their age. The approach it sets out seeks to ensure people can prepare well for later life, are able to enjoy their later years to the full, and can access the right support when they need it, wherever they may live. It also identifies the key delivery role of local leaders as part of Local Strategic Partnerships to develop communities that are *good places to grow older*.
- 1.4 National Government, local government and partners are already working together to respond to demographic change. This is demonstrated, for example, by: *The National and Local Government Concordat*<sup>3</sup> which includes a general commitment to anticipating the needs

<sup>1</sup> Latest ONS/ GAD projections

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> HMG and LGA, Central-local Concordat, 12 December 2007

of an ageing population; the *Putting People First Concordat*<sup>4</sup>, which sets out a shared vision and commitment for the transformation of adult social care; *The Learning Revolution*<sup>5</sup> which aims to improve choice and equality in informal learning for older people and their families; *Putting the Frontline First: Smarter Government* which emphasises the policy ambition to set high standards for all services at national level but not prescribing the means to deliver them; the green paper, *Shaping the Future of Care Together*<sup>6</sup> which sets out a vision for a new National Care Service to respond to the demographic changes in society, and; ongoing work to end age discrimination in health and social care.<sup>7</sup>

- 1.5 This National Commitment recognises these existing partnerships and aims to build on action already being taken in many local areas to promote age-friendly attitudes towards planning and the delivery of services.
- 1.6 Using feedback received from the consultation on *Building a Society for All Ages* as a starting point, this Commitment has been developed and signed by individuals representing Government and organisations who have pledged to recognise the important progress already being made and to help build a society for all ages, in all places.
- 1.7 This Commitment is an expression of the shared purpose of its signatories to support local partnerships to work with older people in developing local plans, strategies, and services that will enable them to live a full and independent life within their communities. It sets a clear expectation and challenge for local leaders and partners to adopt these national pledges and translate them into action at a local level to achieve positive outcomes for older people.

## 2. Vision

- 2.1 Our vision is that *all our communities should be good places to grow older*, where the independence, wellbeing and participation of older people is supported and developed, and where the challenges and opportunities of an ageing society are addressed.

## 3. Guiding principles

- 3.1 We agreed that the following principles should be shared at a national, regional and local level to guide the delivery of our vision:
  - (i) **Enabling** local leadership through central government support.
  - (ii) **Building** on what works well already without creating additional burdens.
  - (iii) **Age-proofing** services and embedding equality.

<sup>4</sup> LGA, ADASS, NHS, HMG, Putting People First, 10 December 2007

<sup>5</sup> The Learning Revolution, Department for Business Innovation & Skills March 2009

<sup>6</sup> Shaping the Future of Care Together (HMG, 14 July 2009)

<sup>7</sup> Achieving Age Equality in Health and Social Care, Sir Ian Carruthers OBE and Ian Ormondroyd

- (iv) **Recognising** – and understanding the impact of demographic change in urban and rural areas
  - and planning for the changing needs of tomorrow's older people, as well as those of today's
  - and valuing the social and economic contribution made by older people to their families and neighbourhoods
  - the diversity, isolation, exclusion and vulnerability of older people in terms of age, ethnicity, health and social care and support needs, housing, and poverty
  - financial constraints.
- (v) **Supporting** – changes in culture, attitudes and behaviours to promote fairness, equity, and a positive approach to ageing by individuals, local communities and organisations
  - purposeful and influential community engagement.
- (vi) **Promoting** – joint commissioning, including through Local Strategic Partnerships
  - joining-up service delivery across all sectors
  - understanding and respect between generations.
- (vii) **Communicating** in ways that recognise the needs and preferences of individuals, including those who have special needs.

## 4. Pledges

4.1 To achieve our vision we pledge to work together as an Ageing Society National Partnership that will:

- (i) Encourage Local Authorities, Primary Care Trusts and other partners to consider our guiding principles when developing their strategies, plans and service delivery, and in particular their Sustainable Community Strategies, Local Area Agreements and commissioning arrangements.
- (ii) Recognise and share existing good practice on age-proofing in policy making, strategic planning and service delivery.
- (iii) Encourage and support local partnerships to engage and involve their communities on ageing issues, in line with the aims and principles of the duty to involve, so as to clearly understand the needs and aspirations of local people in order to identify local priorities.
- (iv) Support the continued involvement of the Third Sector, businesses and user-led organisations in the design, delivery and evaluation of local services.
- (v) Encourage local partnerships in their transformation towards prevention and early intervention, in terms of planning, commissioning and service delivery to promote

wellbeing, health, safety, participation in community life, independence, and to alleviate poverty.

- (vi) Assist local partnerships to maximise the joining up of core local services, drawing on LinkAge Plus principles and the experience gained from Partnership for Older People Projects;
- (vii) Communicate positive messages on ageing to help break down stereotypes and inequalities.
- (viii) Encourage local planners to meet the future needs of an ageing society by adopting Lifetime Neighbourhood principles, having regard to statutory planning statements which reflect the needs of the community.

## 5. Taking this forward

- 5.1 To ensure these pledges make a real difference we undertake to work together in developing plans, acknowledging that the local context will be different in each area, sharing good practice of what is working and jointly reviewing progress against our stated vision.

## 6. Signatures

- 6.1 By signing this Commitment we underline our combined role in encouraging and supporting Local Strategic Partnerships to develop and implement *good places to grow older*. We set challenges for ourselves and the departments, agencies and organisations that we represent and call upon Local Strategic Partnerships to mirror our pledges.



**Chief Executive, Audit Commission**

**President, Association of Directors of Adult Social Services**

**Chief Executive, The NHS Confederation**

**Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills**

**Chief Executive of the National Health Service in England**

**Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families**

**Chief Fire Officers' Association**

**Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government**

**Chief Secretary to the Treasury**

**Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport**

**Director General, Society of Local Authority Chief Executives**

**Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change**

**Head of Equality, Diversity, and Human Rights, Association of Chief Police Officers**

**Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

**Home Secretary**

**Secretary of State for Health**

**Minister for the Third Sector**

**Secretary of State for Transport**

**Minister for Women and Equality**

**Secretary of State for Work and Pensions**



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or on request from:

**Age Stakeholder Team  
Department for Work and Pensions  
Level 5, Caxton House  
Tothill Street  
London SW1H 9NA**

**Telephone: 0207 449 7203**

**Email: [allages@hmg.gov.uk](mailto:allages@hmg.gov.uk)**

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