

# STRATEGY FOR AN AGEING POPULATION PHASE 1:

## ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF OLDER PEOPLE

2009 - 2015





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## INTRODUCTION

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Welcome to Warrington Partnership's strategy for an ageing population - phase 1, which sets out how we, as service providers, are supporting our older population.

This strategy provides a vision of Warrington as a place where people, as they age, will benefit from real opportunity, independence and choice. It provides the framework which will help make our vision a reality.

Our vision for older people is:

**“In Warrington, as people age, they will be valued, respected and enabled to lead as full and independent life as possible in safe, good quality surroundings.**

**They will have access to information and services which promote a healthy and active old age; and for those who need it, responsive, person centred services that promote dignity and choice”.**

Central to this strategy is our belief that as people age, their continued contribution towards a sustainable community is vital. It recognises that the majority of people approaching, or who are past retirement are lively, active citizens, who together make an enormous contribution to community, civic and family life.

Across Warrington Partnership we are committed to promoting positive perceptions of ageing, along with opportunities, ensuring that in Warrington, age is never a barrier to participation.

Warrington Partnership promotes increased opportunities for older people to engage with local organisations and service providers to help shape the way we respond to an ageing society.

## WARRINGTON'S AGEING POPULATION

Our society is ageing. In Warrington, as nationally, we can all expect to live longer, better quality lives.

As a result of influences such as changes in lifestyles, population movements and advances in health and social care, our society is changing in an unprecedented way.

By 2026 43% of the population in the borough will be over 50 and there will also be fewer younger people.

There are three main reasons for this:

- People are living longer now and life expectancy is increasing. In Warrington the average 65 year old man can expect 15.4 years of life ahead of him and the average woman, 18.5 years. The government predicts that in England by 2051, these figures will be increased by a further 6.5 years.
- Advances in health care mean that more people with disabilities and health conditions are surviving through middle to old age
- There has been a long term trend of reduced births, which is resulting in a decline in younger populations. By 2026 the 0-15 years population is expected to decline by 9% and the 16-64 by 4%.

This level of change in the demographics of our population will have a significant impact on our society and how we plan, develop and provide services.

Whilst this strategy takes these changes into consideration, its main focus is on service improvements for older people over the next 5 years.

Further work is required to examine the consequences of an ageing population for all of us over the next 30 years and beyond.

Following the publication of this strategy work will begin on phase 2 to answer a number of key questions:

- What will our population be like in 30 years time?
- How will people live and what services will they require?
- What changes do we need to make now to ensure we can provide effective services for our future generations?

These questions do not just relate to our older communities but to everyone. We face some difficult choices if we are to effectively respond to the needs of a changing population.



## OLDER PEOPLE - A DIVERSE COMMUNITY

Warrington's older population is extremely diverse.

When we talk about an older population, we mean people who are over 50 years old. But the over 50 age range in itself covers a number of significant life stages, namely:

- Working age - those who are around the age of 50 - 65, who still have work and possibly caring commitments, for children, grandchildren or older parents.
- Active retired - those who have no or very few formal working commitments, but are still healthy and active. They may have caring commitments for grandchildren or other members of the family. They may be active in the community and have some level of disposable income to use on activities and interests.
- Retired - those that are infirm or have support needs from either family or social / health care organisations. They may be losing, or have lost, their social network and family members from the same generation, making bereavement, loneliness and feelings of loss a significant issue.

Whilst the boundaries of these life stages are often blurred, each life stage brings different needs, desires and opportunities.

Warrington's older population is also becoming increasingly ethnically diverse. Although Warrington currently has a comparatively small older minority ethnic population (measured at 3% in 2007 for those of pensionable age), given that there are higher numbers of ethnic minorities in the younger age groups, this is likely to increase.

Across Warrington Partnership we are trying to establish improved intelligence about the specific needs of our older ethnic citizens, as there is a lack of local intelligence about their health and social needs.



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It is known that there can be additional challenges for this group of people, for instance with those suffering dementia there is often a gradual loss of English as a second language. There is also a strong association between ethnicity and faith, and faith is often a key element of community life for older people.

Warrington Borough Council recently commissioned research via the Black Health Agency to examine the experience, views and needs of older people from our black and minority ethnic communities.

As people age income deprivation often becomes a more immediate issue. There is a strong geographical pattern of deprivation in Warrington, with most of our more deprived communities based in inner Warrington, with a few pockets of deprivation in outlying areas.

We also know that older women generally have lower incomes than men and older people who live alone are more likely to live in poverty than those who do not. Disabled pensioners are among the poorest nationally and they face additional costs associated with their disability. Geographically isolated pensioners also may face additional costs for goods and services.

However, although we know about particular trends there is still work to be done to identify the individual needs of our older people. There are also specific issues for our older people who are still of working age that need to be explored further.

As with the wider population there are many other issues that the older population faces that are affected by different needs and life choices. Through equality impact assessments, service providers are working to ensure that services are culturally sensitive and there are no barriers to service provision.

# LISTENING TO OLDER PEOPLE IN WARRINGTON

Warrington Partnership and its member organisations engage with older people in a variety of ways on an ongoing basis. Our engagement strategy, “Engaging Warrington”, sets out the principles and objectives of engaging with members of the local community, including older people.

Within this broader approach, there are several well established mechanisms for understanding and engaging with our older communities:

- The Older People’s Partnership Board, a sub group of Warrington Partnership.
- Older People’s Champions including members for Older People; Dignity in Care; and Safeguarding Adults
- Older People’s Engagement Group (OPEG), an umbrella organisation with strategic links to the Older People’s Partnership Board
- Local Involvement Networks (LINKs)
- Warrington Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Joint Intelligence Network
- Older people’s involvement in the Neighbourhood process

This strategy has been built on the engagement work we have undertaken in the last few years and fully incorporates the views of OPEG and the Older People’s Partnership Board which were fed into developing the ambitions and priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

In addition specific engagement during June to December 2008, including a workshop arranged in partnership with OPEG, has informed and added detail to our approach. Representatives of local older people’s groups focussed on the key challenges facing older people in the town and suggested possible solutions.

The table below summarises some key areas raised.

**Table 1 - Summary of older people’s consultation findings**

CHALLENGES	SOLUTIONS
Entitlements and pensions are too complex	Improve and join-up financial advice for older people
Older people sometimes find themselves in houses that are too large and costly	Provide smaller homes, bungalows and sheltered accommodation in local areas where people want to live
Older people can become isolated	There should be more ‘community spirit’ and accessible activities during the day.
Older people want to live in their own homes	Provide more support to allow people to live in their own homes
Voluntary organisations need more support	Provide that support



## IN FOCUS

### Engaging with older people

The Older Peoples Engagement Group (OPEG), an independent membership organisation run by older people, brings together older people from across Warrington to ensure that their voices are heard by those who make decisions affecting the lives of those aged 50 and over.

It influences the planning and delivery of services, particularly in relation to health and social care, housing and care homes, public transport, police and culture and leisure.

OPEG has been successful in:

- Conducting a major survey of older people's experiences when being discharged from hospital and negotiating changes to improve the process.
- Securing agreement from the highways department that pelican crossing times will be adjusted to improve the safety of older people in Warrington town centre.
- Negotiating with Halton Hospital to introduce flexible appointment times for older people.
- Winning concessions on the locations of bus stops used by older people.

## OUR VISION FOR WARRINGTON

Our Sustainable Community Strategy, One Warrington: One Future - Where Everyone Matters, sets out the vision and 5 main ambitions for the community of Warrington.

The overall vision for Warrington is

**“by 2030, Warrington will be recognised as one of the best places to live and work in the UK where everyone enjoys an outstanding quality of life”.**

In pursuing this vision, Warrington Partnership will prioritise closing the gaps in quality of life for our most disadvantaged communities.

Our five ambitions are:

### **PROSPEROUS AND VIBRANT**

Where people benefit from being part of a successful and dynamic economy with vibrant town and district centres.

### **ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE AND ATTRACTIVE**

Where people have good housing, accessible transport and enjoy caring for their environment.

### **SAFE AND STRONG**

Where people are active and supportive in their communities, feel safe and live free from crime and anti-social behaviour.

### **HEALTHY AND ACTIVE**

Where people can enjoy good health and wellbeing.

### **AMBITIOUS AND ACHIEVING**

Where people are inspired and supported to reach their potential and lead fulfilling lives.

# OUR VISION FOR OLDER PEOPLE



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The Sustainable Community Strategy vision and ambitions are for all of our population. Working with the Older Peoples Engagement Group (OPEG) we have amplified the vision and ambitions to give them specific resonance for the needs of our older population.

Our vision for older people is:

**“In Warrington, as people age, they will be valued, respected and enabled to lead as full and independent life as possible in safe, quality surroundings.**

**They will have access to information and services which promote a healthy and active old age; and for those who need it, responsive, person centred services that promote dignity and choice.”**

Our ambitions are:

## **PROSPEROUS AND VIBRANT**

Where older people’s contribution towards a strong economy is both facilitated and recognised and all older people have financial wellbeing.

## **ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE AND ATTRACTIVE**

Where older people benefit from a sustainable, attractive and vibrant environment and have access to a suitable, high quality and affordable home.

## **SAFE AND STRONG**

Where older people feel safe and participate actively in strong and flourishing communities and neighbourhoods.

## **HEALTHY AND ACTIVE**

Where older people enjoy the best health and quality of life possible and are treated with dignity and respect.

## **AMBITIOUS AND ACHIEVING**

Where older people are inspired and supported to lead fulfilling lives and make a positive contribution.

The following pages set out, for each of our ambitions for older people, the issues we need to tackle and the medium term plans for improvement. We have also identified the key questions we will be addressing in the 2nd phase of the strategy.

Older people's contribution towards a strong economy is both facilitated and recognised and all older people have financial wellbeing

## Context

Economic wellbeing, in terms of sufficient income, financial security and the affordability of goods and services, has enormous implications for people as they age. Poverty and low income can affect mental and physical health, as well as restrict independence.

The economic wellbeing of older people in an ageing population also significantly contributes to the health of the local economy itself, as the level of the population's disposable income is affected.

Warrington is traditionally an economically successful borough, with one of the strongest economies in the country, ideally located in the centre of the economic corridor between South Manchester and Cheshire. It was placed in the top ten for employment growth between 1995 and 2005 and although growth has slowed, the borough still has the 12th highest employment rate in the country. With falling numbers of young people entering the labour market, it is essential for the prosperity of the Borough that there is greater emphasis on older people in the workforce, including maintaining and developing their skills.

## Understanding the financial needs of our older people

Warrington's most deprived communities are largely located within However, in order to understand how poverty affects older people in Warrington we need more intelligence about the needs of older people at a community and individual level, as poverty in old age can be influenced by several factors.

## Financial wellbeing through employment

Employment is a key aspect of financial wellbeing and makes an important contribution to keeping older people active. People who are aged over 50 are less likely to be economically active compared to the wider working age population, as many will be retired or unable to work for health reasons.

However, nationally over 1.3 million people above state pension age are now in work and they report higher levels of job satisfaction than younger workers. Older people are recognised as a key employment group within Warrington, with Job Centre Plus implementing New Deal 50+ as part of their package of new deal schemes. Work has also begun on targeting further support at the over 50 working age population to enable access to employment and economic activity.

Warrington Borough Council, as part of a North West based pilot scheme, have secured £50,000 to improve outreach and engagement with the over 50 working age population.

Working in partnership with the Council for Voluntary Service (CVS), Warrington Disability Partnership (WDP), Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), and Job Centre Plus (JCP) the purpose of the programme is to improve the support networks that are available to assist the over 50s with their needs and barriers when maintaining or becoming economically active. The project aims to help older people of working age tackle their own financial insecurity and poverty.



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### Maximising benefit and pension uptake

Warrington Partnership has also focussed on maximising benefit uptake for older people through a successful Local Public Service Agreement. However, the accessibility of advice and support has become even more critical in the current economic climate.

A range of public and voluntary bodies provide advice and support and a series of informative Money Matters DVDs and other promotional materials have recently been produced in partnership with the Widening Active Participation for Older People group (WAPOP) under the theme "Healthy Ageing".

This advice and support needs to be co-ordinated and extended as more people age. Targeted pensions advice and guidance should also be available for young people now in order to help prevent poverty in the future.

### Older people said...

- We face problems accessing information and advice services on things like pensions, benefits and options for our retirement
- We struggle in the town centre with finding parking spaces, getting up and down steps and with not feeling safe, especially after dark.
- When we want to learn new skills we often have to pay, which is difficult for many older people.



## Our priorities for action

### Priority

Make sure older people are financially secure

### Things we will do

- Target 'reducing barriers to work' at the over 50 age group
- Encourage employers to recognise the value of older people
- Use neighbourhood profiles to explore the financial needs of harder to reach communities and individuals at a local level.
- Provide co-ordinated financial advice by developing and better linking existing partnership based services.

### Supporting plans and strategies:

- Warrington Regeneration Framework and Programme
- Town Centre Renaissance Programme
- Maximising Opportunities Programme
- Routeways to Employment programme
- Local Development Framework
- Building a Society for all Ages (Department for Work and Pensions)
- Re-shaping our society for older people (Held The Aged)
- Everybody's future - North West Regional Framework for Ageing (5050 Vision)
- Older Women, Work and Health (Help the Aged)

### Looking forward...

As the population ages our workforce will become older and there will be more people who are retired and on lower incomes.

- How will this affect our businesses and our local economy?
- How will our benefits system cope?
- What do we need to be doing now to prepare the younger generation for a financially secure old age?

# ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE AND ATTRACTIVE



Older people's contribution towards a strong economy is both facilitated and recognised and all older people have financial wellbeing

## Context

Central to living a full and independent life is living in a safe, warm, accessible and affordable home and environment. This becomes particularly important as people age. Our needs change as we get older and being able to adapt to these changing needs with minimum expense and disruption will become even more crucial as our population becomes older and more people find themselves with changing support needs.

## Housing

Housing has been identified earlier in this document as a key priority for older people - the size and types of properties available, issues with isolation and helping people stay in their own homes.

Making sure that older people understand their own needs and the options that are available to them as they get older and increasingly vulnerable is crucial. Making sure that easily accessible support and advice services are available is central to making sure older people can lead an independent life for as long as possible.

We also need to help prevent people from needing to move into sheltered, specialised and nursing care accommodation prematurely.

This will become even more important as the demand increases, spaces become a premium and costs increase. Timely and appropriate aids and adaptations will help to support people to stay safely within their own homes, with further support being needed with home maintenance such as gardening, cleaning, odd jobs and trades.

## Keeping warm

We need to ensure that homes are energy efficient, as fuel becomes more expensive. Fuel poverty damages the health of those living in cold homes and affects their quality of life. Older people, children, and those who are disabled or have a long-term illness are especially vulnerable. According to UK government statistics, under-occupancy is also a factor - on average those in the most extreme fuel poverty live in larger than average homes.

The map on page 19 shows the percentage of households living in fuel poverty by Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) in Cheshire, as taken from the 2001 census. Although the map shows that Warrington generally has low fuel poverty, there is a higher concentration in the Inner Wards as well as in parts of Culcheth, Glazebury and Croft, and Burtonwood & Winwick.

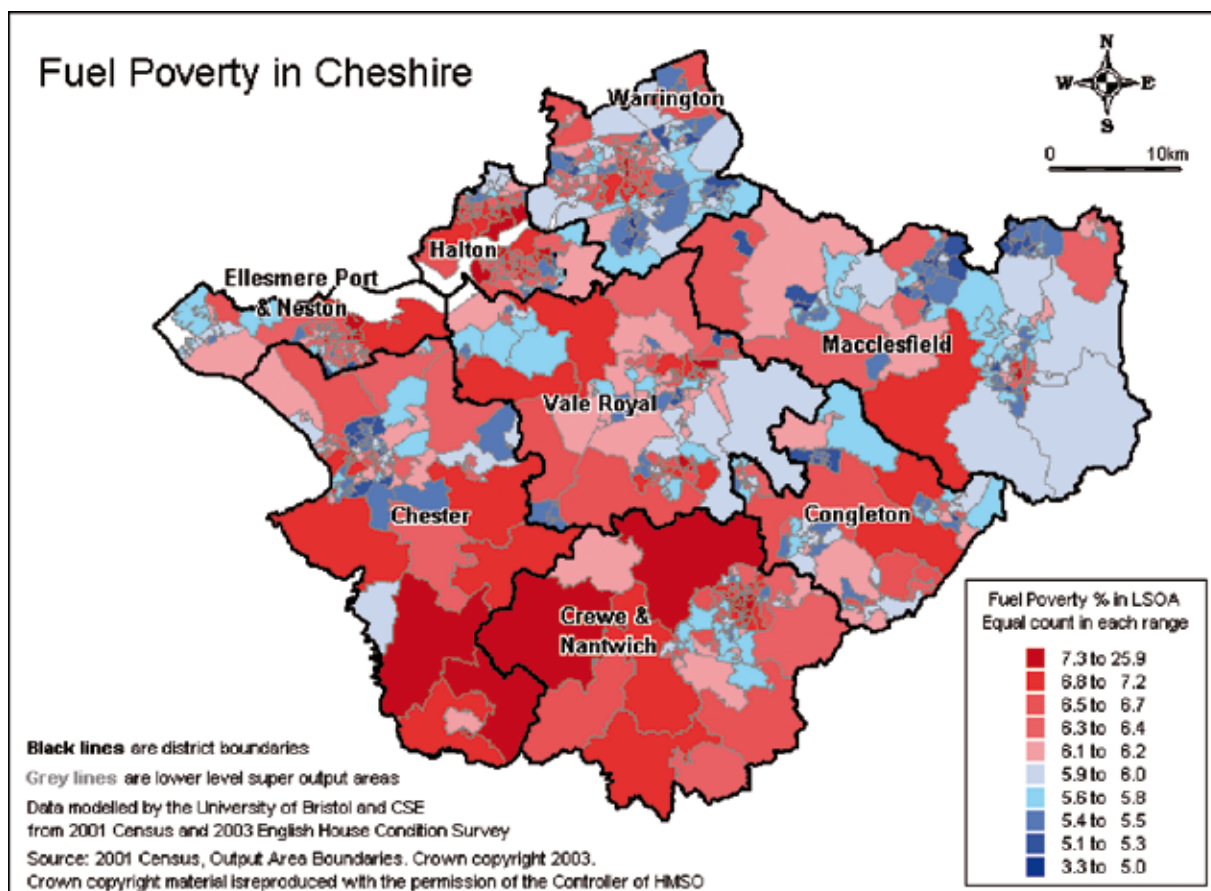
Whilst we know which areas have higher incidents of fuel poverty, we cannot easily identify the individuals affected and therefore target action appropriately. Golden Gates Housing is currently running a survey of their tenants and the initial results will be available end of September. Warrington Borough Council is commissioning research within the private sector and the new National Indicator relating to fuel poverty is included in the Local Area Agreement.

### Preparing for climate change

Whilst work is ongoing to minimise our impact on climate change across Warrington, we are inevitably going to face changes to our climate which will have a direct impact on Warrington, such as more incidents of unpredictable weather conditions.

Many locations in Warrington are susceptible to flooding, including residential areas. This raises the issue of how we plan to care for our residents should they be forced from their homes. Vulnerable residents, including some older people will need particular support in dealing with these types of emergency situations.

The Council's climate change and emergency planning teams are currently working with partners to identify vulnerable households, so that specific plans can be put in place to ensure their safety.



Map provided by the Centre for Sustainable Energy 2008

### Getting out and about

As our population ages the need for flexible public transport becomes even more important. The volume of traffic is growing and we need a range of viable alternatives to the car. With people working till they are older, work patterns are likely to become more flexible with 'rush hour' traffic dispersed throughout the day.

In addition more people will need access to health and other support services throughout Warrington as specialist services are located throughout neighbourhoods.

Public transport and cycling networks will need to respond to this with safe, accessible routes, with a transport network that is appropriate for peoples needs and easy to use.

Maintaining the road and pavement network is also imperative for an older population. Trips and falls due to poorly maintained pavements can be devastating for older people, who are more susceptible to serious injury with longer recovery times.

### Supporting plans and strategies:

- Housing Strategy
- Homelessness Strategy
- Climate change strategy
- Local Transport Plan
- Local Development Framework
- Regeneration Framework
- Warrington Children and Young People's Plan 2009-2011
- Look of the Borough programme
- Building a Society for all Ages (Department for Work and Pensions)
- Re-shaping our society for older people (Held The Aged)
- Everybody's future - North West Regional Framework for Ageing (5050 Vision)
- One Voice - Shaping our ageing society (Help the Aged & Age Concern)

### Older people said...

- We need suitable housing in the areas we want to live. Some of the current accommodation isn't easy to access.
- There is a lack of green spaces in the inner wards and ongoing problems with motorbikes.
- We want to access clean public transport from our front door. Dial-a-ride needs more investment so there are more buses and longer availability times.

Library photos posed by model:PA - John Birdsall





## Our priorities for action

### Priority

Support older people to live independently

### Things we will do

- Develop a partnership housing strategy for older people
- Ensure all new homes are built to 'lifetime home' standards
- Develop co-ordinated advice and support services to assist older people with financial and other housing related issues
- Review aids and adaptations and home maintenance support services to ensure it is effective and well-used

Enable older people to reduce their CO2 emissions and prepare for climate change

- Ensure all new build properties have high levels of insulation and efficient heating systems
- Target energy efficiency initiatives at the most vulnerable older people
- Develop support plans for vulnerable older people in the event of emergencies related to climate change

## Looking forward...

Greater numbers of older people will mean we will need to look carefully at the housing needs of future generations, particularly for older people who have support needs.

- How can we help people live independently for as long as possible?
- How do we ensure there will be enough sheltered and extra care housing units available?
- What impact will greater numbers of older people have on housing for the rest of the population ?

We also need to think about our changing climate and the effect this has on weather conditions. Do we know where our vulnerable older people live and their support needs in the event of an emergency such as flooding or high winds?

We will need to address the greater need for personalised transport.

# SAFE AND STRONG

Older people feel safe and participate actively in strong and flourishing communities and neighbourhoods

## Context

Older people already make a huge contribution to the community and to voluntary organisations. Their time, skills and experience are invaluable to the third sector and consequently to the public sector, who rely on the third sector for many additional services.

Their dedication to improving their community via neighbourhood groups and the electoral process ensures we have communities that are democratically represented and have a say in local decision making. Without the over 50s age group this important aspect of our societal function would be largely defunct.

However, despite this activity and contribution to the wider community, older people often feel unsafe where they live and afraid to leave their home after dark. This can intensify feelings of bereavement, loneliness and isolation that can come with old age, as friends and family from the same generations are lost.

## Contributing to community life

We will continue to enable older people to play a full and active role in their community through contributions to civic, community and family life. This will include tackling age discrimination and other barriers to full participation.

Older people should be fully engaged in influencing decisions and helping to develop the opportunities and services they will need. Neighbourhood approaches will encourage involvement and will take account of the needs of older populations, including hard-to-reach and vulnerable groups. This will happen through involvement in neighbourhood boards and groups, and via information that is available on the needs of older people in the neighbourhood profiles.

## IN FOCUS

### Keeping older people safe

Launched in 2002, the Consumer Alert Network warns members through sharing intelligence about local incidents of doorstep crime and rogue trading via messages by email, voicemail and SMS messaging. The current membership exceeds 2,000 and the most vulnerable communities are targeted, including older people. Members can receive messages directly or through community groups, volunteers or care providers.

The project has been a great success and contributed to Warrington Trading Standards receiving the Municipal Journal Award for Public Protection Achievement in 2006. An example of a positive outcome was when responding to the concerns of an iCAN member, Trading Standards were able to intervene and prevent a 90 year old lady from spending many thousands of pounds on inappropriate security products.



### Being and feeling safe

Despite many older people being active in their community many still have concerns about safety both in their home and their community, and particularly in the town centre.

Much work is ongoing to help older and vulnerable people to be and feel safer, including:

- home security improvements,
- targeted area improvements,
- reassurance activities,
- protection for vulnerable people from rogue traders, and
- positive activities with children and young people.

Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service work closely with Warrington Borough Council and other partners to target the most vulnerable households with home safety assessments. This service will be extended in a pilot project that trains safety officers to assess for other additional needs before referring the person on for further support, if needed.

Cheshire Police provide information and advice to a range of community and older people's groups, including updates on specific problems and ongoing investigations, where appropriate. This is done to reassure local people that work is being done to tackle crime and disorder.

Considerable efforts are also being made to broaden the appeal of the town centre, including new developments such as Golden Square and the bus interchange and reductions in crime and disorder.

### Better understanding between generations

It is vital for community cohesion and sustainability that communities are encouraged to be tolerant and respectful towards each other. Whilst younger and older people engage naturally within families, we need to encourage it within the community as a whole.

Warrington Partnership has been encouraging intergenerational activities and volunteering to help strengthen communities. These types of activities and services will continue to be developed, with the Intergenerational Practice Forum co-ordinating many existing activities and undertaking training to spread best practise, increasing both the quantity and quality of activities.

#### IN FOCUS

#### Extended schools grandparents project

One of many examples of successful intergenerational projects in Warrington was a joint venture across four primary schools in the Bewsey, Dallam and Whitecross area (St Barnabas, Evelyn Street, St Albans and Dallam). The school invited grandparents to return to school for the day. However, the main aim of the project was longer lasting, to encourage grandparents to help children with their homework on an ongoing basis, after brushing up on their basic skills themselves!

### Older people said...

- We want more things to do and places to go, so we can keep socially active.
- There needs to be more police visible on the streets.
- Young people need things to do so that they aren't hanging about on the streets. There needs to be greater understanding between the generations.
- We're concerned about the breakdown of community structures, such as Post Offices and milk delivery.

## Our priorities for action

### Priority

Enable older people to take part in local decision making and enjoy active citizenship

### Things we will do

- Increase volunteering opportunities for older people
- Support projects that reduce isolation and alienation by encouraging participation in leisure and community activities
- Explore opportunities for older people's organisations to work with schools to share skills and knowledge

Reduce fear of crime and help older people feel safe in their own communities

- Provide training to relevant partners to promote the use of holistic home assessments that look at the wider needs of older people and refer as appropriate
- Develop intergenerational activities and share best practice approaches

### Supporting plans and strategies:

- Neighbourhoods Project Plan
- Safer Warrington Strategic Assessment and Partnership Plan
- Neighbourhood Plans
- Community Cohesion Action Plan
- Re-shaping our society for older people (Held The Aged)
- Building a Society for all Ages (Department for Work and Pensions)\* Everybody's future - North West Regional Framework for Ageing (5050 Vision)
- Towards Common Ground - The Help the Aged manifesto for lifetime neighbourhoods

### Looking forward...

We need to consider the impacts of a larger proportion of older people on our community with regard to community safety, cohesion and community life.



Older people enjoy the best health and quality of life possible and are treated with dignity and respect



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## Context

Warrington is working hard to improve healthy life at age 65, which is currently below the average for England, through more activities to keep people's minds and bodies active and healthy for longer.

To achieve and maintain wellbeing, older people need to be able to access a wide range of affordable and quality services, participate and enjoy life within the community, free from financial worries and discrimination. This can only be achieved if we can ensure inclusive and effectively age-proofed universal services alongside well planned targeted services, to prevent the onset of social isolation, physical and mental deterioration.

## Life expectancy

Life expectancy and 'healthy life expectancy', i.e. the number of years spent in good or fairly good health, are linked. Healthy life expectancy is a useful indicator as it is a reliable measure of quality of life.

Currently, older people in Warrington have a slightly lower life expectancy than the England average (0.7 years for both men and women who have reached 65 years) and also less healthy life expectancy.

The tables show that the average 65 year old in Warrington can expect to have 3.8 years (male) and 5.1 years (female) of life without good health. In both cases, this is a longer time than the England averages of 3.6 years for a male and 4.7 years for a female. This means that in Warrington, older people are living slightly shorter lives than the average within which they suffer a slightly longer period of ill health.

Contributing towards these figures, mortality rates amongst the 65-74 year age group are 11% higher in Warrington than the England average (2004-6 data).

## Males

	Life expectancy at 65 years	Healthy life expectancy at 65 years
England	16.1	12.5
Warrington	15.4	11.6
Absolute gap (yrs)	0.7	0.9
% gap	4.3%	7.2%

## Females

	Life expectancy at 65 years	Healthy life expectancy at 65 years
England	19.2	14.5
Warrington	18.5	13.6
Absolute gap (yrs)	0.7	0.9
% gap	3.6%	6.2%

## Dignity and Respect

Warrington Council has been recognised for its achievements by the award of Beacon Council status for Dignity in Care (2008-9). This is not a distinct area of work, but is integral to our approach. The work of this strategy will contribute to this by further enhancing the quality of life, choice and independence of older people.

## IN FOCUS

### 'Stay on your feet'

This targeted exercise and lifestyles programme, run by NHS Warrington, increases independence and helps to prevent physical deterioration. It includes physical activity, muscle strength, balance, flexibility, posture and falls prevention for people over 65 who are able to stand and walk unaided.

The programme lasts 8 weeks, is offered at various community venues and includes exercise, a nice cup of tea and speaker on various topics, for example dental care and emotional wellbeing. The course is free of charge and includes free transport. 136 people have attended so far, and all have shown significant improvement.

## Health and Social Care Services

The vast majority of older people do not require social care services - only approximately 15% of those over 65 are regular users of health and care services. In Warrington the average age of adult social care users is 74, however this includes younger adults who also receive services.

Health and Social Care Services in Warrington are focussing increasingly on ensuring a wide range of preventative services, delivered by public, private, voluntary and independent sectors to help support people to live as independently and healthily as possible.

For those who do require more intensive support, services are focussed on promoting personalisation, choice and control, along with maximum independence. The Transforming Adult Social Care programme aims to give individuals and families control over what care they receive by giving care in the form of a self-directed grant.

Nationally, the NHS has developed a Prevention Package for Older People<sup>1</sup> to integrate and enhance the existing wide range of preventative work on, for example, falls prevention. In Warrington, there is an active programme to encourage lifestyle improvement for all ages and, particularly for older people, an emphasis on fall prevention.

<sup>1</sup> Department of Health, July 2009

[http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_103146](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_103146)



## Mental Health & Dementia

Older people have some different mental health needs, particular dementia and problems coping with declining health and loneliness.

Dementia is a condition in which there is a gradual loss of brain function. There are various forms of dementia; the most common ones predominantly affect older people. There are thus clear implications for dementia prevalence associated with an ageing population.

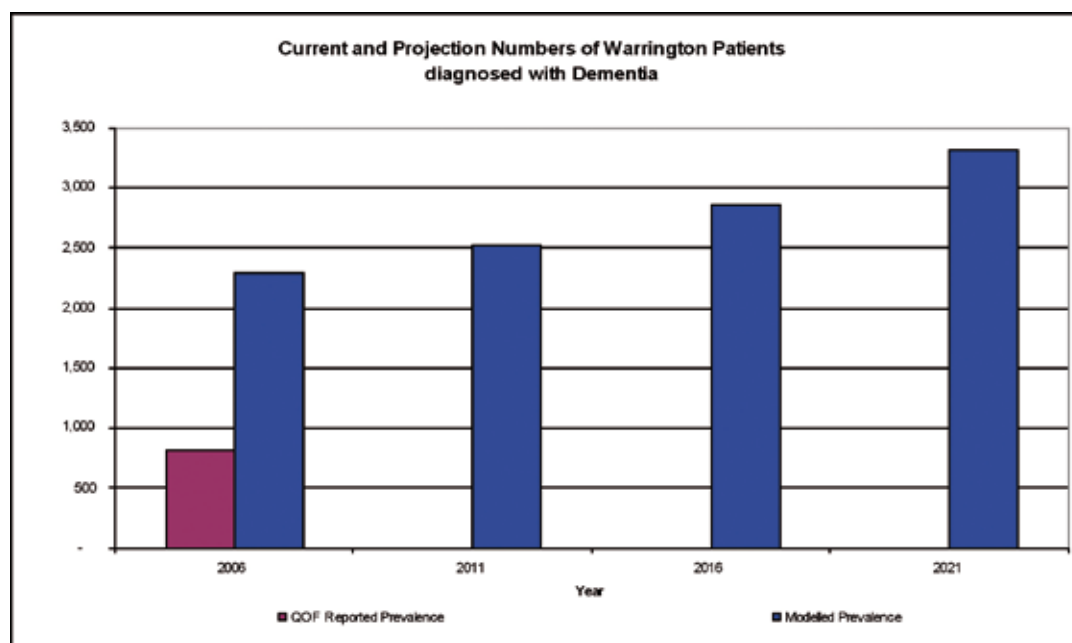
The following chart illustrates local projections for the increase in dementia prevalence for Warrington; with number of people with dementia estimated to increase to over 3,300 by 2021.

There are a wide and increasing range of services available to support people suffering from dementia and their carers in Warrington and these are outlined in our Mental Health Strategy. Living Well With Dementia: A National Dementia Strategy<sup>2</sup> addresses three key issues: raising awareness; early diagnosis and intervention; and improving quality of care and will inform further development of local services.

### Support for carers

Warrington already has a successful Carers Strategy 2007-10, implemented through the Carers Partnership Board. We will build on our achievements by producing a refreshed strategy and follow-on action plan.

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_094058](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_094058)



## Older people said...

- We need more community support for those living in their own homes.
- GP surgeries can be difficult to access, with long waiting times for treatment and appointments
- Co-ordinated working between agencies such as the PCT and WBC could be better.

## Our priorities for action

Priority	Things we will do
Reduce health inequalities for older people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop a health inequalities strategy to develop interventions to address health inequalities for older people in the Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA)</li></ul>
Support older people to live independently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pilot Connected Care, training local people to support people with complex needs</li><li>• Reduce the number of falls</li><li>• Develop borough wide home care re-enablement service</li><li>• Refresh current carers strategy and produce follow-on action plan</li><li>• Develop a co-ordinated approach to health promotion for the over 50s</li></ul>
Make sure health and social care services meet the needs of older people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Give people control over the care they receive by introducing self-directed budgets</li><li>• Develop Integrated Social Care teams across NHS and Social Care</li><li>• Improve end of life care</li></ul>
Reduce the impact of dementia on older people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Implement the Mental Health Strategy and, particularly, a low level dementia prevention programme.</li></ul>

### Supporting plans and strategies:

- Health Inequality Strategy
- Warrington PCT Operational Plan 2008/09 to 2010/11
- Older People's Mental Health strategy
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Warrington Carers Strategy 2007-2010
- Warrington Children and Young People's Plan 2009-2011
- Building a Society for all Ages (Department for Work and Pensions)
- Re-shaping our society for older people (Help The Aged)
- Everybody's future - North West Regional Framework for Ageing (5050 Vision)
- One Voice - Shaping our ageing society (Help the Aged & Age Concern)

### Looking forward...

We need to better understand the impact that an ageing population will have on the demands for health and social care services.

Central Government is currently consulting on how people could pay for social care services in the future. We need to closely watch how this develops so that we are ready to support our residents with the new payment options, and can provide high quality services to those who need it with any new funding arrangements that are introduced.

We need to be mindful that as the population ages demand on care services will increase, so we need to think carefully about how we prevent older people from becoming reliant on social care services.

Older people are inspired and supported to lead fulfilling lives and make a positive contribution

## Context

Warrington seeks to support and enable everyone to reach their potential and lead fulfilling lives. Keeping active in the community is essential for older people to enable them to lead fulfilling lives. There is a need to re-skill for work as well as a desire to learn for leisure.

The role of carers, many of whom are older themselves, cannot be underestimated, and we will support them to lead fulfilling lives too.

## Keeping older people active in the community

Loneliness and social isolation blights the lives of too many older people. In a recent survey of adult social care users, 13% felt socially isolated and often lonely<sup>3</sup>. We aim to create communalities where there is lots for older people to do, where there are networks of friends and community support for older people. We will do this through a range of leisure and cultural activities and developing community activity in local neighbourhoods.

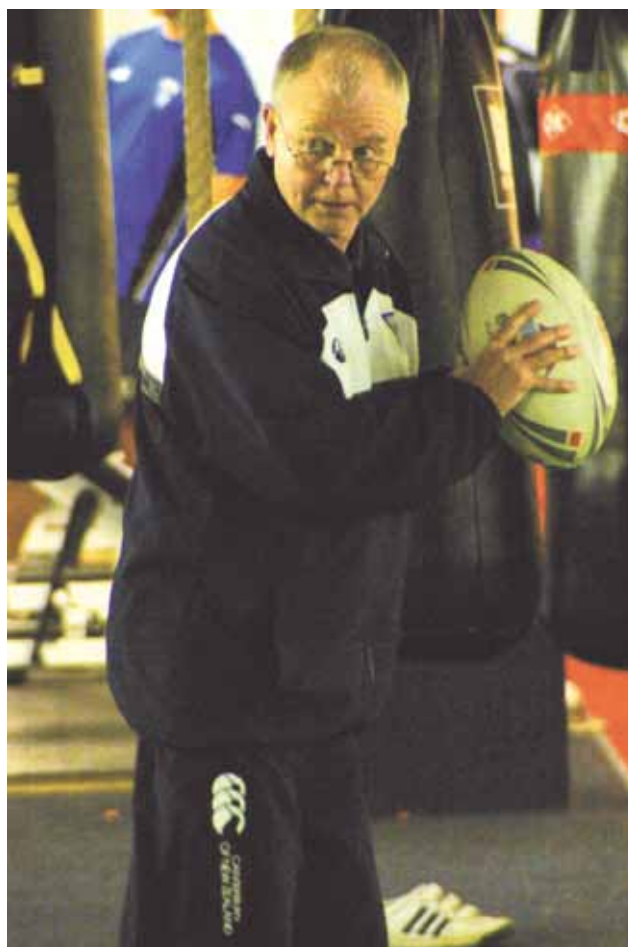
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<sup>3</sup> WBC Adult Social Care Users Survey, October 2008 - April 2009

## Leisure and culture

For older people, participation in leisure and culture helps to maintain physical, emotional and social wellbeing, encourages learning and brings enjoyment for its own sake

Participating in sport and physical recreation covers a range of activities from sport to lighter activities such as walking or cycling. It is especially important for retaining health and wellbeing. In Warrington, older people are slightly more likely to participate for the recommended 30 minutes 3 times per week than the national average (15% compared to 14.8%)<sup>4</sup>. However, this is markedly less than the average for those aged 25-49, which is 26%.



Enjoyment of a wider range of cultural activities, such as reading and library use, visits to museums, art galleries and theatres, was investigated by a Borough Council survey in late 2007. Again, this showed that the proportion of over 55s using leisure centres, museums and attending courses was lower than for younger age groups. Only for use of libraries was the level of use equal.

Older people have identified particular issues, such as transport and lack of confidence and 'no one to go with'.

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<sup>4</sup> Sport England, Active people Survey 2007



### Neighbourhood and community activities

A network of Neighbourhood Hubs is being created throughout the Borough to bring local facilities together in a focal point for each community. More than that, it is a new way of working, joining up services and building a stronger role for citizens.

Neighbourhood working will impact on most aspects of this strategy, but perhaps particularly in terms of generating more community activities and reinvigorating local community spirit, so vital to the wellbeing of older people.

Community Hubs should be local centres not only for services to older people, but for activities for them. The Neighbourhood approach should encourage and develop local community activities involving all the facilities and organisations in their areas such as community centres, churches and sporting clubs.



### Accessing learning opportunities

Older people benefit from learning opportunities, not only to enable them to re-skill for new employment roles, but to fully participate in new technology, especially as using modern communications technology is often the best way of keeping in touch with distant family members.

The proportion of people with no formal qualification tends to increase with age. Nationally, fewer than 8% of those aged 19-34 have no qualifications, compared with 12% of those aged 45-49, 16% of those aged 50-54 and 20% of those aged 55-64<sup>5</sup>. Government funding has tended to emphasise vocational qualifications for younger people. A national survey found that participation rates of for all types of learning decrease with age. In 2008, 40% of people aged 45-54 described themselves as current or recent learners, compared with 29% of those aged 55-64 and 19% of those aged 65-74<sup>6</sup>.

As well as learning for vocational reasons, learning for basic skills and for leisure is important to older people. The route back into learning generally takes place through informal learning, such as using libraries, participation in voluntary activities, through family learning opportunities with children or 'taster' sessions.

The government strategy for informal learning, The Learning Revolution<sup>7</sup> highlights that government funding has tended to favour vocational courses, but that there is still considerable informal learning activity through cultural provision and the voluntary sector, such as the University for the Third Age.

### IN FOCUS

#### 'Young at heart' award

This is an annual awards ceremony hosted by the Widening Active Participation for Older People (WAPOP) group, recognising the achievements of those working with older people aged over 50 that contribute to the arts and sports sector in Warrington.

Previous winners of the award have included Neville Thomas, an 84 year old singer who still loves to sing and dance and has recorded his own CD, Bill Savage who still swims 1 mile a week despite being 92 and Margaret Isherwood who, in her mid 80s, trained to be a complementary therapist.

### Celebrating the role of older people

Older people themselves often feel that their role is undervalued by society at large, and they themselves may have a self-limiting view of what they can achieve. To overcome these issues, Warrington already has a range of awards and activities that celebrate the contribution of older people.

These should be developed with the following aims:

- Promote the role of older people to employers both as employees and consumers
- Promote the role of older people to the voluntary sector to encourage more volunteering (from all age groups) and build awareness and support for volunteering
- Demonstrate to older people themselves what they can achieve.

<sup>5</sup> Department of innovation, Universities and Skills, The Level of Highest Qualification held by Adults, 2007

<sup>6</sup> Age Concern/NIACE, Keeping the Grey Matter Ticking Over, 2008

<sup>7</sup> Department for Innovation, Universities & Skills 2009  
[http://www.dius.gov.uk/skills/engaging\\_learners/informal\\_adult\\_learning/~media/publications/L/learning\\_revolution](http://www.dius.gov.uk/skills/engaging_learners/informal_adult_learning/~media/publications/L/learning_revolution)

## Older people said...

- There is a lack of support for voluntary organisations, such as meeting venues admin support and funding.
- The process for checking volunteers for activities with children and vulnerable adults is complex.
- There is a patronising attitude to older people.
- Information about services for older people needs to be better communicated.

## Our priorities for action

### Priority

Enable older people to re-skill and engage in learning activities to improve access to work opportunities

### Things we will do

- Encourage older people to retrain, increase their skills and obtain more formal qualifications to remain an effective part of the workforce by working with employers and the Learning & Skills Council (LSC)
- Support informal lifelong learning for all age groups to improve quality of life and encourage further learning the LSC and third sector learning organisations

Increase opportunities for older people to participate in cultural and leisure activities

- Develop more community social activities for older people by developing the voluntary sector and adopting a Neighbourhood approach
- Increase participation in leisure and cultural activities for older people by schemes such as the Carers Card
- Develop friends groups and 'buddy' schemes to enable more people to participate in cultural and community activities

Celebrate the role of older people

- Celebrate the contribution of older people members of the community, as employees and as consumers to the wider community by further developing the WAPOP Awards scheme

### Supporting plans and strategies:

- Cultural Improvement Plan
- Building a Society for all Ages (Department for Work and Pensions)
- Re-shaping our society for older people (Held The Aged)
- Everybody's future - North West Regional Framework for Ageing (5050 Vision)
- Warrington Children and Young People's Plan 2009-2011
- One Voice - Shaping our ageing society (Help the Aged & Age Concern)

## Looking forward...

We need to consider the skills needs of older people to ensure they match with the developing skills needs of employers.

We need to ensure we provide leisure and cultural facilities that better meet the needs of older people, and ensure they are accessible by public transport and are safe to access after dark.



In order to achieve the vision and all the ambitions set out in this strategy we need to:

1. Better understand and engage with the older community;
2. Link services together more to improve quality and efficiency of services; and
3. Ensure universal services are effectively age proofed

### Understand and engage with the older community

We will continue to build on existing mechanisms for understanding and engaging with our older communities.

We have an excellent base of shared information and intelligence about our local population which is helping inform action; however, there are some gaps.

- We will engage more at a community level through Neighbourhood profiling in order to identify target and support those people most at risk and in need.
- We will share information through the new Warrington Partnership Observatory. This includes information about diverse older populations and those most at risk of isolation and hardship.



### Link services together more

We will learn from the government's LinkAge Plus pilot schemes<sup>8</sup> to further streamline services, avoid duplication and improve quality of services, particularly in terms of services that support older people's independence in their own homes.

To achieve this, we will further establish the role and capacity of the Older People's Partnership Board to bring partners together and join up services and undertake the Promoting Independence self assessment exercise as a starting point for this process.

### Ensure universal services are effectively age proofed

All older people, whatever their level of need, make use of mainstream services. Partners are already undertaking work to ensure they meet new equalities legislation, which will include consideration of issues relating to older people. We will help in this process by sharing best practise in auditing services.

We will undertake a regular programme of 'mystery shopping' to evaluate the experiences of older people using services and assist partners identify areas for improvement. This will be one of the ways we measure our success in implementing this strategy.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/ageing-society/resources-good-practice-reports/linkage-plus/>

## Our priorities for action

### Priority

Understand and engage with the older community better

### Things we will do

- OPPB will work closely with the process of researching and using Neighbourhood profiles to engage with 'hard to reach' individuals and groups of older people
- Share information with partners using the Partnership Research and Engagement groups

Link services together more

- Further develop the role and capacity of the Older People's Partnership Board to manage the delivery of this strategy and promote the further integration of services
- Undertake the Department of Health's 'Promoting Independence' self assessment and integrate lessons into the development of this plan

Ensure universal services are effectively age proofed

- Share best practise in auditing services to ensure partners comply with equalities legislation with regard to older people
- Undertake regular (annual) 'mystery shopping' exercise to evaluate the experience of older people in using local services



This strategy has been informed by direct engagement with older people and by a broad range of strategic debate and planning across Warrington Partnership, which also includes the contribution of older people and their representatives. The Older People's Engagement Group considered the priorities at their annual business and planning meeting in autumn 2008 and their feedback has informed the development of the ambitions and priorities.

The proposed vision, ambitions, priorities and actions now require active debate and development by a range of local partners, to achieve the commitment required to ensure the necessary changes are made.

Warrington Partnership will be working with the Department for Health to analyse the strategy and evaluate our contribution to its vision, ambitions and priorities, through a newly developed self-assessment tool.

Warrington is the first authority in the North West to take this approach, which involves appraising our strengths and weaknesses and identifying key areas for improvement. It is based around a number of themes, including:

- Developing a vision
- Leadership
- Whole systems working
- The involvement of older people
- Service design
- Service delivery
- Commissioning for independence
- Sustainability, and
- Service monitoring and quality

In the meantime, the various member bodies of Warrington Partnership will be considering their response to the strategy and its implications for future services and ways of working.

A more detailed action plan will be developed once this programme of self-assessment has been completed, in which targets and milestones will be confirmed.



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