

Section 2

National and local policies



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Introduction

This section provides further information on some of the major government policies relating to older people.

Policies set out what central and local government plan to do to develop or change services. They normally give the big picture to describe the way services should be and the way organisations should deliver those services.

Our Strategy for an Ageing Population has not been developed in isolation. Over the past few years there has been growing national recognition of the need to completely change the way we think about older people and of the challenge presented by an ageing society.

National and local organisations have started to recognise the need to develop new ways of meeting these challenges by developing a range of policies. Our strategy brings these together into a comprehensive framework that will help Lancashire's older people and organisations work together for the benefit of everyone in the county aged 50 or over.

The new debate about public policy and older people

The debate about policy and older people has broadened from the traditional focus on ill health and frailty to a much wider agenda. This covers:

- promoting quality of life and wellbeing;
- tackling age discrimination;
- recognising older people as equals in society; and
- valuing the contribution older people make to their communities.

It means breaking down the barriers which prevent older people enjoying quality of life and independence in older age. These include legal barriers, negative attitudes, financial barriers and a range of often small but critical things which can make the difference between feeling in control or not.

The policy debate emphasises prevention as well as care and support. The Nuffield Institute for Health describes this as 'successful ageing' and 'living well in later years', and argues that giving greater priority to prevention should produce 'a more rounded approach to successful ageing'.

The following paragraphs provide some details of these policies, together with links to useful websites which provide further information.

Better Government for Older People

All changes in public policy have a history. One of the key recent changes in how older people are viewed has been developed through the Better Government for Older People (BGOP) Programme – a partnership between national and local government, the voluntary sector and older people.

'Independence, wellbeing and choice' (a report published in 2003 by BGOP and the Audit Commission) set the tone for this change, as shown in the following extract.

'As yet there is no consensus about what the implications of our ageing society are, but we have an opportunity to shape things for the better. ... We need approaches that help older people to lead independent lives – keeping people healthy, active and able to participate for as long as possible. For older people whose health has begun to fail, we need to find ways to ensure that they do and can live their lives as fully as possible.'

BGOP's Older People's Advisory Group works alongside older people to advise national government and the public sector through its regional structure for modernising older people's services. Its aim is to:

‘Improve public services for older people by better meeting their needs, listening to their views and encouraging and recognising their contribution.’

Its recommendations cover, amongst other things:

- age discrimination;
- involving older people;
- improved decisionmaking;
- better meeting older people’s needs; and
- organisations working together.

It also highlights the importance of adopting a broad, citizenbased approach to tackling inequalities, diversity and social inclusion.

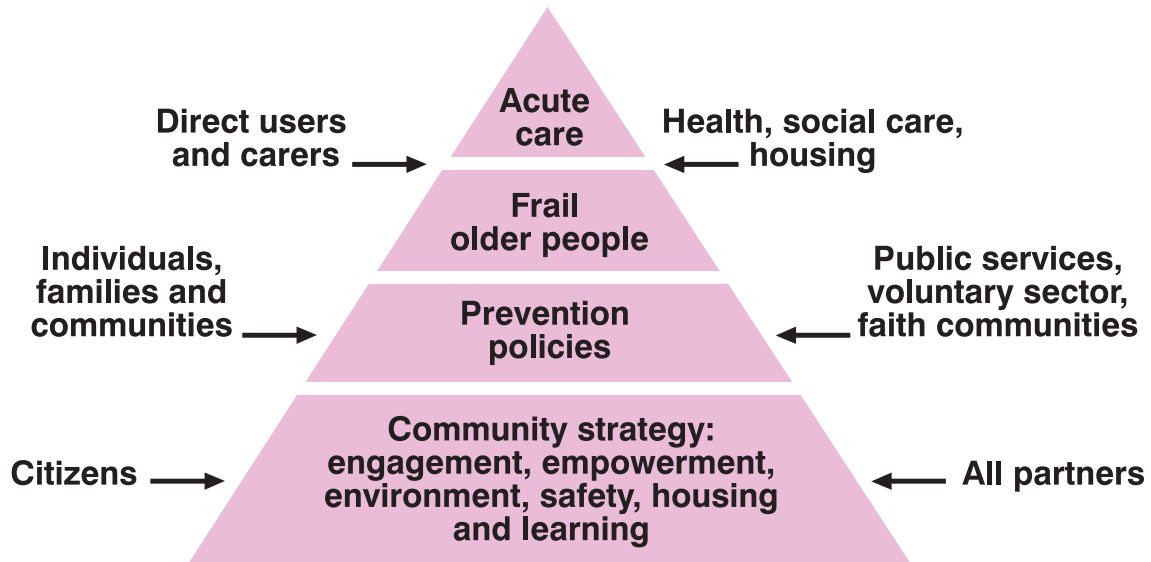
Better Government for Older People is now sponsored by the Department for Work and Pensions, the Cabinet Office and a consortium of national age sector organisations.

You can find out more about BGOP by following the web link www.bgop.org.uk.

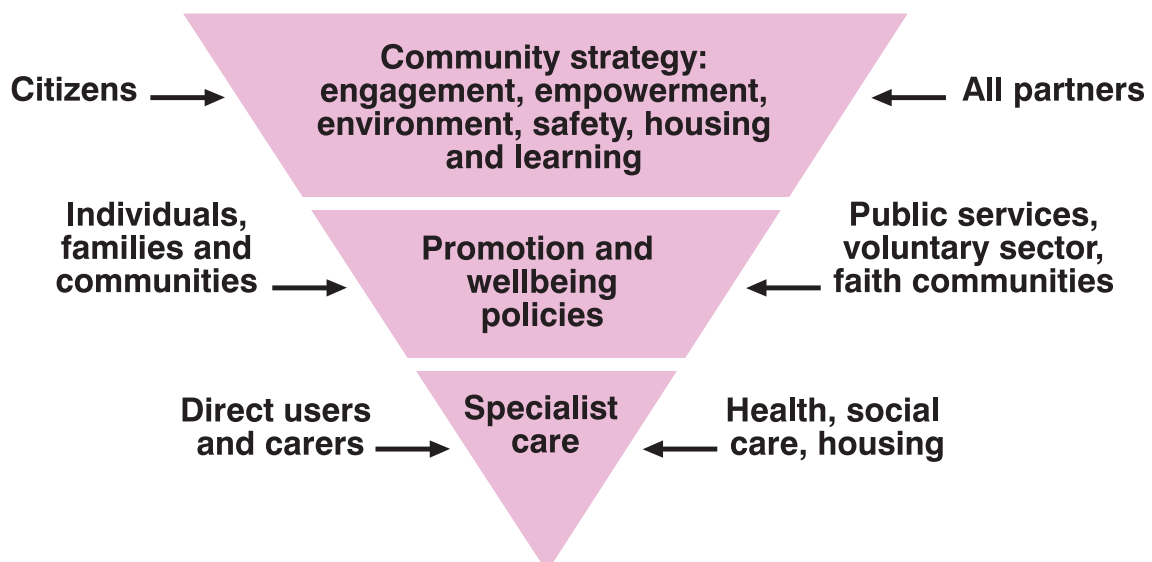
‘All our tomorrows’

This discussion paper recognises the importance of choice and independence for older people. It stresses the need to give older people the power to exercise more control over their lives, generating their own options and developing new opportunities for relationships based on mutual exchange rather than dependency. It’s about not just seeing older people as service users, but as citizens who can and do contribute.

The past



The future



Future services need to reverse the carebased trend by inverting the triangle so that community strategy and promoting wellbeing are at the top. Universal services must be extended to all older people.

You can find out more about 'All our tomorrows' by following the web link www.adass.org.uk or www.lga.gov.uk

'Opportunity age: meeting the challenges of ageing in the 21st century'

This is the government's response to the implications of our ageing society. It consists of a range of policies and strategies which move organisations towards a shared approach to older people. It focuses on the contribution older people can make and sets out key principles for our future society.

'Opportunity age' and 'A sure start to later life' (see below) deal with the complete range of issues that affect older people. There are other national policies that focus on specific issues such as health, social care and housing.

You can find out more about 'Opportunity age' by following the web link www.dwp.gov.uk/opportunity_age.

'A sure start to later life: ending inequalities for older people'

This concentrates on older people who are excluded from community life by poverty, deprivation and poor health. It recognises the importance of:

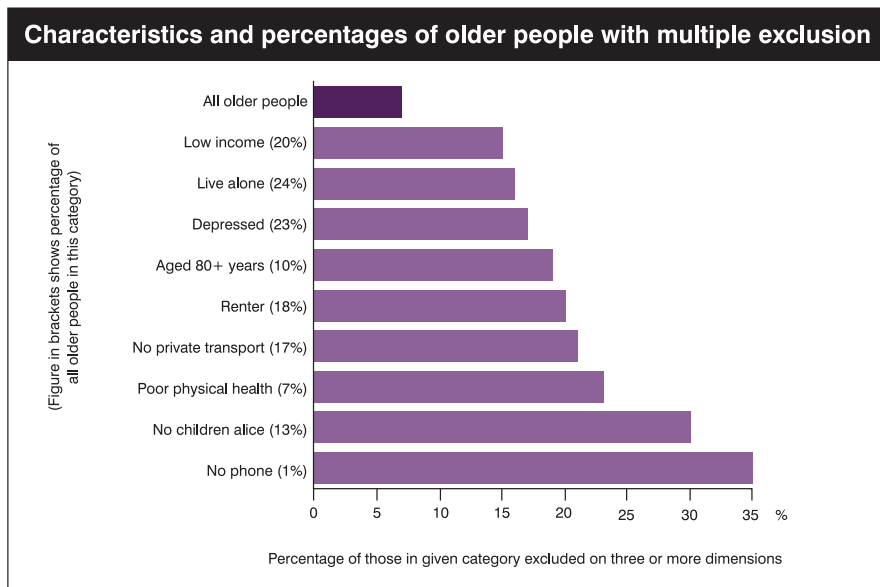
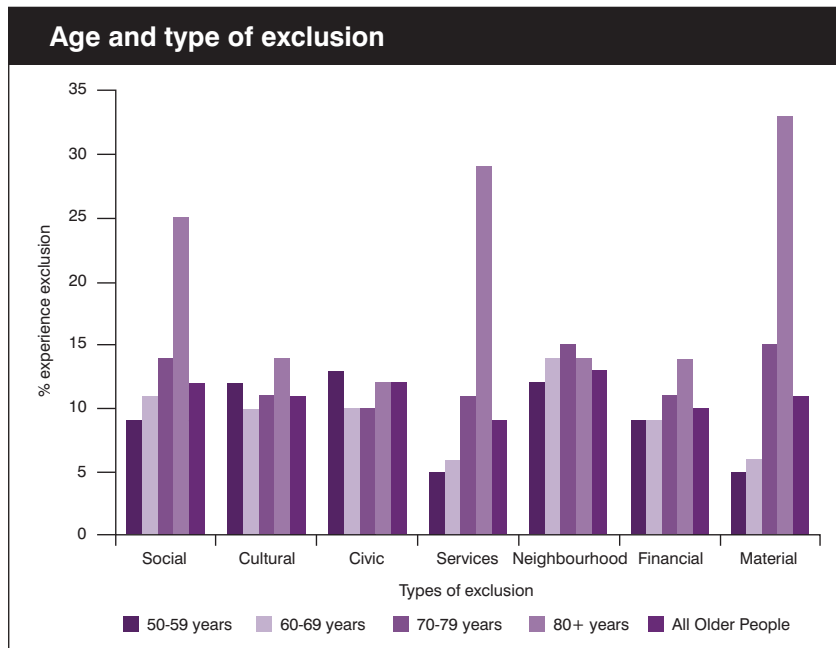
- maintaining basic standards of health and wealth;
- developing communities where no one is left out;
- improving older people's quality of life; and
- helping older people to get involved and continue to have meaningful relationships and roles.

Sure start confirms that exclusion is particularly acute in later life and suggests three main reasons for this.

- People who are excluded in midlife cannot break the cycle of exclusion in later life.
- Exclusion is often reinforced by the effects of key life events, such as bereavement.
- Age discrimination creates low expectations among older people and is a negative

influence on the environment they live in. This in turn creates exclusion, made worse when services do not react.

The charts below show how exclusion happens by age and type of exclusion and the nature of multiple exclusion (exclusion as a result of more than one factor).



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'A sure start to later life: ending inequalities for older people'

You can find out more about 'A sure start to later life' by following the web link <http://archive.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/seu/downloadaddoc7b5f.pdf?id=797>.

Age discrimination and the National Service Framework for Older People

Over the years, governments have moved to tackle all forms of discrimination through legislation. Since 1 October 2006, the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations have made it illegal to discriminate against people because of their age in relation to employment and vocational training.

At the moment, the government has no plans to extend legislation on age discrimination to providers of goods and services. However, the National Service Framework for Older People requires the NHS to make sure it does not discriminate against older people when providing healthcare. And the proposed Commission for Equality and Human Rights will cover age discrimination as part of its remit.

The National Service Framework is a series of standards covering key areas that affect older people's lives. It is a core document that supports and guides a range of services, but particularly those in the NHS.

You can find out more about the National Service Framework by following the web link http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4003066.

‘Choosing health’ – making healthy choices easier

The Public Health White Paper

This document is not specific to older people but sets out how services should be tailored to meet individual needs and delivered in ways from which older people should benefit.

It discusses promoting good health and wellbeing by:

- focusing on lifestyle issues such as smoking, alcohol, diet and physical activity; and
- helping people make informed choices about keeping and staying well throughout their life.

It is part of the public health agenda through regional, local and national directors of public health.

You can find out more about ‘Choosing health’ by clicking [here](#).

‘Independence, wellbeing and choice’ – a vision for the future of social care for adults in England

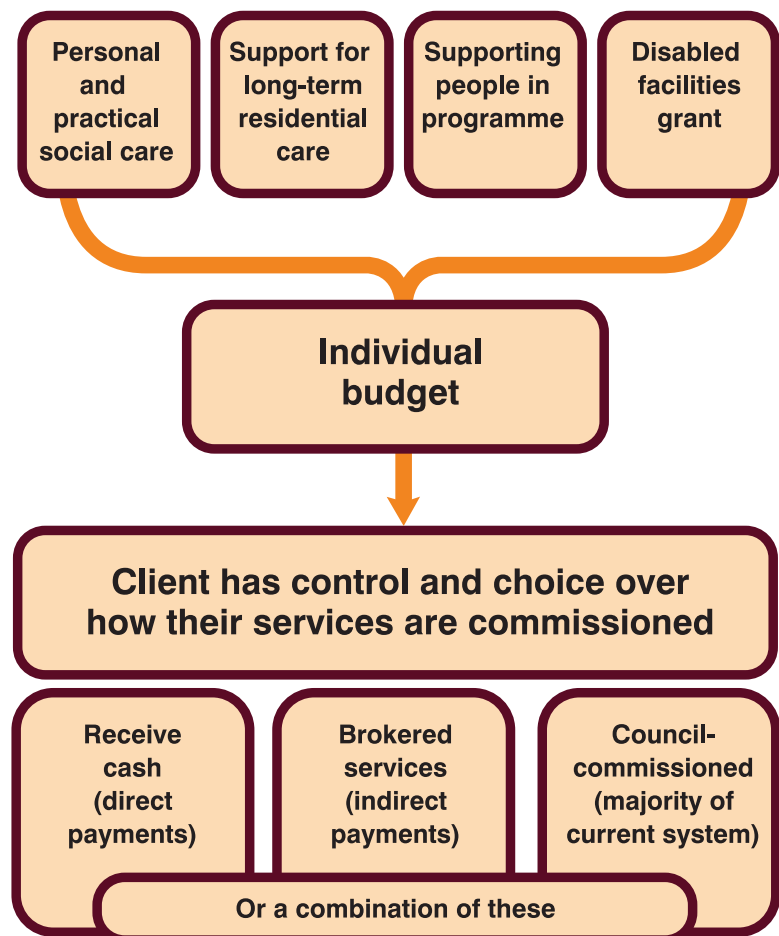
This report recommends seamless, personcentred services with clear outcomes. It looks at strategic leadership so that local authorities introduce the post of director of adult social services (in Lancashire this is the director of adult and community services) to stand alongside the director of children's services. This reorganisation means that we now have separate directorates for children's and adults' social services.

The document also puts greater emphasis on partnerships and joint commissioning of services in relation to prevention, lower-level needs and providing intensive support for those with highlevel, complex needs.

To find out more about ‘Independence, wellbeing and choice’, follow the web link www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Closedconsultations/DH_4116631.

‘Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services’

This document also sets out proposals for community health and social care services. It reinforces the principle of providing health and social care in the community wherever possible. It expands the concept of choice by extending direct payments and introducing individualised budgets, where everyone has a budget to spend on care as they wish. And it emphasises the need to prevent dependency by offering the right services at an earlier stage and helping people to manage their own health and maintain independence.



It also examines in detail the concept of involving GPs and primary care trusts at an earlier stage. There is a commitment to support people with long-term needs, giving GPs more responsibility for local health budgets and allowing them to commission services.

The document creates a National Reference Group for Health and Wellbeing and encourages innovation and partnership services at local level. It creates the opportunity for different providers, possibly from the private or voluntary sector, to become involved in delivering services.

It also establishes an outcomes framework for adult social care which includes many of the principles set out in our strategy. For example:

- improved health and emotional wellbeing;
- improved quality of life;
- making a positive contribution;
- choice and control;
- freedom from discrimination;
- economic wellbeing; and
- personal dignity.

If you want to find out more about 'Our health, our care, our say', follow the web link www.dh.gov.uk/en/policyandguidance/organisationpolicy/modernisation/ourhealthourcareoursay/index.htm.

'Quality and choice for older people's housing'

Housing is a major issue for older people as their needs change with age. This document, along with 'Preparing older people's strategies' (2003) and the Housing Corporation's Strategy for Older People (2003), promotes choice and diversity and the need to develop services around what older people want.

It stresses that most older people live in ordinary rather than specialist housing, and that most of them are homeowners. This means that the government will not be satisfied with older people's housing strategies that focus only on sheltered housing or the rented sector.

The document also considers the large number of equity release and home loan products available to help older people pay for repairs, improvements and adaptations. Local planning authorities will be encouraged to recognise the housing needs of older people in their local development frameworks.

If you want to find out more, follow the web link below http://communities.gov.uk/pub/811/qualityandchoiceforolderpeopleshousingastrategicframework_id1507811.pdf.

Housing and care

In April 2003, the government introduced Supporting People funding, based on people, not the properties they live in. This has helped to reinforce the importance of promoting independence and supporting older people (and other vulnerable groups) at home, if possible, or in supported housing. It means extending housing support services beyond rented sheltered housing – for example to include mobile wardens linked to community alarm schemes or teams who work across an area providing a full range of support to older people in their own homes.

If you want find out more about Supporting People, follow the web link below www.lancashire.gov.uk/social-services/supporting-people/default.asp.

Ambition Lancashire

Ambition Lancashire is our strategic vision for the county to 2025. It is based on the needs and expectations of the people of Lancashire and covers the whole range of issues affecting the county. For older people, the vision is:

‘Lancashire is a county where older people are empowered to live their lives in the way they choose and where their skills and expertise are valued.’

There are two ambitions underlining this vision.

- To maximise life opportunities for older people and involve them in all levels of decisionmaking.
- To promote older people’s health, safety and independence and make sure all older people and their carers are treated with respect, dignity and fairness.

Ambition Lancashire focuses on health and social care but also aims to make sure older people remain visible in other key areas of life in the county. These include employment, learning and skills, rural issues and tourism – all areas of opportunity when we consider the implications of an ageing society.

To view this document, click on the web link www.lancashirepartnership.co.uk.

The Lancashire Local Area Agreement for Older People

Local area agreements (LAAs) are negotiated by local authorities on behalf of their local strategic partnerships (LSP) and their government office. They provide an opportunity to consider, agree and deliver local and national outcomes. They are intended to improve

partnershipworking, achieve efficiencies and align funding streams – all with the aim of improving services to communities and individuals.

‘Strong and prosperous communities’, the local government White Paper, has also set out the future of LAAs as central to delivering sustainable community strategies with a life span well beyond the original three years. The web link is www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1137789.

The Lancashire LAA has been commissioned by the county’s local strategic partnership, with the Lancashire Partnership acting as the umbrella organisation for the 12 district LSPs. Lancashire County Council is the lead authority and accountable body.

In structure the Lancashire LAA is split into four blocks. These are:

- safer and stronger communities;
- children and young people;
- healthier communities and older people; and
- economic development and enterprise.

The LAA sets out several outcomes and a number of measures for each of these four blocks. These outcomes and measures have produced growing partnership activity directed at better outcomes for older people.

There is also a dedicated forum to develop the LAA around older people, which will report to the Healthier Communities and Older People Steering Group. This is an officer group which includes members from many partner organisations. It will oversee the activity around existing measures and lead on a major redevelopment of the LAA. This major redevelopment (or ‘refresh’) will take place during 2007 for the year 2007/08. It will involve reviewing the LAA’s outcomes and measures.

It has been encouraging that the LAA’s existing priority outcomes and measures for older people match those identified in our Strategy for an Ageing Population. We now have the opportunity to bring them together within an overall delivery and development structure and to use the LAA refresh to align all priority outcomes.

Our Strategy for an Ageing Population will be the main influence on the future shape of the Lancashire LAA. The LAA provides the focus and framework for all partners to work together to deliver the priorities identified in the strategy.

Further details on the Lancashire LAA can be found at <http://www.lancashirepartnership.co.uk/content/laa/index.asp>.

District and city council strategies for older people

Several districts and city councils are developing their own strategies for older people. Pendle has had one since 2004 and South Ribble, Wyre and Rossendale now have them in place. Other councils are in the process of developing their strategies.

District and city older people's strategies are an integral part of the overall approach to delivering our Strategy for an Ageing Population. They provide a local focus for delivering key areas such as housing and leisure, and are the primary means of involving older people. The web links for district and city councils are listed in the appendices to this handbook.

Community strategies

All district and city councils have community strategies which set out:

- their vision for their area; and
- broad objectives for delivering their community plan or older people's strategy.

Over time, as community plans and strategies are reviewed and developed, older people will begin to feature more strongly in these important documents.

To view your local community strategy, visit your district or city council's website. Links are provided in the appendices to this handbook.