

Annex 2.9

Older People Strategy

MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF AGEING IN THE 21ST CENTURY

9.1 Helping the older population

1. In April 2005, the UK Government set out its strategy for older people and the ageing society in *Opportunity Age¹ – meeting the challenges of ageing in the 21st century* including specific commitments for legislative change and innovation in service delivery. The strategy set out how all parts of Government, central and local, are organising themselves more effectively to deliver a wide range of initiatives – not only to improve financial security and extend working life, but also to combat discrimination, promote active ageing, and improve services to promote the well-being and independence of older people.
2. Since it last reported, the Government has, for the first time, implemented a specific Public Service Agreement (PSA) - PSA 17: “tackle poverty and promote greater independence and wellbeing in later life” - aimed at ensuring that the needs of the older population are given due priority.
3. This PSA reflects the Government’s high level priorities. It sets out the specific improvements that the UK Government wants to achieve and identifies performance indicators that will be used to measure progress.

9.2 Anti age discrimination legislation

4. Anti age discrimination legislation became law in the UK from 1st October 2006. This gives rights to every working person in the UK and those applying for and undertaking vocational training. Since its implementation Regulations have been introduced to tackle the need for age-related employment equality in the same way as that for equality, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation and religion or belief.
5. The Regulations give individuals important new rights, extend existing rights and remove traditional barriers. They apply to all employers, private and public sector, vocational training providers, trade unions, professional organisations, employer organisations and trustees and managers of occupational pension schemes. They cover employees of any age, and other workers, office holders, partners of firms and others. They cover recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals and training. They do not cover provision of goods and services.
6. The Regulations make the following changes to the law.

¹ Available at: www.The Department for Work and Pensions.gov.uk/opportunity_age

- *Stop unjustified age discrimination in employment and work-related training*

Employers must make sure that any redundancy policies don't directly discriminate against older workers. They must not discriminate indirectly - for example, by selecting only part-time workers for redundancy, when a large number of these may be older workers. The only exceptions are where an age requirement can be objectively justified.

- *Stop Harassment and victimisation on the grounds of age*

- *Improve the rights of employees facing retirement*

The employer can only retire you below 65 where they can show that having a lower retirement age is appropriate and necessary. Whatever age the person, the employer must inform the employee in writing, at least six months in advance, of his intended retirement date.

The employee also has a statutory right to request working beyond compulsory retirement, which the employer must consider.

- *Remove the upper age limit for unfair dismissal and redundancy rights*

The regulations remove the upper and lower age limits for the entitlement of statutory redundancy pay. The upper age limit on unfair dismissal claims is also be removed. The employer will have to pay the employee the statutory minimum redundancy payment even if they are under 18 or over 65 (or after the employee's normal retirement age if this is lower). This means, if the employee meets all the other requirements, he will receive redundancy pay whatever your age.

7. The Equalities Bill [DN : Act by time of publication] will contain powers to outlaw unjustifiable age discrimination when providing goods, facilities and services in the future. To allow businesses and public authorities to prepare, and to make sure the law does not prevent justified age differences, there will be further consultation on the design of the legislation and a transition period before the new legal protections from age discrimination are implemented.

9.3 Engagement of Older People

Review of Older People's engagement with Government

8. Better Government for Older People (BGOP) was set up 10 years ago by a partnership between DWP, Age Concern, Help the Aged, and Anchor Trust, who make up the financial partners, to ensure older people's views are heard in government at all levels. It has played a very significant role, organising older people's groups around the country. Partly as a result of

government listening to those older people's views, the agenda is now moving dramatically on. From April 2008, with the introduction of PSA 17, we have moved into a new era where national and local government are committed to promoting wellbeing in later life

9. So for the future we want to create a stronger mechanism allowing older people themselves to hold local and central government to account. The new PSA provides a new focus and will encourage expectations to see improvements made by central and local government. Essentially, our review of older people's engagement with government, and specifically examining BGOP, will look at how to build on the successful engagement of older people over the last 10 years and see how it can be made stronger still, and importantly seek out new opportunities in light of recent changes.

LinkAge Plus

10. One of the commitments in *Opportunity Age – meeting the challenges of ageing in the 21st century* was to pilot a LinkAge Plus service, which would provide access to fully integrated services for older people. This approach was subsequently reinforced by the publication of the Social Exclusion Unit report 'A Sure Start to Later Life' in January 2006. This report suggested that the Sure Start approach in galvanising communities and re-shaping children's services, could work equally well with older people.

11. The Department for Work and Pensions is responsible for the LinkAge Plus programme which is spending up to £10 million over 2 years – for 2006/07 and 2007/08. Eight Linkage Plus pilots have been developed to expand the principles of joined up working by providing access to a wide range of services for older people, beyond the traditional benefits and care agendas. Each pilot is focused on local needs and how best to integrate services within these locations. Below are some examples from those initiatives that are being sustained and what they have achieved so far:

- Satisfaction with home and community is being enhanced by interventions tackling social isolation. Outreach workers in Tower Hamlets have drawn isolated older people into supportive communities where they are both valued and can make contributions of their own. They also provide advice on health and diet to people from ethnic minorities, addressing specific health risks associated with their communities. The council and PCT have agreed joint funding to continue this work.
- Health and general well-being has been improved through a number of initiatives in Salford. These include Healthy Hips and Hearts exercise classes to improve general fitness and mobility which mitigate against the risks of falls. Housing Options Service helps older people assess the type of accommodation most appropriate to their needs, providing support either to stay in their existing home or to move into a more suitable property. Salford PCT have agreed to joint funding with Salford City Council.

- Through a face-to-face service, Gloucestershire Village Agents have provided rural outreach to hard to reach communities and have been very successful in helping older people to access multiple services. Funding has been secured to continue this work and extended to include Community Agents who will work with ethnic minority groups.
- The Senior Council for Devon has strengthened existing older people engagement – they now have over 760 individuals involved in 26 local groups. This Senior Council forms part of the Devon County Councils decision making process, giving local people over the age of 50 the opportunity to have a voice in their local community. Funding has been agreed for the next 3 years.
- A real success of LinkAge has been around provision of information. Leeds and Nottinghamshire have worked with older people to develop accessible, intuitive websites. These will continue to be funded and provide vital sources of information for partner organisations to use and for older people themselves.
- In Lancaster employment prospects for older people have improved, through the Employment Bureau which has found paid employment for over 60 people and voluntary placements for over 120. It has also established successful partnerships with 67 local employers. This has been funded until November 2008 while Lancashire County Council consider its longer term future.
- A variety of interventions have empowered older people to live independently in their own homes. Typical are Gateshead and Nottinghamshire which have developed home repair and gardening services which will continue to be funded.
- Nottinghamshire's First Contact scheme provides a simple signposting solution based on a proforma used by a variety of voluntary and statutory organisations, including for example, the Fire and Rescue Service. This provides a checklist of services which could be appropriate, and when completed prompts further contact from other specific service providers. The signposting process ensures referrals are made and received, and then tracks them to ensure appropriate action is taken. These arrangements will continue.
- There is evidence of increased awards through successful referrals from partner organisations in a number of the pilots to The Pensions and Disability and Carers Service. Our discussions with colleagues in PDCS aim to sustain existing arrangements and to build on them for the future.

12. LinkAge is combining with the Partnerships for Older People pilots to provide a significant body of learning for Local Authorities. The current LinkAge Plus pilots will end their funded activity by October 2008 and a final evaluation report, drafted by Warwick Business School, will be delivered by March 2009.

13. One of the commitments in *Opportunity Age – meeting the challenges of ageing in the 21st century* was to pilot a LinkAge Plus service, which would provide access to fully integrated services for older people. This approach was subsequently reinforced by the publication of the Social Exclusion Unit report 'A Sure Start to Later Life' in January 2006. This report suggested that the Sure Start approach in galvanising communities and re-shaping children's services, could work equally well with older people.

9.4 Changing cultures

14. A wider challenge is changing the culture and perceptions about older people. The Department for Work and Pensions is leading on strategic communications on older people and the ageing society. This aims to spread positive messages on older people, their aspirations and the contributions that they continue to make to society.

Older People's Day

15. On the 1 October 2007 the UK had its first Older People's Day, to coincide with the UN International Day of Older People, as part of the Government's wider strategy for older people. The Day celebrated the contribution of older people in the UK, supporting their aspirations, highlighting opportunities and update attitudes in later life.

16. This year's Day (1 October 2008) will focus on building relationships between the generations. This event will spread the important messages on including older people as part of wider society (in particular in relation to continued working) and this year will have a particular focus on intergenerational practice. Better relationships between different generations will help to improve social inclusion of older people in particular home and neighbourhood – closer relationships between generations can be key to creating a sense of community in neighbourhoods.

9.5 Employment

Vision, outcomes and governance

17. Older people's employment rates have risen in recent years. The employment rate for the over 50s is increasing faster than the employment rate of younger people. Currently over 1 million people are working past State Pension Age (SPA) – many part-time, and there are almost 800,000 more people aged 50 to 69 in work than there were five years ago. The employment rate of people aged 50 to SPA has risen from 64.7% in 1997 to 71.6 % in April to June 2007.

18. The projections for the coming years suggest that the number of older people in work will continue to increase. There will be one million extra older workers *above demographic change* by 2030.

Help with employment

19. The Government is encouraging employers to adopt flexible working and retirement practices which give individuals more choice and opportunity to stay in work longer. Its Age Positive initiative is a highly respected ongoing Government initiative designed to encourage employers, particularly small and medium employers, to change ageist practices and culture and to provide opportunity and choice for their older workers

20. The Government already has a range of policies designed to increase employment for older people. New Deal 50 Plus has supported over 175,000 older people in their return to work and the Department for Work and Pensions is proposing to extend the back to work help available to the over 50s. In the May 2006 Pensions White Paper the Department for Work and Pensions announced further proposals to assist and encourage longer working. The State pension deferral rate has been increased to 10.4% and the option of taking a lump sum instead of an increased weekly pension has been introduced.

Tax and pension rules

21. An increase in the deferral rate for State Pensions, and an increase in the earliest age at which a personal or occupational pension can be drawn, will encourage people to work for longer. The ability to draw an occupational pension while continuing to work for the same employer should also encourage working longer, though we are currently working with the pensions industry to issue guidance on how to implement this in a way that complies with the age regulations.

22. In early 2008, the Department for Work and Pensions launched with the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform the programme of work towards the review of the Default Retirement Age in 2011. Key research and analysis through 2009 – 10, and stakeholder engagement 2008-2011 will inform the progress of developments.

Communications

23. The Department for Work and Pensions will improve communications to raise awareness of the importance of, and options for working longer, and assist decision making in planning for later life. This work will include embedding good practice identified by the face to face guidance pilots. It will continue to work in partnership with business to promote the benefits of an age diverse workforce; and consider how to ensure there are financial benefits from working longer, particularly working beyond State Pension Age (for example, revising State pension deferral. Through the Age Positive Initiative, the Department for Work and Pensions also provides guidance and case studies, and attends Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs business advice days for small and medium sized employers

24. Through 2008-9 The Department for Work and Pensions is developing more detailed practical guidance with targeted employment sectors on maximising the contribution of older workers to increase business productivity. This will contribute to creating a momentum by 2010 to the widespread adoption of flexible approaches to work and retirement.

9.6 The Percentage Of Pensioners In Low Income

Vision, outcomes and governance

Pensioner poverty

25. Since 1996/97, there has been a fall in the proportion of pensioners in poverty. People over State Pension Age are no more likely to be living in poverty than any other customer grouping after housing costs are taken into account. This is the first time on record that this is the case.

Income related benefits

26. Estimates suggest that around half of pensioners who are in poverty do not take up the income-related benefits they have potential entitlement to. The Pension Service has in place a strategy for increasing take up of income-related benefits and will continue to promote take-up of benefits by those entitled with the additional focus on ensuring that the delivery organisations join up to ensure that customers have access to all of the benefits that they are entitled to.

27. In the longer term, earnings uprating of Basic State Pension will make it more generous, and changes to the qualifying rules will mean that more people will be likely to receive a full Basic State Pension. People who receive the full Basic State Pension and people who have saved for retirement are less likely to face poverty in retirement. Whilst this is not likely to have such an impact over the spending review period, it will be vital in the long term to minimising levels of poverty amongst older people, as will encouraging more saving for retirement.

Pension Credit

28. Pension Credit was introduced in October 2003 to replace the Minimum Income Guarantee. It is designed to ensure that help is directed at pensioners at the lower end of the income scale by providing a contribution to a guaranteed level of income of at least £119.05 a week for a single person aged 60 and over (rising to £124.05 from April 2008) and £181.70 a week for couples (rising to £189.35 from April 2008). These amounts may be higher for people who have caring responsibilities, are severely disabled or have certain housing costs. In addition the savings credit rewards those who have made modest provision for their retirement.

29. Pension Credit can be claimed over the telephone and customers do not need to sign and return a claim form. The Pension Service have also introduced an integrated claims process for Pension Credit, State Pension, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit, allowing customers to apply for four benefits in one call. There is also a question to identify relevant caring responsibilities in order to invite, where appropriate, the customer to claim Carer's Allowance using a shortened claim pack for people over pension age. Alternative offices have also been set up, run by Local Authorities, Citizens' Advice Bureaus, Age Concerns and others to help the most vulnerable older people access services.

30. The Pension Service is continuing to undertake a range of activities to ensure people are aware of and claim their entitlement. It has a programme of initiatives such as data-matching to identify those who be entitled but are not claiming benefits, mailings to encourage and remind eligible non-recipients to apply for Pension Credit, national and local advertising and marketing campaigns and home visits to ensure pensioners are receiving all the benefits and services to which they are entitled.

Fairer pensions

31. The Department for Work and Pensions are also taking steps to make pensions fairer. From April 2010, a full basic state pension will be available to those with 30 years of National Insurance contributions (NICs). This is a reduction from the previous requirement of 40 years NICs for men and 39 years NICs for women. As a result, many more people will qualify for a full Basic State Pension and this will end some of the historical inequalities in entitlement, especially for women. By 2025 the Department for Work and Pensions estimate that over 90 per cent of women reaching State Pension Age in 2025, the same proportion as men, will be entitled to the full Basic State Pension. Today, only 35 per cent of women reaching State Pension Age are entitled to the full Basic State Pension.

9.7 Healthy Life Expectancy At Age 65

Vision, outcomes and governance

32. Life expectancy at 65 has been increasing strongly but the number of years spent in good health (or Healthy Life Expectancy is increasing at a slower rate although, since 2000, Healthy Life Expectancy has kept pace with increases in life expectancy).

33. This means that whilst the number of years of healthy life expectancy at 65 is increasing, the overall life expectancy is increasing faster, resulting in a similar proportion of life after the age of 65 spent in good health, rather than an increase in this proportion.

Public Health Measures

34. Healthy Life Expectancy at age 65 is significantly influenced by individual lifestyle choices in earlier years which affect mortality and morbidity. General public health policies, therefore, are of particular importance to reducing the risk of developing associated late-onset diseases, including cancer, coronary heart disease and diabetes. Changes in lifestyle at a relatively late stage in life can have an impact on people's life expectancy. The Government is acting on public health issues for example,

- Cancer: The Cancer Reform Strategy, published in December 2007, builds on the progress of the NHS Cancer Plan by spreading best practice to improve clinical outcomes, drive up quality and increase value for money. The Strategy focuses on prevention as well as treatment – amongst other initiatives, the Government has committed to consult in Spring 2008 on proposals for the next steps in tobacco control and the further regulation of tobacco products, including the display of tobacco at the point of sale, packaging and vending machines.
- Tobacco: The Department of Health's comprehensive tobacco control strategy has six strands, each of which has a measurable impact on reducing smoking prevalence at all ages: highly successful media/education campaigns, which have proved to be the single most important factor triggering smokers' decisions to quit; restrictions on advertising, promotion and sponsorship; supply reduction: tobacco products are highly taxed –cigarettes are the most expensive in the European Union; an extensive network of NHS stop smoking services and a national quitline; measures to make smoke-free environments the norm and protect particularly from second-hand smoke; and regulation of tobacco products, including pack health warnings and changing the age of sale to 18.
- The smoke-free law in England has been very effective since 1 July 2007. It is the single most important public health initiative for a generation. Because of the new smoke-free law, thousands of lives will be saved and the health of everybody is being protected. From 1 October 2008, tobacco products made for sale on the UK market must, by law, carry hard-hitting picture warnings.
- Obesity: the Government announced a new long-term ambition on obesity: "to reverse the rising tide of obesity and overweight in the population, by enabling everyone to achieve and maintain a healthy weight". Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives, a new £372 million comprehensive cross Government strategy was launched in January 2008. It comprises policy areas for action including healthier food choices, physical activity, health incentives and personalised advice/support.
- Alcohol: In June 2007, the Department of Health launched a new strategy, Safe, Sensible, Social, which commits all Government departments to work together to tackle what is a society-wide problem. The strategy aims

to reduce the types of harm that are of most concern to the public, including chronic and acute ill health caused by alcohol, resulting in fewer alcohol-related accidents and hospital admissions. As part of the strategy, the Department of Health has secured a groundbreaking agreement with industry to include health and unit information on most alcohol labels by the end of 2008.

- *Drugs:* The new cross-Government drug strategy launched on 27 February 2008 aims to enhance even further the role that effective drug treatment can have in supporting individuals in re-establishing their lives. For instance, drug treatment services will become even more personalised towards meeting an individual's needs to increase the chances of users successfully re-establishing their lives. Getting drug users back into work after they have entered treatment is a radical new focus in the new drug strategy. This is an essential step for drug users to rebuild their lives and the lives of those around them. Treatment agencies will have a new role to work closely with Job Centres and housing services to help drug users re-establish their lives.

Health Reform

35. The Department of Health are now in the seventh year of the modernisation programme set out in the NHS Plan a plan for investment, a plan for reform published in July 2000². Health Reform is about revitalising and modernising the NHS so that it is fit for purpose and fit for our times. Reform has produced service improvements, large increases in the NHS workforce and considerably reduced waiting times, all of which contribute to creating a healthier older population (for instance, reducing waiting times for hip replacements). In particular:

- Giving people more choice and control over their care and treatment is at the heart of the programme of reform. People's choices will drive improvement and innovation in healthcare provision.
- Reform of the provider side of the healthcare system aims to give providers more freedom to innovate and improve services in response to the needs and decisions of patients.

Health and Care services

36. Pilots, set up under the Partnerships for Older People Projects (POPP) initiative, are aimed at large-scale system reform across health and care services to support older people in healthy and active living and to

² The NHS Plan outlines the vision of a health service designed around the patient: a new delivery system for the NHS as well as changes between health and social services, changes for NHS doctors, for nurses, midwives, therapists and other NHS staff, for patients and in the relationship between the NHS and the private sector.

enable older people to remain independent and in control of their own lives for as long as possible. A total of 29 pilots have been established across the country and are due to complete by April 2009. Nineteen first phase sites were established in May 2006 and are in their second year of operation. Ten second phase sites were established on 1st May 2007 and have been operational for ten months.

37. Each of the 29 POPP sites are delivering and evaluating approaches, aimed at creating a sustainable shift in resources and culture away from crisis-based institutionalised care towards 'preventative' care for older people within their own homes and communities. This approach should not only improve people's quality of life and their experience of aging, but also offers a way to provide more cost-effective services.

38. The Department of Health has commissioned a National Evaluation of the POPP programme, which will report in October 2009. The National Evaluation will identify 'what works, for whom, where and in what circumstances' and will enable the Department of Health to identify approaches, which are potentially replicable across England in different health and social care communities. In the longer-term, POPP pilots are expected to make a significant contribution to the existing evidence base on the effectiveness of prevention as highlighted in *Our Health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services*.

Social Care

39. *Putting People First: a shared vision and commitment to the transformation of Adult Social Care*³ sets out, the vision, ambitions and components of the future system. Led by the Department of Health, it establishes an explicit, collaborative approach between six Government Departments, local Government, the sector's professional leadership, providers and the regulators.

40. *Putting People First* recognises the need to empower citizens to shape their own lives and the support they receive. It also emphasises the need for a strategic shift away from intervention at the point of crisis to a more pro-active and preventative model centred on improved wellbeing, with greater choice and control for individuals. Amongst other key policy options under development and subject to Ministerial steer, this will include further work on Individual Budgets following the analysis of progress at pilot sites.

41. The Social Care Reform Grant⁴ provides £520million, ring fenced funding, over 3 years to support councils to undertake the necessary reforms to deliver this whole system change in adult social care.

³http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_081118

⁴http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Lettersandcirculars/LocalAuthorityCirculars/DH_081934

Early intervention and prevention

42. The Department of Health is investing £60 million ring-fenced funding (£20m in 2006/07 and £40m in 2007/08) for Councils with Social Services Responsibilities (CSSRs) to establish locally innovative pilot projects in partnership with Primary Care Trusts, the voluntary, community and independent sector and with older people themselves.

Provision of services

43. *World Class Commissioning* sets out a new approach to commissioning for health and care services. It is the underpinning delivery vehicle for many of the objectives of current health policy. The programme will bring about a step change in commissioning, ultimately improving health and well-being outcomes. *The NHS in England: the operating framework for 2007/08* published on 11 December aims to embed reform so that local clinicians and managers can use the new reform tools and levers to transform services.

9.8 The Proportion Of People Aged 65 And Over Who Are Satisfied With Their Home And Their Neighbourhood

Vision, outcomes and governance

44. At a national level, the proportion of people over 65 who express satisfaction with their home and neighbourhood in recent years has remained roughly level at over 85%. Satisfaction with accommodation is at very high levels averaging around 95%, and satisfaction with neighbourhood averages approaching 90%. A higher proportion of older people express satisfaction with their home rather than their area and older people are more likely to be satisfied in rural compared to urban areas. This is a particular challenge to make Age Friendly Cities to ensure that the migration from urban to rural areas does not continue.

45. The Government seeks to improve housing information and options, housing conditions, home adaptations and appropriateness of housing for older people.

Home - Housing

46. On 25th February 2008, Communities and Local Government launched the Government's Housing Strategy for an Ageing Society, *Lifetime homes, lifetime neighbourhoods*. This, together with the existing decent homes programme, will form the basis of much of the Government's work in this area. It sets out a range of measures to bring about a fundamental change in the way future communities are built alongside an expansion in existing support available to older people that will help them to live safely and, where they choose, independently in their own homes. Key elements of the strategy include:

- Expansion of rapid repairs / handyperson services – investment of £33m from 2009 for simple repairs and adaptations e.g. fitting hand rails or fixing a stair carpet, light or leaking tap. This will enable an additional 125,000 older people each year to get repairs and minor adaptations (about 300-400 more vans across the country). Rapid repairs schemes will be operational from 2009.
- A new Housing Advice and Information service providing information and guidance to support older people making choices about their housing options. It will be linked to existing help lines for social care, carers, finance and benefits.
- *Private Sector Decent Homes*: Increasing the number of vulnerable households (those on income and disability related benefits who are least able to change their housing circumstances) living in decent homes in the private sector.

Heating

47. Warm Front is a scheme to improving heating in homes. Eligibility is determined by receipt of certain means-tested and disability benefits. 1.6 million households have received assistance since the start of the Scheme in 2000; around half of these households aged over 60. The Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs will allocate just over £800 million from 2008 to 2011 to continue the Warm Front scheme in England.

Neighbourhood

48. *Lifetime homes lifetime neighbourhoods* set out a vision for lifetime neighbourhoods – neighbourhoods that are welcoming and accessible everyone, regardless of age, or health or disability. Existing planning policy and guidance provides the framework to enable regional and local planners to take account of demographic change and the needs of older people and those with disabilities.

Crime

49. According to the British Crime Survey, older people are less likely than younger age groups to be victims of crime – from theft to violence to vandalism – and tend to worry less about crime than those in younger age groups. Older people, however, were more likely to feel unsafe walking in the dark than younger age groups. According to police records, older people are more likely to be victims of some very specific crimes, such as burglaries by ‘bogus callers’ – which may have a big impact on their quality of life and how safe they feel at home

50. The Home Office has recently published a Crime Strategy which sets out how reductions in crime will be sustained in the future. Neighbourhood policing teams are being introduced in all areas by April 2008.

On criminal damage, the Department of Communities and Local Government provides a range of support and good practice to those engaged in delivery. In relation to burglaries by 'bogus callers', the Home Office works with a range of partners to provide information aimed at improving older people's behaviour when answering their doors without disproportionately affecting their fear of crime. Warden schemes, initiated with Government funding and now supported through Local Area Agreements and other local funds, provide a visible, uniformed presence in neighbourhoods and town centres.

51. The police play a role in sharing intelligence and monitoring trends. The Home Office are currently working with the Water industry as they attempt to bring more consistency and spread good practice in the messages individual water companies on this subject, raising awareness of how to avoid bogus callers.

Transport

52. The Department for Transport has used powers in the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) to introduce accessibility regulations; issued good practice guidance to assist planners and providers on meeting the transport needs of different social groups (e.g. The Older People's Audit); established schemes to promote secure travel (e.g. Secure Stations Scheme); and worked with local authorities and transport operators to provide transport suited to people's needs.

53. From, April 2008, a national concessionary fares scheme will be introduced for older and disabled people in England, to offer free off-peak travel on buses anywhere in the country.

54. The Department for Transport introduced 'Accessibility Planning' into the current round of the local transport planning process, which runs from 2006 to 2011, so will be fully implemented in coming years. Accessibility planning aims to ensure that there is a clearer and more systematic approach to tackling the barriers that people face in accessing jobs and services.

9.9 The Extent To Which People Over 65 Receive The Support They Need To Live Independently At Home

Vision, outcomes and governance

55. This does not relate exclusively to people who receive social care, although they are clearly important to delivery. Rather, it relates to the ways that all older people are supported to live at home, including in sheltered accommodation, which research shows is the way that most wish to live. The Government will in addition to social care assess other factors that enable people to live at home, such as housing-related support services including provision of home adaptations, available transport, support networks and local services. For example:

- Quality of housing, as outlined above in the section on the Communities and Local Government housing strategy.
- Transport links – for many, good transport links can make a huge difference to their ability to live independently.
- Safe neighbourhoods – this can directly influence whether people are happy to live at home.

56. For health it will include the early intervention and preventative approaches to support people to live in their own homes.

Independent Living

57. A key element of the cross-government Independent Living Strategy, published on 3 March 2008, is to enable disabled people, including older disabled people to have more choice and control over the support they need to go about their daily lives. The personalisation of services, set out in *Putting People First*, is critical to this.

58. The Department of Health announced last autumn a User-led Organisations Development Fund which will make £750,000 available to establish 12 User-led Organisations as Action and Learning Sites around England. The emphasis is on user-led organisations themselves developing practical solutions locally, and sharing this with others through a learning network supported by the Department of Health.

Intermediate care

59. Since the publication of the National Service for Older People in March 2001, which included a standard on intermediate care, combined with the investment in the NHS Plan (2000) there has been a significant increase in the numbers of people benefiting from intermediate care. Alongside the National Service for Older People, additional guidance to support the implementation of intermediate care services was published. Evaluation of new intermediate care services show that they reduce length of hospital stay and have high patient satisfaction ratings.

60. Proposed for 2008/09 is an update of the existing guidance on intermediate care and this will also make an important contribution to this indicator. Intermediate care is targeted at people who would otherwise face unnecessarily prolonged hospital stays or inappropriate admission to acute in-patient care, long-term residential care, or continuing NHS in-patient care. interventions have planned outcomes of maximising independence and typically enabling patient/users to resume living at home

Housing support services

61. The *Supporting People* programme provides housing support services to over 840,000 older people and 45,000 disabled people, enabling them to live independently in their home and community. The Government

has invested over £8bn since the programme began in 2003, and committed a further £4.9bn funding up to 31 March 2011.

Disabled Facilities Grant

62. Approximately 35,000 households receive a Disabled Facilities Grant each year. Approximately 70% of those in receipt of the grants are older people. The programme has proved to be highly successful with Government funding increasing from £57 million in 1997 to £126 million in 2007. Funding will increase by a further 20% in 2008 to £146 million, local authorities also contribute funding from their own resources making total public expenditure on adaptations in excess of £200million.

63. Changes being made to the programme include raising the limit on Disabled Facilities Grant to £30,000. This will have the immediate benefit of helping those people with complex needs for whom the current ceiling is not high enough, access to gardens will now be part of the Disabled Facilities Grant, the means test will be changed to help speed up the process and other changes will improve how the means test impacts on people working but on a low income