



Pension, Disability and Carers Service
Strategy for Partnerships and External Relations
2009-2011

Working Together to Make Lives Better

This document is intended for use internally within PDCS and with external stakeholders and partners as appropriate.

DWP Department for
Work and Pensions
Disability and Carers Service

 **The Pension Service**
Part of the Department for Work and Pensions

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Glossary of Terms

Abbreviation	Explanation
C&P	Customer and Partnerships
DCS	Disability and Carers Service
DoH	Department of Health
DSO	Departmental Strategic Objectives
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
GO	Government Office
HMRC	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
ICE	Independent Case Examiner
JCP	Jobcentre Plus
NAO	National Audit Office
OGD	Other Government Departments
PDSCS	Pensions Disability and Carers Service
PHSO	Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman
PSA	Public Service Agreement
SLA	Service Level Agreement
TPS	The Pension Service

Foreword by Kim Archer



Building Credibility and Reputation with our Partners and Stakeholders

I am delighted to introduce our first Partnership and External Relations Strategy. The purpose of the Strategy is to help us all work together effectively on one of our Agency's key strategic imperatives "to build our credibility and reputation with partners and stakeholders".

This is a practical document for PDCS which shows how we can build on some strong foundations already laid and make our aspirations a reality. We will do this by clearly defining our objectives, identifying our priorities and agreeing our roles and responsibilities. A Partnership and External Relations Board will help steer and co-ordinate this work. The Board will make sure that we maximise our learning to improve the experience of our customers' as well as our people and make ourselves more efficient.

No one team can do this on its own. Our aspirations will not be achieved by producing this document. This is the start of a more exciting journey of collective, co-ordinated effort across PDCS to engage organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors to make things better for our customers. In particular, we need to work with those who are most vulnerable, and who rely most heavily on our ability to work closely with others to better understand their needs. This will help us to provide a 'needs led' service to make sure we deliver the right benefits and services at the right time.

Having clear objectives, priorities, roles and responsibilities will help us build credibility with our partners and stakeholders. But our success will very much depend on how well we have understood and embedded our vision and mission in our culture, "Working Together to Make Lives Better".

Success at a national level is dependant on how well we work with our partners and stakeholders in the Strategic Customer Advisory Council. We must continue to listen to them in consultation through the PDCS Advisory Forum and resolve local issues quickly and consistently. We must continue to develop and maintain key relationships with organisations working with our most vulnerable customers through Local Service. Importantly our success will also depend on the quality of the conversations we have internally about our partners and stakeholders and how well our people on the front line deal with their day to day contacts.

This strategy is a good start to embedding within our structure ways of working which support our Agency's vision of "Working Together to Make Lives Better" and the DWP values.

I am grateful to the Partnership Team for leading this work and to all the other people in PDCS, DWP and our partner and stakeholder organisations who have contributed to its development.

It is now for us all to make it happen.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kim Archer', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kim Archer
Head of Partnerships and Relationship Development

Pension, Disability and Carers Service Strategy for Partnerships and External Relations

1. Introduction

This strategy outlines how we will deliver one of the six strategic imperatives for our Agency: “to build our credibility and reputation with our partners and stakeholders”¹

It sets out the objectives, priorities and high level delivery plan which will support the Agency vision: *‘Working Together to Make Lives Better’*.

The vision for Partnerships and External Relations places customers, their carers and representatives at the forefront of our service. ***By working even more closely with others we can deliver more benefits and more services, more effectively, for more of our customers when they need us most.***

We recognise the important role our **partners** play in helping to deliver our Department’s Public Service Agreements (PSAs), Strategic Objectives (DSOs), and underpinning strategies and policies efficiently².

We value collaborative working with our **stakeholders** whose contributions provide insight and expert knowledge to inform our policies and help us to change and improve services for our customers.

2. Our focus for Partnerships and External Relations

To help shape our plans, we have developed a Partnerships and External Relations prioritisation approach. This helps us to prioritise engagement with new partners and stakeholders and focus our efforts on building relations with organisations who represent or serve our most vulnerable customer groups.

This targeted approach is guided by customer insight in identifying our most vulnerable customers. It helps ensure our plans for partner and stakeholder engagement are integrated within a wider programme of work across the Agency designed to make a positive difference to our most vulnerable customers’ lives³.

In many instances we engage with organisations as both a partner and a stakeholder. However, we make a distinction between partnership and external relations activity based on the focus and purpose of the interaction.

¹ See [PDCS Business Strategy 2008 - 2011](#)

² The key DWP PSAs and DSOs can be found at Annex 3. Key strategies with critical dependencies on increasingly effective partnership working across the public, private and voluntary sectors include the recently released [DWP Ageing Strategy - Building a society for all ages](#), [Putting people first](#), [Shaping the future of care together](#) and [Pension Reform changes](#). These can be accessed via Ctrl+click to follow the link.

³ Annex 4 presents an example of how this strategy helps PDCS to promote the four key drivers of Customer Satisfaction.

Our focus for partnerships is on making a measurable difference - working with others to reach and serve our most vulnerable customers by joining-up and delivering more benefits and better services more efficiently to those in need.

Our potential partners are those organisations outside PDCS with whom:

- We share some of the same customers
- We share in the delivery of services/benefits
- We can work to meet our customers needs more holistically
- We can work to better reach and serve the most vulnerable and hardest to reach customers

PDCS has partnerships in place with organisations at national, regional and local levels, with many of these relationships established by the former Pension Service (TPS) and Disability and Carers Service (DCS)⁴.

Our recent work has focused on reviewing our partnerships and seeking opportunities to improve existing working relationships to deliver better outcomes for our customers.

Our focus for external relations is on actively engaging, consulting and listening - building relations with organisations and experts able to provide valuable insight for our key strategies or who can represent our customers in helping to change and improve services to better meet our customers' needs.

Our stakeholders are those external to PDCS, who:

- Understand the needs of our customers and want to work with PDCS to contribute information and insight
- Are recognised advocates/representatives of our customers
- Have experience, learning or business knowledge which can contribute to strategies, policies and business change
- Support customers to access our services and are willing to provide feedback to help us improve our services

Work over recent months has focused on establishing a new PDCS Advisory Forum and promoting strategic outreach and Community 5000⁵ activity.

Plans are also in place to establish a Strategic Customer Advisory Council to bring in expertise from outside industry, academia and the third sector to help PDCS develop longer term strategies and plans.

⁴ Examples of our current partners and stakeholders can be seen at Annex 5.

⁵ This is a DWP wide programme which provides the opportunity for around 1500 PDCS staff to spend a day or more working closely with customers and voluntary organisations.

3. Why Partnerships and External Relations are important

PDCS deliver pensions, benefits and forecasts to approximately 15 million customers. We pay around £90 billion in benefits and entitlements to older people, those with a disability, children and carers each year.

Our customers' needs are often complex and wide ranging and they benefit from the combined efforts of different organisations to deliver the help and services they require.

By working more closely with key organisations (see list below) we can join-up to become more efficient, planning services to meet the needs of customers.

- Jobcentre Plus (JCP)
- Department of Health (DoH)
- Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC)
- Third sector and local authorities

By working with customer representatives and business experts we can also make sure that the changes we introduce are fit for purpose and improve the services we offer.

The quotes below highlight the views of some of those involved:

For our customers

"Thanks to my very helpful TPS visiting officer, I have enough to buy the odd little luxury and she arranged for my home to be warmer and a lot more secure. She was marvellous".

For our agency

"They extend our reach, help us to learn and enable us to deliver more money and better services to the most vulnerable people in our communities".

For our partners

"Working closely with DCS helps us deliver more for our customers and it reduces duplication and delays".

For our stakeholders

"We have a lot of knowledge and experience in serving and representing your customers and are happy to help you improve".

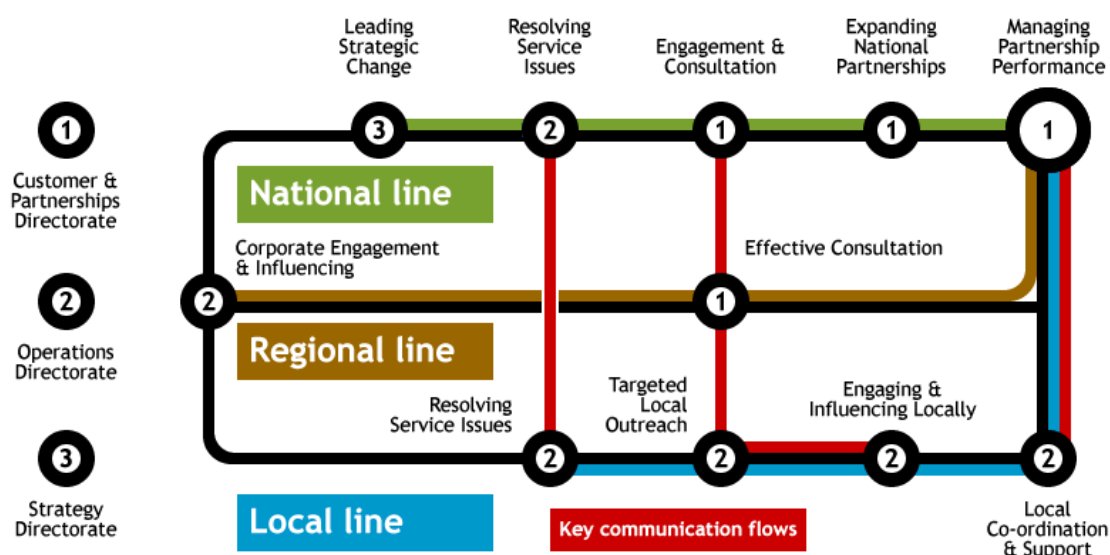
4. Our strategic objectives and priorities

We have identified five overarching strategic objectives for Partnerships and External Relations, together with our key priorities and measures of success (see Annex 1). These guide us in delivering our vision and will help us to make a significant contribution to achieving the DWP DSOs and PSAs and our Agency's Business Strategy and imperatives⁶.

The primary outcome we expect from the delivery of our strategic objectives is the timely delivery of the right benefits and services to more customers, through closer working with more people across more organisations.

5. Organising for delivery

This diagram illustrates the key functions we will establish across PDCS at national, regional and local levels to deliver our strategic objectives and priorities for partnerships and external relations.



The diagram also highlights which PDCS Directorates are responsible for implementation and delivery of each of the functions.

A brief description of the purpose of each function⁷ is shown in the tables in the next section.

⁶ DWP DSOs, PSAs can be found at Annex 3 & [PDCS Business Strategy 2008 - 2011](#) can be accessed via this link

⁷ An illustration of how key external parties will engage with the new arrangements in PDCS can be seen at Annex 5.

National Functions	Purpose
Leading strategic change (3)	Provide a point of contact for strategy and change with Other Government Departments (OGDs)/Agencies and co-ordinate with PDCS directorates to support wider input and assurance activity.
Resolving service issues (2)	Manage benefit processing/performance issues and complaints raised in collaboration with Centre of Excellence and other directorates.
Engagement and consultation (1)	Lead engagement and consultation with customer representatives through the Strategic Customer Advisory Council and PDCS Advisory Forum. Lead strategic outreach to promote awareness and reputation of PDCS.
Expanding national partnerships (1)	Expand productive partnerships with those voluntary and private sector organisations considered best placed to help meet the needs of our priority customer groups. Work collaboratively with JCP and OGDs to join-up services and initiatives better.
Managing partnership performance (1)	Develop a strategy for Partnerships and External Relations and co-ordinate implementation of new roles and responsibilities. Oversee partnership performance and facilitate communications across the partnership and external relations network.

Regional Functions	Purpose
Corporate engagement and influencing (2)	Lead engagement for PDCS in collaboration with DWP/JCP to improve customer service, shape initiatives and influence Government Offices (GOs), OGDs and regional Agencies. Promote better understanding of PDCS customers, their needs and our key business priorities.
Effective consultation (1)	Engage and consult with customers, voluntary sector, lobby groups and other key forums and stakeholders. Work with colleagues at regional level across DWP to coordinate activity.

Local Functions	Purpose
Resolving service issues (2)	Lead performance issues raised by stakeholders and partners locally - escalating where appropriate.
Targeted local outreach (2)	Develop partnership and stakeholder relations to build awareness of PDCS services for shared customers. Promote efficient service delivery to meet customers' benefit, independence and well-being needs.
Engaging and influencing locally (2)	Engage with JCP, local authority, strategic planning forums and key partners to help shape local objectives and priorities. Promote understanding of PDCS customers and priorities. Oversee local partnership performance to drive increased efficiency.
Local co-ordination and support (2)	Manage joined-up working to improve understanding of initiatives, priorities and customer service through best practice and sharing achievements.

6. High level delivery plan

The PDCS Business Strategy⁸ sets out three stages in the PDCS journey over the next few years. These are 'shaping up', 'joining up' and 'moving up':

- **Shaping up** - aims to get core performance and enablers right and make the transition to the new Agency
- **Joining up** - wherever we can around customer needs and working with other organisations to deliver more effectively
- **Moving up** - being responsive to change, identifying new opportunities, making the best use of technology and providing an exemplar service with outstanding value for money

Our high level plan of key milestones for delivering our Partnerships and External Relations Strategy can be seen at Annex 2.

7. Management and co-ordination

Activity will be managed through a Partnerships and External Relations Board which will be in place by the end of 2009. This group will include senior representatives from each business area across PDCS, and representation from DWP and from key partner and stakeholder organisations.

Terms of Reference for the Partnerships and External Relations Board are currently being developed.

8. Conclusion

Successful implementation of this strategy will result in more extensive and effective partnership and external relations activity which will:

- Improve resolution of service delivery issues and services for customer representatives
- Make the most of insight to change and improve our services
- Help us understand, reach and meet the income, independence and well-being needs of more of the most vulnerable people who need our support
- Provide easier access for our customers to a wider range of services delivered more seamlessly and efficiently
- Contribute to partner and stakeholder activities to improve the services they deliver to their customers

⁸ See [PDCS Business Strategy 2008 - 2011](#)

Our Strategy is driven by customer insight and is integrated within a customer focused programme of activity to make a difference to customers' lives.

Our high level plan presents the roadmap for PDCS partnerships and external relations in support of our Agency's strategic imperative "to build our credibility and reputation with partners and stakeholders"⁹ by working collaboratively in the most efficient way possible.

The management arrangements we are putting in place will help us to work flexibly with our partners and stakeholders and to respond positively to new challenges and opportunities.

This strategy will be reviewed by the new PDCS Partnerships and External Relations Board annually.

⁹ See [PDCS Business Strategy 2008 - 2011](#)

Strategic Objectives and Priorities for Partnerships and External Relations

This Annex presents our strategic objectives for partnerships and external relations, the key priorities for each objective, the Directorate where lead responsibility sits and the critical factors against which we will measure our success.

Objectives	Key Priorities	Lead Director (s) ¹⁰	Critical Success Factors
<p>Engage effectively</p> <p>Consult effectively, secure timely and meaningful input to change and improvement initiatives, and maintain ongoing constructive dialogue</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an effective Advisory Forum that represents customers to build consultation into change processes Establish a Strategic Customer Advisory Council to secure external learning and expertise to help shape the strategic direction for PDCS Seek and value stakeholder contributions at the earliest possible stage Build insight from first hand customer knowledge into operational work and customer outcomes Establish direct communications and feedback mechanism for stakeholders – including single point of contact arrangements for PDCS Advisory Forum members 	<p>C&P</p> <p>C&P</p> <p>C&P</p> <p>C&P</p> <p>C&P</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDCS Advisory Forum established and in live running Strategic Customer Advisory Council established and in live running Increase in stakeholder awareness of PDCS, who we serve, the services offered and how to engage with us Increase in stakeholder satisfaction with PDCS engagement and consultation
<p>Resolve service issues</p> <p>Resolve service problems raised by partners on individual cases and broader issues and support partners to improve their services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a named officer in each Operational Unit to resolve individual cases and wider service delivery issues Establish a national role as point of contact to work with Centre of Excellence to identify trends in complaints and resolve national service issues raised by stakeholders and partners Provide a conduit between Change, Customer Planning and Management and Operational areas to manage performance and prioritise service improvements Resolve Tier 3 complaints and cases escalated to Independent Case Examiner (ICE) and Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) Ensure stakeholder representatives are fully informed of change and new policy and processes 	<p>Ops</p> <p>Ops/C&P</p> <p>Strat</p> <p>C&P/Ops</p> <p>C&P</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in the number of issues raised by partners and time taken to resolve them Prioritised programme of service improvement activity in place Increase in satisfaction with issue resolution and service improvement processes Fewer cases escalated to dedicated officer or national point of contact National Audit Office (NAO) recognition of service improvements in handling customer complaints ICE/PHSO recognition of early and effective resolution of complaints in their annual reports

¹⁰ Key to Lead Directors is: C&P = Customer and Partnerships Director
Ops = Operations Director
Strat = PDCS Business Strategy Director

Objectives	Key Priorities	Lead Director (s)	Critical Success Factors
<p>Identify customers in need</p> <p>Engage with organisations who also serve PDCS customers to build awareness of our services, those we seek to serve and how to refer to us</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the number of national, regional and local partners able to identify need and increase our reach to vulnerable customers Establish referral arrangements with partners which meet customers' needs most efficiently Work with partners/stakeholders nationally, regionally and locally to share insight and deliver take-up initiatives Run targeted strategic and local outreach activity to build awareness and identify, support and enable customers to access the benefits and services they need 	<p>C&P</p> <p>C&P/Ops</p> <p>C&P/Ops</p> <p>C&P/Ops</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in customers reached from partnership activity Increase in numbers of staff in partner organisations able to identify need and appropriately refer to PDCS Increase in number of customers referred correctly by partners to PDCS Increase in numbers, awareness and satisfaction of customers and stakeholders engaged through strategic and local outreach activity
<p>Join up services</p> <p>Join up with partners to deliver holistic services that meet customers' income, independence and well-being needs and explore new service delivery opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners/stakeholders to improve access to services for customers and the channel appropriateness and quality of referrals Apply the learning from Linkage Plus with partners to agree efficient service models delivering a consistent core range of services¹¹ Expand national and local partnerships to enable customer access to a full range of services that meet their income, independence and well-being needs Work with HMRC and DoH to identify opportunities for shared and improved service delivery and efficiencies Work with JCP to improve employment outcomes and services delivered to our shared customers 	<p>C&P/Ops</p> <p>C&P/Ops</p> <p>C&P/Ops</p> <p>C&P/Strat</p> <p>C&P</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in successful benefit applications generated from appropriate partner referrals Increase in amount of benefits generated by partner referrals Increase in referrals from PDCS to partners that promote customers' independence and well-being Increase in services delivered to customers from PDCS referrals Increase in customers' satisfaction with the extent to which the services delivered meet their income, independence and well-being needs Increase in local partnerships which enable customers to access the full Linkage Plus service package Increase in speed and appropriateness of partner referrals
<p>Actively manage</p> <p>Co-ordinate partnership activity with clear and agreed priorities in taking forward communications, take-up and service improvement initiatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish clear roles and responsibilities for partnership and external relations activity for PDCS Establish a Partnership and External Relations Board to oversee partnership performance and coordinate engagement activity Align and integrate PDCS partnership arrangements with JCP/DWP to optimise delivery Improve partnership performance and expand measures to support ongoing delivery of objectives 	<p>All</p> <p>All</p> <p>All</p> <p>All</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New partnership and external relations roles and responsibilities implemented across PDCS New Partnership and External Relations Board established to support implementation, coordination and oversee performance Increase in stakeholder and partner satisfaction with partnership management and co-ordination arrangements

¹¹ Annex 6 describes the core services

The High Level Plan for Partnerships and External Relations

This Annex presents the high level delivery plan for our Partnerships and External Relations Strategy. Many of the key activities in the **shaping up** stage have already been completed and these are shown by use of italics.

Stage	Key Milestones	Lead Director ¹²
<p>Shaping Up</p> <p>April 2008 to October 2009</p> <p>Focus on core business and performance to allow us to grow from a stable foundation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Establish new PDCS Advisory Forum to lead engagement and consultation with stakeholders in business change and improvement</i> 	C&P
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Expand PDCS partnership and external relations performance measures to encompass activity, outcomes, awareness and satisfaction measures</i> 	C&P
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Complete a full review of local partnerships and take forward opportunities to improve joint working</i> 	C&P/Ops
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Complete research and analysis to identify the potential for expanding national partnerships and stakeholder relations for our priority customer groups</i> 	C&P
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Complete a review of current roles and responsibilities for Partnerships and External Relations across PDCS and agree future arrangements</i> 	C&P/Ops
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch a PDCS Strategy for Partnerships and External Relations 	C&P
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a senior Partnerships and External Relations Board to coordinate implementation of new responsibilities and partnership/external relations performance – <i>underway</i> 	C&P
<p>Joining Up</p> <p>April 2009 to April 2010</p> <p>Find ways to join up services holistically, across channels and boundaries around customer needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete migration of DCS Outreach to Local Service and consolidate the Centre Liaison Officer functions 	Ops
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete development of detailed Implementation Plans across directorates to deliver new roles, responsibilities and strategic priorities 	All
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement new roles and responsibilities for Partnerships and External Relations across PDCS and coordinate activity and communications across DWP 	All
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a PDCS Strategic Customer Advisory Council to bring leading edge external insight and knowledge to future PDCS strategic planning 	C&P
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand national partnerships/stakeholder engagement with voluntary and private sector organisations to support activity targeted at priority customer groups 	C&P
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start to expand local partnerships to promote consistent levels of awareness and enable consistent delivery of an agreed 'package' of income, independence and well-being services (Linkage Plus) 	Ops
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish new performance measures to track outcomes from referrals to partners (by PDCS) and drive channel shift to most effective and efficient channels 	C&P
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete analysis of service improvement opportunities with JCP, HMRC and DoH and establish a prioritised programme of activity 	C&P

¹² Key to Lead Directors is: C&P = Customer and Partnerships Director
Ops = Operations Director
Strat = PDCS Business Strategy Director

Stage	Key Milestones	Lead Director
<p>Moving Up</p> <p>April 2010 to April 2011</p> <p>Extending the services offered across all channels and to key external partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete a strategic review of national Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and partnership agreements with OGDs 	C&P
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the effectiveness of the PDCS Advisory Forum and associated working groups and communications/feedback arrangements and implement improvements as required 	C&P
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to drive forward a programme of service improvements with JCP, HMRC and DoH, and investigate the potential to expand the approach to OGDs 	C&P/Strat
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete expansion of local partnerships to enable delivery of a consistent package of services to customers to reflect learning from Linkage Plus 	Ops
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to review and optimise local and national partnerships/stakeholder relations to support new customer and campaign priorities 	C&P/Ops
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider research outcomes and requirements for a non-home visit face to face service and also agree the way forward for the Alternative Office network 	C&P
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete research and establish pilots to examine the potential for partners to deliver more services to PDCS customers 	C&P/Ops
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and take forward pilot initiatives with high potential private sector partners outside the priority customer group programme of engagement 	C&P
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners and stakeholders to actively support improvement to their services and their delivery of objectives and improved performance 	C&P/Ops
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners and stakeholders to actively support the wider Government change programme to explore and pilot new local joined up service delivery models 	All

DWP Public Service Agreements (PSAs) and Departmental Strategic Objectives (DSOs)

DWP Public Service Agreements

These are part of a cross government performance framework to focus on the governments main priorities. Each PSA is supported by a set of indicators to enable performance to be measured.

Public Service Agreement	National Indicators
<p>PSA 8: Maximise employment opportunity for all</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in overall employment rate • Narrowing the gaps in employment rates of disadvantaged groups • A reduction in the number of people on working age out-of-work benefits • An increase in the proportion of people who leave benefit and stay off for a sustained period
<p>PSA 9: Halve the number of children in poverty by 2010 -11</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of children in absolute low-income households • The number of children in relative low-income households • The number of children in relative low-income households and in material deprivation
<p>PSA 17: Tackle poverty and promote greater independence and well-being in later life</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The employment rate of those aged 50-69 and the difference between this and overall employment rate • The percentage of pensioners on low income • Healthy life expectancy at age 65 • The proportion of people over 65 who are satisfied with their home and neighbourhood • The extent to which people over 65 receive the support they need to live independently at home

DWP Strategic Objectives (2008 – 2011)

The DSOs shown below underpin the PSAs and provide the fundamental purpose and priorities for the Department. They provide the focus for the Department to deliver its vision to tackle poverty, reduce welfare dependency and provide our customers with greater choice and quality of service:

- Reduce the number of children living in poverty
- Maximise employment opportunity for all
- Improve health and safety outcomes
- Promote independence and well-being in later life, continue to tackle pensioner poverty and implement pension reform
- Promote equality of opportunity for disabled people
- Pay our customers the right benefit at the right time
- Make DWP an exemplar of effective service delivery

Promoting the key drivers of customer satisfaction

The following table highlights the four key drivers for customer satisfaction for PDCS and shows how our Strategy for Partnerships and External Relations will help to promote improvements across each of the key drivers.

The Key Drivers of Customer Satisfaction			
Ease of Access	Treatment	Timely Response	Right Outcome
<p>What they mean:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ease of access through suitable methods ▪ Ease of finding what is available to you ▪ Ease of understanding written communication ▪ Processes being simple and easy to understand ▪ Customers not having to repeat information ▪ Process / information linked to other Government services ▪ Being made aware of all your entitlements 	<p>What they mean:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Feeling comfortable dealing with services ▪ Staff being helpful & polite ▪ Staff treating you with respect ▪ Staff being knowledgeable about your entitlement and the process ▪ Staff listening to what you say ▪ Staff telling you about other possible entitlements ▪ Trusting the organisation 	<p>What they mean:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Claim forms / correspondence being acknowledged appropriately ▪ Being told how long it will take ▪ Being kept informed of progress of claim ▪ Speed entitlement received / conclusion reached 	<p>What they mean:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Right outcome reached (including finding employment) ▪ Being confident that payment received is correct ▪ Receiving an explanation for decision or outcome of contact ▪ Being informed of next steps if dissatisfied with the outcome ▪ Outcome delivered to the right number of customers
<p>How this strategy will help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More partners and stakeholders have good understanding of PDCS services and how to refer customers ▪ More partners and stakeholders are aware of entitlement conditions and where to get extra information or help ▪ Better partnership and stakeholder relations which help join-up service delivery for the customer - rather than relying on the customer to navigate across organisations ▪ More agreements with more OGDs/partner organisations to capture and share information ▪ More partners and stakeholders involved in targeted communications and take-up activity, to identify customers in need and drive take-up of benefits 	<p>How this strategy will help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Early engagement with customer representatives/ stakeholders via PDCS Advisory Forum to enable service improvement and change activity ▪ Regular feedback secured from stakeholders on quality of service and performance and acted upon promptly ▪ Dedicated people in place across PDCS to resolve customer service issues/individual case problems with stakeholder representatives ▪ Clear responsibilities for Partnerships and External Relations in PDCS at national, regional and local levels to build trust and co-operation and to co-ordinate activity to benefit shared customers 	<p>How this strategy will help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More partners and stakeholders working with PDCS to identify and serve customers when the need arises ▪ Closer working with partners and stakeholders to ensure referrals are via most appropriate channel ▪ More partners and stakeholders are clear of entitlement conditions and the information required to process claims quickly ▪ Better feedback to customer representatives and stakeholders on claims performance to help inform customer expectations ▪ More partners and stakeholders able to access DWP systems to track claims and advise customers 	<p>How this strategy will help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More partnerships and stakeholder relations which enable the delivery of a wider range of services to meet customers' needs more fully ▪ Better feedback from partners and stakeholders enabling improvements to benefit delivery and communications ▪ More partners and stakeholders with better awareness of entitlements and conditions helping customers - feeding through to improved speed and accuracy of payment ▪ More partners and stakeholders able to support and represent dissatisfied customers and with single point of contact in PDCS to address specific issues

Examples of current relationships with external organisations

The table below presents examples of the relationships PDCS has with external organisations nationally, regionally and locally. It highlights the breadth of current activity.

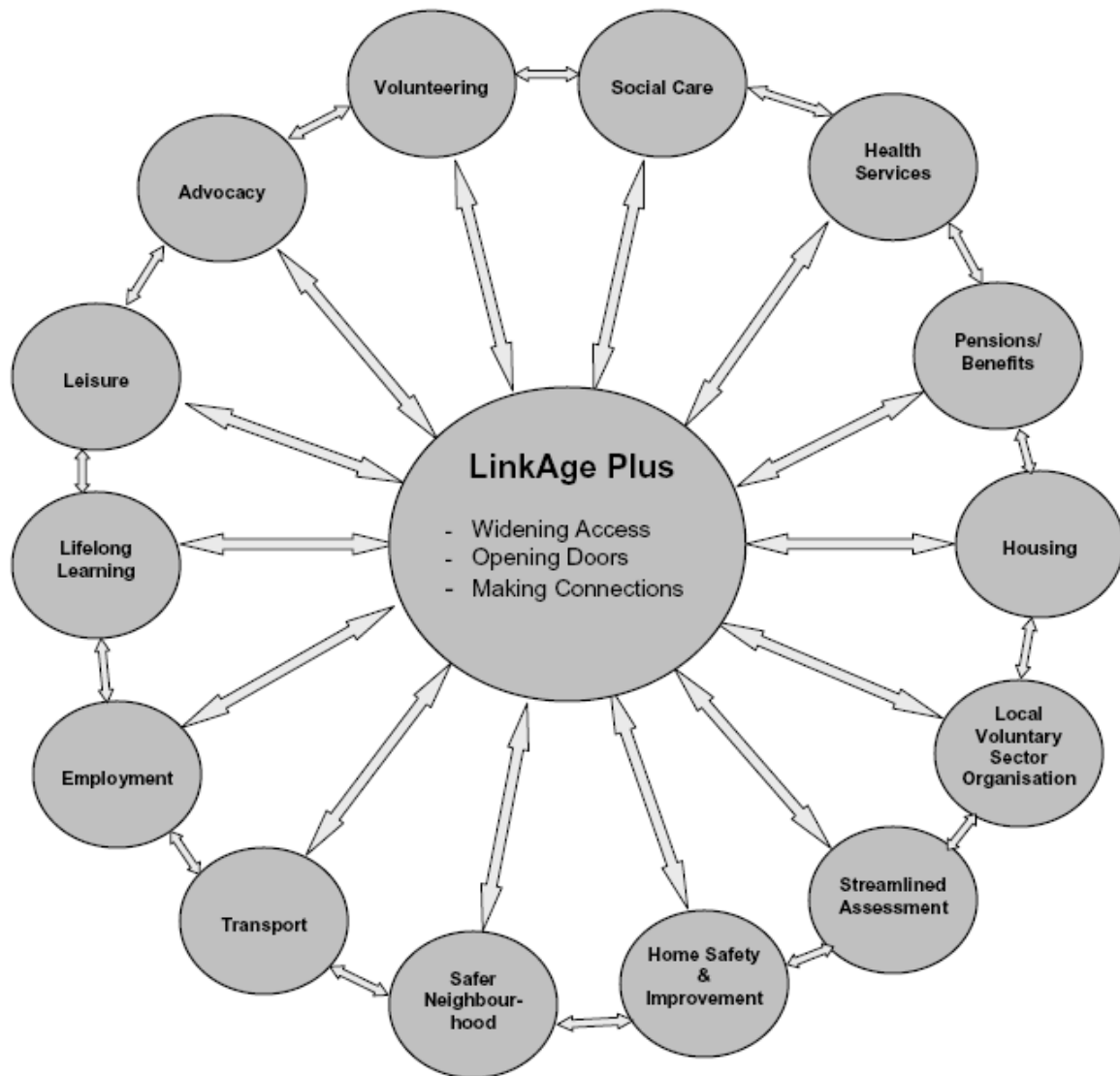
Partnerships – organisations currently engaged	Stakeholders – PDCS Advisory Forum members
Internal DWP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobcentre Plus • Tell us Once • Tribunal and Appeals Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizens Advice • Local Government Associations • Local Authority representatives • Turn2Us • Royal National Institute of Blind People • Macmillan Cancer Support • Help the Aged/Age Concern • Mind • Princess Royal Trust for Carers • Low Incomes Tax Reform Group • Royal National Institute for Deaf People • Carers UK • Terrence Higgins Trust • National Autistic Society • Contact a Family • Benevolence Today • Dial UK • National Deaf Children’s Society Current Working Groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families and Carers Group • Local Government Association Forum
Other Government Departments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HM Revenue and Customs • Department of Health • Regional Government Offices • Scottish Government • Welsh Assembly 	
National organisations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Government Associations • Age Concern/Help the Aged • Citizens Advice Bureau • Royal National Institute for Deaf People • Royal National Institute of Blind People • Carers UK 	
Regional organisations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Health Authorities • Regional Third Sector Agencies • Regional Forums on Ageing 	
Local organisations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Authority Social Care • Local Authority Housing Benefit/ Council Tax Benefit • Local Third Sector Partners • Local Health Authority • Association of Directors of Adult Social Care 	

The LinkAge Plus ‘Service Offering’

The LinkAge Plus programme established a series of projects to promote close working across a wide range of local partner organisations on behalf of their customers.

Partner organisations developed closer working and referral arrangements to enable the delivery of services to alleviate poverty and promote independence and well-being amongst their customers.

The LinkAge Plus service offering can be seen in the graphic below:



The learning from LinkAge Plus is currently being taken forward within the DWP Ageing Strategy – Building a society for all ages¹³.

¹³ See [DWP Ageing Strategy - Building a society for all ages](#)

The links between PDCS and key external organisations

This diagram illustrates how external organisations feed into PDCS partnership and external relations arrangements at national, regional and local levels.

Section 5 describes the PDCS functions in more detail.

