

Older People's Strategy 2008



Stockton-on-Tees
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Introduction

Why a Strategy for Older People?

Stockton Borough Council and North Tees Primary care Trust are committed to achieving a healthier, safer, cleaner and more prosperous community and developing a range of effective services which enhance the health and well-being of Stockton's growing older population.



We aim to support older people in Stockton on Tees to retain their independence, enjoy an active life, contribute to the growth of strong, local communities and be involved in planning the future of the services they need and value.

This strategy sets out our vision for the period 2007 – 2025 and aims to ensure that all services have considered the needs of older people, and that older people can access, on an equitable basis with the rest of the Stockton population, services that meet their needs. The strategy concerns not only those of us who are older people now, but Stockton's future generations too.

We can only achieve our visions and aspirations if services are designed and planned in consultation with, and for the needs of, the population of Stockton.

Facts about Stockton

- Approximately 57,000 people were aged over 55 (32% of the population) in 2001.
- At the 2001 Census over 11,000 people were aged 75 or over. By 2025, it is estimated that this could rise to nearly 21,000.
- The proportion of 'oldest old' (over 85 years) has more than doubled from 0.9% in 1971 to 1.9% in 2004.

Our Vision for Older People in Stockton

By 2025, Stockton will be one of the best places in the country to live as an older person.

Every older person will be a valued part of their local community, alongside people of every age. They will have access to services that help them improve their quality of life and their individual well-being.

They will be able to contribute to their local community and to how Stockton develops services for its local people in future.

Key Themes for Planning Services in Stockton

The Seven Dimensions of Independence

There is no shortage of recent work from a wide variety of sources on national policy for older people's services, and on how local agencies should turn this into locally relevant strategic plans for improving services in their area.

The 2004 **Seven Dimensions of Independence** study reported the factors that older people themselves identified as having most impact on their daily lives.

These seven dimensions have been used as the foundation for a number of other policy developments and by local planning agencies as the framework for their local older people's strategies.

Our strategy focuses on these seven dimensions as the key themes to consider when planning services. They are:

1. Housing and the Home

- More single older person households (especially amongst the oldest), leading to increased demands for support services, need for more proactive communications to reach single older people, fewer older people providing care to others
- Increased demand for suitable housing for older people
- Increased demand for home adaptations/ home equipment to continue living at home
- Increases in the numbers of people entitled to housing benefits and changes in the type and level of benefits



2. Neighbourhoods

- Likelihood of shifts over time in the geographic distribution of older people overall from urban areas to the more rural outlying areas of the borough
- Different population distributions for 'younger older' and very old age groups
- The very old will be most likely to live in deprived areas, traditionally the focus of much neighbourhood and service development work, but 'younger older' people are relatively less likely to do so. Delivering equitable services across the borough will require an effective response to changing population distributions
- Increased risk of deprivation amongst 'younger older' people in terms of geographic access to services

3. Social activities, social networks and keeping busy

- An increase in the potential pool of volunteers?
- Increasing numbers of single older people may risk growing levels of loneliness, with implications for mental and physical health, social isolation and reduced engagement with services and the local community
- Increased engagement with 'communities of interest' rather than locally based networks may decrease older people's reliance on traditional sources of information and support services – but provides opportunities to target people in new ways and to encourage engagement in a wider range of activities

4. Getting out and about

- Increased numbers of older people overall entitled to free public transport
- Increased car ownership and use amongst the 'younger older' increases their personal mobility but may have implications for the demand for public transport and older age groups more reliant on it

5. Income

- Older people may remain economically active for longer given trends in the labour market
- Increases in relatively affluent 'younger older' people and also in relatively poor very old people suggests a potential polarisation in terms of income distribution
- Increased demands for income based benefits, and particularly high rises in the number of very old people with complex needs and entitlements
- Take-up of benefits will be key to addressing income deprivation in a growing proportion of the overall population

6. Information

- Both traditional sources of information and new media will be needed to ensure that older people have access to information relevant to them
- Information targeted at 'older people' per se may risk being ignored by, or alienating, growing proportions of the target group, who are less likely to define themselves by age. Information for these people is seen as more relevant if it is targeted at those of any age with particular needs

7. Health and Healthy Living

- The vast majority of older people will continue to live outside the world of specialist health and social care services: planning to improve health and well-being needs to recognise their needs and/or lifestyle choices
- At the same time, there will be more older people with health needs of all kinds, and the increase will be most marked in the oldest groups with the most complex needs
- More people will be living with chronic conditions and/ or impairments that will affect their ability to manage at home
- More older people will be acting as a carer for others (although there will also be more older people living alone who are less likely to give or receive unpaid care) and services will need to take account of the needs both of carers and those for whom they care, in terms not just of targeted carer support but in terms of the ability of those providing care to access other mainstream services and support, given their role and the time devoted to it.



Our Strategic Priorities

Working across these themes, we have identified four strategic priorities which will encourage services, agencies and individuals working in Stockton to plan for improving services and a more integrated approach to services used by older people:

Priority 1: Community Leadership and Development

Working more closely with older people to put them at the heart of shaping and leading their communities

Priority 2: The welcoming community

Encouraging older people to contribute to the design and delivery of the various different community services – from housing and roads, crime prevention and policing to locally-based amenities and activities.

Priority 3: Choice, control and equitable access

Ensuring older people have a real choice about the services they use, control over how they use them, and that services will be accessible equitably by all

Priority 4: Improving personal well-being

Giving older people the opportunity to improve their personal well-being whether by equitable access to employment, health improvement (diet, exercise, smoking cessation etc.), education or leisure and cultural activities.

Our Action Plan

We can only achieve transform our vision and priorities into real achievement in improving services for older people in Stockton on Tees by working towards a comprehensive action plan.

Our action plan has been developed with Stockton Borough Council, North Tees Primary Care Trust and the local voluntary and community sectors all working together to create a detailed programme of action with specific deliverables, measurable targets and ongoing engagement with older people as leaders in the development of their own local communities.

A full copy of our action plan is available on request.

How you can get Involved

If you would like to get involved in shaping older people's services for Stockton, we would be pleased to hear from you. There are a number of ways you can become involved.

If you are an older resident you can become a member of the "Over 50's Assembly" which meets on a monthly basis or contribute to our annual "Are you Being Served Well" event held in October or as a contributor to the regularly published "Are You Being Served Newsletter".

For further details, please contact:

Peter Smith

Strategic Commissioner - Independent Living

Adult Strategy Team
1st Floor, Tithebarn House
High Newham Court
Hardwick
Stockton-on-Tees TS19 8RH

Tel: 01642 528462

Email: p.smith@stockton.gov.uk

Finally, if you wish to discuss any aspect of this Strategy you can contact:

Ruth Hill

Head of Adult Strategy
Stockton Borough Council
Municipal Buildings
PO Box 228
Church Rd
Stockton on Tees
TS18 1XE

Tel: 01642 527055

Email: ruth.hill@stockton.gov.uk

