

North Somerset Partnership

Older People's Strategy

April 2011 to March 2017

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Chapter 1: The Context

Introduction

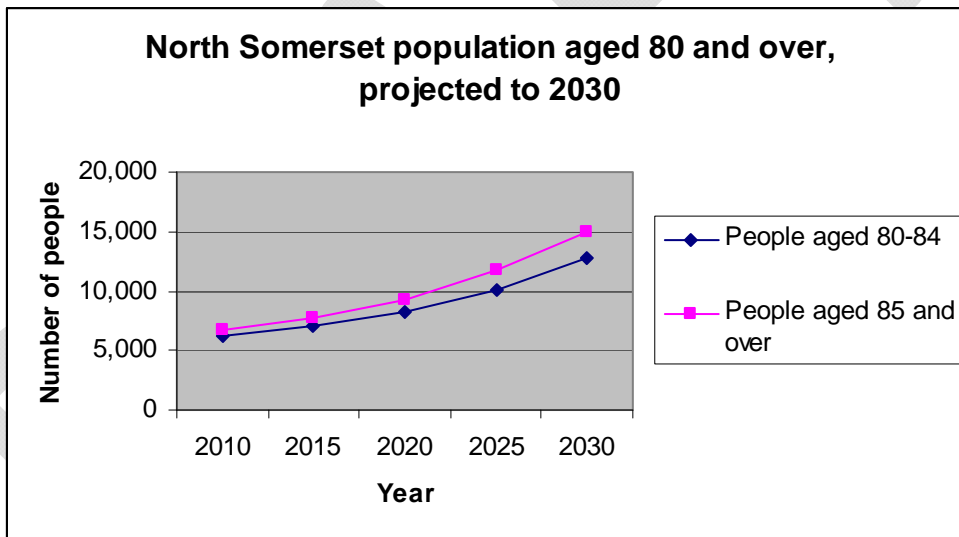
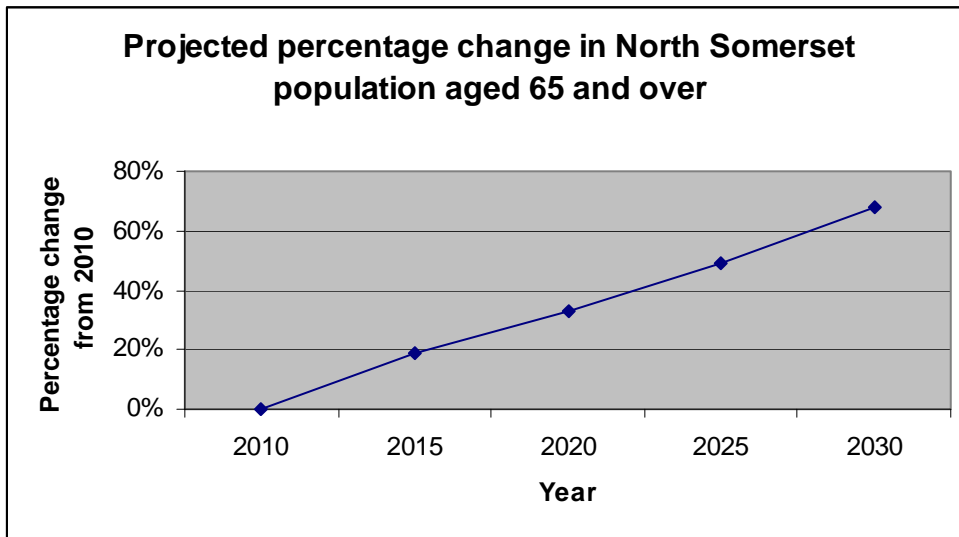
- 1.1 This Older People's Strategy has been developed by the North Somerset Partnership (NSP). It sets out our vision, principles and priorities for the development of services for older people in the district. It also explains the strategic actions we will carry out to meet those priorities in the period to March 2017. We will review the strategy in 2014, to ensure that we are working well to meet our priorities and to check that the strategy remains current and relevant.
- 1.2 This is an overarching strategy, setting out the high-level priority outcomes we aim to achieve in North Somerset in the coming years. The strategy is designed to inform and guide the wide variety of strategic documents that each North Somerset Partnership member organisation has in place to provide services for older people in the district. It will not duplicate the information and actions held in those documents, but sets out the framework in which all members will develop and deliver services and policies aimed at improving outcomes for older people. Examples of the documents that will be informed by this strategy include: the Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People, the Carers' Strategy, the Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy, and the North Somerset Dementia Strategy.
- 1.3 We have worked closely as a partnership to develop this strategy and have consulted widely to make sure that it will meet the needs of older people in North Somerset. We will continue to work closely as a partnership to achieve the priorities we have identified.
- 1.4 In developing this strategy we have been acutely aware of the reductions in public expenditure, which will restrict the ability of all North Somerset Partnership organisations to develop new or expanded services. Therefore, the focus of this strategy is on responses that do not require additional funding.

Why do we need a strategy?

- 1.5 It is widely recognised that we live in an ageing society. In 2007 we reached a significant point where for the first time there were more people over the State Pension age living in the UK than there were children.
- 1.6 In North Somerset older people make up a larger portion of the population than the average nationally. Currently, those aged 65 and over make up 20.3% of the population in North Somerset, compared to 16.5% nationally¹. These numbers are expected to increase significantly in coming years: by 2030 the 65 and over

¹ Department of Health POPPI statistics (accessed October 2010)

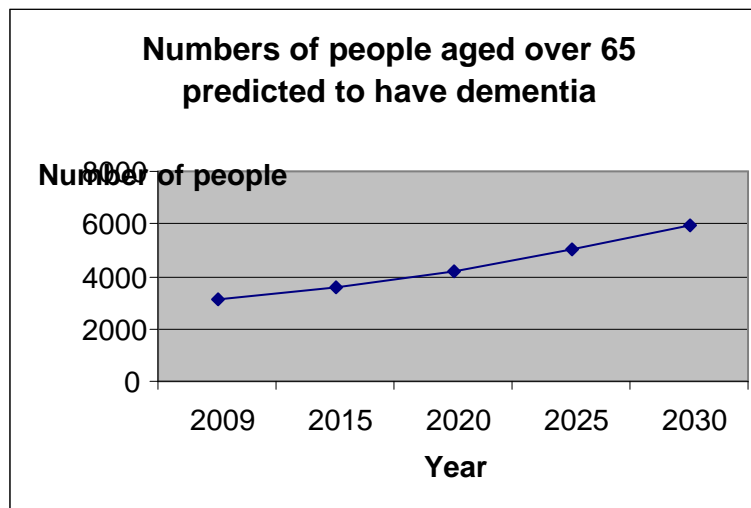
population in North Somerset is expected to increase by 68%, with a particularly dramatic increase in the number of people aged 85 and over². This is illustrated in the graphs below.



1.7 This rising older population presents significant challenges to those organisations that provide services to older people in North Somerset, as, inevitably, demand for services is set to increase greatly. This challenge will be added to further by a predicted high level of growth in the number of people in the district who will be living with dementia in coming years. By 2030, it is expected that in North Somerset there will be a 91% increase in the number of people over the age 65

² Department of Health POPPI statistics (accessed October 2010). See: <http://www.poppi.org.uk/index.php?pageNo=314&areaID=8311&loc=8311>

with dementia, compared to the level in 2009³. This is illustrated in the graph below.



- 1.8 This strategy has been developed at a time when service providers across the North Somerset Partnership face extensive cuts in funding, as announced in the October 2010 Spending Review. North Somerset healthcare services are required to deliver savings of £47.8 million between April 2011 and March 2014 to meet the growing costs of healthcare associated with the North Somerset population. In addition, NHS North Somerset must reduce its management costs by more than 30% by March 2013. North Somerset Council faces a 30% reduction in funding from Government over the next four years, and the voluntary sector is also facing cuts in budgets. At the same time, we know that the demand for services for older people will continue to increase. This means that, as a partnership, we will face some tough decisions as to how we prioritise the funding available to us in the future. The strategy must be viewed in this context and all improvements that we aim for will be dependent on resources.
- 1.9 The strategy has also been developed in the context of the national government's ambition to create a 'Big Society', in which partners across sectors will build new relationships with local communities, enabling them to take greater responsibility for meeting their own local needs. Partnership working will be vital, as no one agency can meet the needs of older people in North Somerset on their own.
- 1.10 In this context there is a real need for this strategy, which will enable co-ordinated partnership working to deliver positive outcomes for older people. As a

³ Department of Health POPPI statistics

partnership we can work to ensure that the resources that are available are used efficiently and provide value for money. To achieve this we will need to make fundamental changes to the way that we deliver statutory services. We will also need to maximise the contributions that the public and the voluntary sector can make in meeting the needs of older people.

Definition of older people

- 1.11 The definition of older people for this strategy refers to anybody over the age of 50. This is because we should be thinking about and planning to meet the needs of older people as early as possible. However, the strategy does recognise that those in earlier old age are likely to have significantly different needs from those who are in later old age.

What will the strategy do?

- 1.12 Our overall vision for older people in North Somerset is:

“That older people have the opportunity to live their lives to the fullest extent they choose with dignity, choice and fairness, free from discrimination”

- 1.13 This strategy explains how the North Somerset Partnership will contribute to making this vision a reality, by developing and delivering services that recognise and respond to the diverse needs of older people in North Somerset.
- 1.14 As explained above, this strategy is overarching and pulls together the many strategies and plans for older people that have already been developed by members of the North Somerset Partnership. It will be influential in the review of these existing strategies and plans, as well as in the development of new ones, which will aim to meet the priorities identified here. A full list of documents already in place can be found in Appendix ****
- 1.15 It would be very difficult for any strategy to respond to all of the issues that older people and those who work with them have told us matter to them. Therefore, the priorities identified in this strategy are those that older people and the organisations that make up the North Somerset Partnership have said are the most important.

What is the North Somerset Partnership?

- 1.16 The North Somerset Partnership (NSP) is the local strategic partnership for the district. The partnership brings together a range of representatives from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors to tackle important issues in the community in a co-ordinated way. Members of the partnership include the council, the local NHS, the Police, business representatives, further and higher education and the voluntary sector. For full details of the member organisations, please see Appendix ****.

1.17 The partnership has worked together to develop and implement a vision and plan that will lead to better opportunities and quality of life for all residents in North Somerset. The vision and plan are set out in its Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2026. This Older People’s Strategy 2011 – 2017 will deliver the aims and aspirations in the Sustainable Community Strategy that are specifically aimed at or relevant to older people.

1.18 The North Somerset Vision, as set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy, is:

"Sustainable, inclusive, safe, healthy, prosperous communities thriving in a quality environment".

1.19 To achieve this vision six shared priorities have been developed. These are:

- Tackling disadvantage and promoting equality of opportunity.
- Developing strong inclusive communities.
- Ensuring safer communities.
- Improving health and wellbeing.
- Developing a prosperous economy and enterprising community.
- Living within environmental limits.

1.20 Within each shared priority the NSP has identified a number of aims and outcomes that it would like to see achieved through the implementation of its work programmes. One of these aims is: “Meet the health and social needs of older people” and we hope to contribute to this aim in particular through the successful delivery of this strategy.

Chapter 2: What older people have told us

- 2.1 In developing this strategy we have listened closely to what older people in North Somerset have told us about the issues that matter to them.
- 2.2 We set up a project board to oversee the development of the strategy and to ensure that it reflects the needs of our older residents. The project board was made up of representatives from each of the member organisations of the North Somerset Partnership whose remit includes developing and delivering services for older people, as well as older representatives from the community. A list of member organisations and a description of their involvement with older people can be found in Appendix ****.

How we consulted

- 2.2 As the members of the North Somerset Partnership had carried out a number of consultations with older people in recent years, we were able to understand what issues they had identified as being important. In particular, we looked at the results of the Place Survey carried out in December 2008 and two Citizens' Panel surveys, one from 2008 and the other from 2009, the results of which could be analysed in relation to specific age groups. The results of these surveys highlighted some clear issues that matter to older people in North Somerset. They suggested that the key issues for older people in North Somerset are: public transport; accessing information about the services available to them; and tackling crime and perceptions of personal safety. Using this information, combined with our knowledge of broader research about older people's needs and aspirations, it was possible to put together a list of priorities and principles on which we thought this strategy should focus.
- 2.3 It was on this list that our consultation exercise for this strategy centred. We asked people for their views on our proposed principles and priorities and asked for ideas for actions to meet those priorities. The detailed actions highlighted by respondents to the consultation will not feature within this strategy, as they are of an operational nature. They will, however, be considered in full in the review of existing strategies and the development of new ones, as they give a good indication of the types of services that are needed or wanted by older people in North Somerset.
- 2.4 The proposed principles we consulted on were:
 - That the views of older people are valued and recognised.
 - That organisations work together to make sure that services are provided in the most efficient, affordable, cost-effective and straight-forward way.
 - That services are provided in a way that ensures and protects the dignity of older people.
 - That, as far as possible, older people have choice and control over the services they receive.
 - That services do not discriminate.

2.5 The proposed priorities we consulted on were:

- Improving safety and security.
- Improving access to transport.
- Supporting economic well-being and income.
- Enabling older people to make informed choices and decisions through the provision of appropriate advice and information.
- Improving and maintaining health and health services, in particular hospital discharge and mental health promotion and treatment.
- Reducing age discrimination.
- Enabling older people to remain living independently, avoiding the need for residential care where appropriate.
- Reducing social isolation.
- Improving and developing support for carers.
- Improving the quality of care at the end of life.

2.6 We consulted by a variety of means: via groups and organisations whose remit includes working closely with older people; at existing groups attended by older people, including the Senior Community Link; via the council's Citizens' Panel, which is a regular forum for local residents to provide feedback on council services and proposed initiatives; directly with residents through an advertisement about the consultation in the North Somerset Life magazine; and at residents' meetings in a sheltered housing scheme and an extra care scheme. We received 824 responses in total.

Headline results

2.7 A full report of the results to this consultation is held in Appendix ***, but the headline results are set out below.

- There was a high level of support for the principles and priorities put forward.
- There were a number of themes that appeared in the responses to almost all of the questions. The first of these is information, and the need to make access to information easier for older people. Many responses noted that people do not know where to go to access information, be it about benefit applications, bus times or support for carers. This issue was brought up by many respondents and shows a need for focussed work in this area.
- A second noticeable theme was that of transport, and improving access to it. This was seen as a solution to many of the priorities, including reducing social isolation, enabling older people to remain living independently and maintaining and improving health. Many respondents called for increased access to community transport, improved public transport, and transport that would take people from door-to-door.
- A third theme that appeared in responses to multiple questions was the need to increase support to carers and to recognise the important role that

they play in caring for older people in North Somerset.

- Another theme was that of a need for improved close working with other organisations and agencies, including the voluntary sector, to deliver services. Respondents suggested that doing this could help to deliver multiple priorities, including: reducing social isolation, enabling older people to remain living independently, and improving and maintaining health.
- Finally, cost is clearly an issue at the forefront of many people's minds. This is both in relation to an awareness of the constraints on public services in terms of the resources available for delivering improvements, and the cost of services at point of delivery to the user. Respondents were keen to see services that are affordable, but not to the detriment of quality. Many also argued for a halt to means testing, which is perceived to discriminate against those who have saved financially for all their lives.

- 2.8 As a result of the consultation we have removed two of the priorities from the original selection. These are: 'reducing age discrimination' and 'reducing social isolation'. The priority on age discrimination was removed as a result of comments questioning whether this is something that needs to be prioritised and whether it would be achievable by the North Somerset Partnership within the life of the strategy. The project board also felt that this priority was adequately covered in the principle: 'that services do not discriminate'.
- 2.9 In terms of the social isolation priority, feedback questioned the meaning of the term 'social isolation'. It was also felt that this priority is woven throughout the strategy, as social isolation will be addressed by meeting so many of our other priorities. This is particularly relevant to the priorities relating to improving access to transport, improving support to carers, provision of information and advice, improving health and discharge services, and enabling independent living. As meeting these priorities should have the beneficial effect of reducing social isolation, it has been removed as a stand alone priority.
- 2.10 As this strategy has been written during a time of significant political and economic change, the Partnership has had to respond by adapting some of its original ideas. The original consultation took place before the Comprehensive Spending Review and before we knew the extent of the reductions in public spending. This has meant that some of the suggestions we put forward in the initial consultation have had to change to reflect the current situation. However, this strategy is still focussed on the issues that older people have said are most important to them.
- 2.11 We cannot assume that the views of those responding to the consultation are representative of all residents, or even all older people, within North Somerset. The results of the consultation do, however, give a good indication of what issues matter and how the North Somerset Partnership should be focussing its efforts in relation to older people's services.

Chapter 3: The Principles and Priorities

Principles

- 3.1 The priorities and actions outlined in the following pages are underpinned by five key principles that we believe should be fundamental in the planning and delivery of all services and policies for older people in North Somerset.
- 3.2 These principles have been developed by the North Somerset Partnership and refined as a result of the consultation process described in the previous chapter. These principles are of equal importance and none should be emphasised more than others.
- 3.3 The principles on which this strategy is based are:
- That the views of older people are actively sought, valued and recognised.
 - That organisations work together to make sure that services are provided in the most efficient, affordable, cost-effective and straightforward way.
 - That services are provided in a way that ensures and protects the dignity of older people.
 - That, as far as possible, older people have choice and control over the services they receive.
 - That services do not discriminate.
- 3.4 All members of the North Somerset Partnership have responsibility for ensuring that these principles are adhered to and become engrained into all policies and practices aimed at or relevant to older people.

Priorities

- 3.5 The consultation enabled us to refine our priorities and the final priorities on which this strategy will focus are:
- Safety and security.
 - Access to transport.
 - Economic well-being and income.
 - Advice and information.
 - Health and health services, in particular hospital discharge and mental health promotion and treatment.
 - Enabling independent living, reducing reliance upon residential care.
 - Support for carers.

- Care in the last phase of life.
- 3.6 These priorities have been carefully selected and we are determined to achieve against them. However, due to the current economic position and the diminishing resources available to the public sector, it is important to remember that introducing any new services would be a significant challenge. Therefore, we will focus on improving the way we work, and working closely in partnership, to deliver the priorities in this increasingly challenging environment.
- 3.7 The rest of this chapter explains why these priorities are so important. As with the principles, these priorities are listed in no particular order and each is as important as all of the others.

Safety and security

- 3.8 This priority was selected because we know that older people can experience a greater fear of crime and may also be more vulnerable to some types of crime, for example distraction burglary. Previous consultation⁴ has shown that of a range of crime types 'burglary from the home' was of most concern to respondents, with those aged between 60 and 74 being most likely to be concerned about this. In fact, 60-74 year olds were amongst those respondents who had higher levels of concern across all crime types. Similarly, consultation has shown that those people most likely to feel unsafe after dark are those aged 70 and over⁵. The Citizens' Panel Survey (December 2008) also showed that older people were less likely to be confident that the Police and council are working together to tackle anti-social behaviour. We also know that older people are amongst those most likely to have seen and taken action in response to crime prevention messages. This means that awareness raising and providing information can be very positive activities, both in reassuring older people and in encouraging them to take action to improve safety.
- 3.9 Another element of improving safety and security relates to work to safeguard adults, including older people, in North Somerset from abuse and neglect. This is important and a priority for us because the experience of abuse or neglect can have a significant impact on a person's health and well-being and on their independence. Neglect can lead to a person losing choice and control over fundamental aspects of their life and can cause humiliation and loss of dignity. This is why we must prioritise this area of work.

Access to transport

- 3.10 This priority was selected because meeting an older person's transport needs can be an important factor in maintaining that person's quality of life, by enabling

⁴ December 2009 Citizens' Panel

⁵ North Somerset Place Survey 2008

them to maintain a more independent lifestyle. This was highlighted by a number of respondents in our consultation, who suggested that having access to transport would help to achieve some of the other priorities put forward, including enabling older people to remain living independently and maintaining and improving health. Our consultation also suggested that having good access to transport can also have the beneficial effect of reducing social isolation, as it enables people to access the activities and groups that support a good social network. Therefore, access to transport is an important priority for us, due to the role it could play in meeting a broad range of important outcomes.

Economic well-being and income

3.11 This is a priority for us because supporting economic well-being and income can help to improve an older person's quality of life. It can also delay dependency on statutory support, as, with improved economic well-being, people may be able to help themselves for longer by paying the charges associated with their care and support. This is particularly important in light of the need for providers to make charges that reflect the true costs of service provision. Some older people may experience financial difficulty because of fixed incomes and may wish or need to work beyond retirement age because of this, or for other reasons. Further, some older people wish to retrain and learn new skills, for example ICT. As at a national level there is a focus on younger people and worklessness, there is very little funding available for, or programmes dedicated to, supporting older people with retraining or accessing work. A further issue is that evidence shows that over a third of all people over the age of 60 years are not claiming the benefits that they are entitled to⁶. Benefits available range from help with rent payments through housing benefit to pension credits. If in receipt of state benefit, customers can further benefit from free dental treatment and help with funeral costs, among other things. This shows why it is vital that customers are encouraged to take up the benefits they are entitled to.

Advice and information

3.12 Providing access to good quality information and advice for older people is a cornerstone in the national Putting People First and Personalisation agendas, which are aimed at improving people's experiences of adult social care⁷. Feedback on our consultation, and on others before it, has shown that many older people in North Somerset are not aware of what services are available to help them, or where to go for information about those services. Without this information, people are unable to make informed choices and decisions about the issues that matter to them. This is why it is necessary for us to prioritise this area of work in adult social care and across the partnership.

⁶ Age UK: Local action for later life.

⁷ See: http://www.cpa.org.uk/cpa/putting_people_first.pdf

Health and health services, in particular hospital discharge and mental health promotion and treatment

- 3.13 This is a priority for us because it is essential that older people are supported to self care and to access appropriate services that maximise their health and well-being. The majority of older people will need to access health services from time to time, and some will need to go into hospital at some point to receive specialist care. We know that when those over 75 are admitted to hospital as an emergency it is predominantly due to a urinary tract infection, respiratory problem, heart disorder, confusion, collapse or stroke. Through improved self care, case management, and co-ordination, many of these admissions could be avoided. Where admission is inevitable or appropriate, improved support facilitating discharge will ensure that the length of time someone will need to stay in hospital can be kept to a minimum and also that the transition home or to another care setting is smooth, with everyone involved being well informed.
- 3.14 Our aim will be to provide for older people as much care in the community as possible and as appropriate. This will require support from the specialists to their generalist colleagues to ensure people are and can be effectively managed in primary and community care settings as opposed to hospital settings. Effective use of clear pathways of care, transparent communication between professionals and provision of information to people that enables them to make informed choices and better manage their own condition will allow us to ensure people and their carers receive the right care and support in the right place, at the right time, to meet both their physical and mental health needs.

Enabling independent living, reducing reliance upon residential care

- 3.15 This priority was selected as research has shown that the majority of older people want to be as independent as possible and to live in their own homes for as long as they can⁸. Whilst for some this will mean a move to more specialist accommodation in later life – for example to sheltered or extra care housing – most will wish to remain in the house that has been their home for many years. The 2008 Adult Care Review highlighted a heavy reliance on residential care in North Somerset, which does not reflect the majority of people’s needs or aspirations. All of this means that we need to work together to ensure we are able to provide the right housing, care and support options to enable people to live as independently as they can for as long as possible, if this is what they choose to do. This also includes the important area of supporting people who pay for their own care. “Self-funders” need support, information and advice about the range of options open to them, to ensure they are able to make informed decisions.

⁸ Putting Older People First in the South West: A regional housing market assessment. November 2008.

Support for carers

3.16 Around 20,000 people in North Somerset are carers, and 22% of them are aged 65 and over⁹. This number is set to increase as our population grows, but many people who want to provide care will be unable to do so without support. Providing support to carers means that those who are willing and able to care can be enabled to sustain this, contributing to the development of the 'Big Society' approach**. It may also help to reduce the stress and social isolation that some carers may feel in their day-to-day lives. Further, by supporting carers we are recognising the enormous contribution they make to society. Each carer who is supported to continue in their role contributes not only to the care and quality of life of the person they look after, but also to supporting the health and social care system in North Somerset. This is why it is essential for us to prioritise this area of work. Support for carers also links in with other strategy and policy requirements such as the Dementia Strategy, and the Personalisation agenda.

Care in the last phase of life

3.17 A number of respondents to our consultation highlighted that being able to die at home is important to them. This echoes in the results of research carried out by Marie Curie Cancer Care, which indicates that 60% of people would prefer to die at home. In reality, 60% of people die in hospital. Our own evidence from people in their last phase of life, their families and their carers suggests that people often do not have enough information and support and feel that they have to relay their stories to too many professionals. People feel vulnerable outside of normal working hours, which, naturally, can lead to a panic call to 999, resulting in admission to hospital. This is why the quality of care in the last phase of people's lives is a priority for us. We aim to support people to identify their preferred place for their care in the last phase of life and to commission and provide services that allow them to achieve that.

⁹ 2001 Census, quoted in the North Somerset Carers Strategy 2008-2011

Chapter 4: What we will do

- 4.1 This chapter sets out the actions that the North Somerset Partnership is committed to, to ensure that we are able to meet the priorities described in Chapter 3. Some of the actions will be carried out by all members of the partnership, whilst others will be shared between just a few specific agencies. Information about who will be responsible for each of the actions, and in what timeframe, can be found in Appendix ***.
- 4.2 The majority of actions relate to specific priorities, outlined below. However, there are two overarching actions that all members of the North Somerset Partnership are committed to, to enable us to support older people across the district. These actions are described below.
- 4.3 Firstly, as a partnership we must ensure that we deliver the priorities in this strategy, and that the principles that it is based on become integrated and mainstreamed into our policies and services. All members of the North Somerset Partnership commit to this as an action.
- 4.4 Secondly, to make sure that this strategy can bring about real change, it must be a 'living' document that responds to the needs of older people. All partners will need to continue to engage with older people to make sure that this happens. It is vital that policies and services demonstrate that they have taken into account and reflected the views of older people wherever possible.
- 4.5 We already have engagement structures in place. For example, North Somerset Council and NHS North Somerset jointly support and fund an engagement structure with older people called Senior Community Links (SCLs). There is an SCL in each of four local areas, where older people get involved in and comment on both local and district-wide issues. There is also an SCL for older people from Black and other Minority Ethnic communities. This SCL, which is supported by Somerset Race Equality Council, builds on earlier work by NSP partner organisations in highlighting and promoting Black and other Minority Ethnic community issues through events such as "Your North Somerset". Representatives from the SCLs meet with North Somerset Councillors and NHS North Somerset on a quarterly basis at the Older People Champions' Group. All the other member organisations of the NSP consult and engage with older people through their own structures and on specific issues. Where there are not specific engagement structures with older people, older people take part in other more general groups. To build on this work, all member organisations of the North Somerset Partnership will undertake the following action:
- We will review our engagement structures and produce and implement an action plan setting out how we will improve engagement with older people.
- 4.6 The rest of this chapter describes our actions under each of the priority headings. These actions are focussed on giving people the opportunity to make informed

decisions about their own lives, or the lives of people that they care for. Where intervention is needed, public services will work in a joined up way that is simple and avoids confusion.

Safety and security

- 4.7 We already work hard to improve safety and security for older people in North Somerset. For example, the Bobby Van Scheme was introduced by the Avon and Somerset Police Community Trust in 2001 to help reduce crime and the fear of crime among the elderly and vulnerable by providing extra security. A range of prevention activities also takes place, including provision of home security advice and seasonal campaigns that highlight particular risks (for example in the summer months when windows and doors are left open, or at Christmas when valuables are left on display). Targeted information is provided to prevent distraction burglary and bogus callers. A key approach to reducing burglary is the Safer & Stronger Partnership's work to target offenders and reduce re-offending; this includes providing effective drug treatment.
- 4.8 In 2010 we introduced and published minimum service standards for how the partnership responds to anti-social behaviour. These include commitments to dealing with reports in a consistent way and within agreed timescales with feedback to victims on a regular basis. These service standards have been included in the council's North Somerset Life magazine alongside information on how to report anti-social behaviour. Co-ordinated approaches are brought together for key events – for example, Halloween – to prevent anti-social behaviour. This includes prevention work in schools and through the media and organised events to ensure a positive approach. We hope that this work will help to reduce the concern felt by older people over anti-social behaviour.
- 4.9 We have also worked hard to improve Safeguarding adults in North Somerset. Work has included: the implementation of a comprehensive training and development programme for all partner agencies; improved commissioning and awareness of advocacy; significant improvements in the standards of quality assurance within Safeguarding systems; and the development of our first Business Plan for the Safeguarding Adults Board.
- 4.10 However, there is still work to do to improve safety and security for older people in North Somerset. To achieve this, we will undertake the following actions:
1. We will finalise and implement a communications strategy to boost public confidence in community safety as a whole with particular emphasis on domestic burglary and anti social behaviour.
 2. Annually, we will produce and implement a Safeguarding Adults Business Plan to continuously improve partnership working to safeguard vulnerable adults, underpinned by the views and experiences of people with experience of the safeguarding adults process.

Access to transport

4.11 We have already completed, or have under way, a number of initiatives to improve access to transport in North Somerset. These include:

- Completing the installation of 300 low level bus stops, as part of the Greater Bristol Bus Network.
- Working towards a national requirement that all bus operators will provide low level access buses by 2015.
- A recent review of the information provided about transport options, resulting in us providing specific information on bus routes at bus stops.
- Plans to provide real time information screens at bus stops in the near future.
- Plans to introduce smart card infrastructure on to local bus stops in the near future, which will improve ticketing and integration of transport modes.
- The commissioning of dial-a-ride operators to provide a community transport service across the whole of the district.
- The introduction of a community transport directory leaflet to provide comprehensive information about all of the local community transport operators.
- The introduction of a new online service for residents to apply for a bus pass, which will improve convenience and delivery of travelcards.

4.12 There is further work to do to enable access to transport for older people. This has been highlighted in a number of responses to our consultation, as well as in previous consultation exercises. It is important to note, however, that the partnership has limited power in delivering improvements to public transport services. We are reliant on other organisations, such as the bus operators, for this. We can make improvements to the information provided about these services – something that has been requested by older people via our consultation. As such, we commit to the following actions:

1. We will improve the way we engage with and respond to older people when undertaking our annual review of transportation services.
2. We will investigate how we can make better use of other council access points, for example libraries and Gateways, to provide information on travel options for older people and will put in place agreed improvements.

3. We will regularly update our web pages to ensure that information is relevant, current and can be accessed through the public computer networks and will work with older people to ensure that information is presented in the most accessible, helpful way.

Economic well-being and income

- 4.13 Work is already under way to support economic well-being and income for older people in North Somerset. Support is available through Westonworks to help people of all ages back into work. Together with its partner agencies, Westonworks provides free advice and support on volunteering, employment and self employment. The services are available to older people and include: advice on a range of work-related topics, UK Online computer training, specialist career change software, free internet access for job searching, local papers and vacancy notice boards. Ready4work is a scheme run across North Somerset and supports people on benefits into work through retraining and job grants where appropriate.
- 4.14 We also recognise the importance of identifying customers, including older people, who may be entitled to benefits but who are not claiming. Therefore, we have commissioned a full demographic profile through Insight Mosaic to provide us with details of households that may be entitled to benefits. Once identified, we will either write an invitation to claim, hold a benefit surgery in the identified areas, or carry out a home visit to potential claimants. To help people who self-fund their care, Care Navigators are available to give benefit and other financial advice.
- 4.15 We know that there is still work to do to support economic well-being and income for older people in the district and so we commit to the following actions:
 1. We will further develop joint-working between relevant agencies, including Age UK, and will support their advice days.
 2. We will proactively identify and target older people who may be entitled to claim benefits to increase benefit take-up and older people's incomes.
 3. We will provide an online indicative funding assessment form (for older people in need of care and support) for those with access to computers. This will improve the speed and efficiency of responding to requests for support.

Advice and information

- 4.16 We already work hard to ensure that people have access to the information and advice that they need to make informed choices and decisions. Some of this work includes:

- Care Connect was set up in 2004 to be the first point of contact for all health and social care enquiries. This service guides all callers through a series of questions to signpost them in the right direction and can refer them to services provided by voluntary, statutory or private sector organisations.
- The council produces an award-winning magazine, North Somerset Life, which is circulated monthly to all households in the district and contains information about what is going on in the district, information about services and other council news.
- We provide information in a variety of formats to improve accessibility, including in large print, Braille, and in other languages.
- New public transport information services are being developed, with a recent example being the new SMS service for local bus stops.
- We hold Community Cafés at a range of locations across North Somerset. Each café event provides an opportunity for older people to chat to a member of the Age UK Somerset Team and local councillors about concerns and talk to trained advisors about a range of everyday issues.
- We have increased access to health information, advice and support through the new Health Shop in Weston-super-Mare and libraries hold an expanded range of books and information that support people to understand and manage their long-term health conditions.
- Avon and Somerset Constabulary's pioneering police kiosk service provides a live access point to police information and services through a simple touch screen interface which is housed in a distinctive kiosk casing. These can be accessed throughout the constabulary area, with one in Weston-super-Mare.
- North Somerset Council has a Community Agent scheme, in which agents proactively identify older people in need of support. They provide information and advice relating to a wide range of services and health issues, provide a link to partner organisations and raise awareness of issues facing the community. They link with people on an individual basis to reduce isolation, improve independence, well-being and quality of life. Community Agents assist people with referrals and signpost to relevant community services.
- Other services and initiatives include the Home from Hospital Scheme and our Care Navigator Service.

4.17 However, our consultation has shown that we still need to improve our provision of advice and information to older people. As such, we will undertake the following actions:

1. We will produce key information for older people's services in a variety of formats and ways. This will cover the services and support provided by the partners, making it easier to access help and support.
2. We will develop and implement the Putting People First Information and Advice Strategy.
3. We will establish a North Somerset Information and Advice Partnership to manage and own the strategy.

Health and health services, in particular hospital discharge and mental health promotion and treatment

4.18 The infrastructure within which acute and community health services are delivered will change significantly over the next few years as a consequence of implementing the national *Transforming Community Services Strategy* and the 2010 NHS White Paper *Equity & Excellence - Liberating the NHS*. Health and social care services are also responding to specific service area strategies in areas such as dementia, stroke and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. The opportunities arising from *Equity & Excellence - Liberating the NHS*, in conjunction with *Transforming Community Services*, will allow us to review and improve care pathways over the next few years.

4.19 We have already made progress in supporting older people in North Somerset to improve their own health. As described earlier in this chapter, we have made improvements to the information available to older people about health issues. Also, the PCT agreed a self care protocol in 2009 and the development of self management plans to support adoption of the protocol is under way. Self management plans currently available include: chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, stroke, diabetes and hypertension. We are also working towards our ambition for people with long-term health conditions to have a management/care plan that is personal to them. An increasing number of people with a long term condition have a personalised care plan. Increasing numbers of older people with long term conditions will use self management plans as they are developed and adopted by professionals to help their patients manage their health and well-being in a way that is personal to them. Joint work is also under way to improve the process of discharge from hospital. Services which assist here include the Care Navigator Service provided by Social Services which works with people who self-fund their own care to identify all the options open to them. There is, however, still work to do and so we commit to the following actions:

1. We will implement our Dementia Strategy, which includes as priorities:
 - Raising awareness and training in all care sectors.

- Improving early diagnosis of dementia and early intervention which may include advice and support and/or treatment.
 - Developing care pathways between all services.
 - Improving dementia care within general hospitals.
2. We will implement effective, evidence-based pathways of care that are underpinned by open and transparent communication standards and processes, thereby ensuring people are treated in the right place, at the right time by the right professional.
 3. We will support people to self care and thereby manage their long-term condition. This helps maintain their health and well-being, prevent or slow down deterioration and exacerbations; and prevent ill-health in the first instance through having active, healthy lifestyles.

Enabling independent living, reducing reliance upon residential care

4.20 We are committed to enabling older people to remain living independently, where it is appropriate and this is their choice. Members of the North Somerset Partnership work to support people to maximise their independence and well-being and already provide a wide range of services to make this possible, including enablement. We are continuing to develop services and are adopting a more proactive approach to meeting the needs of older people in the community. We have developed an Early Intervention and Prevention strategy to support this work. Examples of the services currently provided, and of the initiatives being developed, include:

- Provision of low level support services, delivered by Community Development Workers across the district, including supporting Community Cafés and helping to develop local community groups that promote inclusion, involvement and empowerment.
- Provision of floating support services in people's homes through the Supporting People Programme.
- Provision of Disabled Facilities Grants to facilitate adaptations in people's homes, to enable people to carry out everyday activities in their own homes.
- Supporting a Care and Repair service that helps homeowners undertake adaptations in their homes.
- Provision of specialist housing options for older people, including sheltered housing and extra care housing across the district.

- Provision of the Care Connect service – the first point of contact for all social care enquiries – which offers impartial advice on all social care issues.
- Provision of personal care and support, domiciliary care and health care in the homes of older people, through joint working between the PCT, the council and Weston hospital.
- We have developed 10 Community Patches in which we are focussing on developing local services in response to local issues, through better working and contact with and between service providers.
- We work with ‘self-funders’ to signpost to them the options available for care and support, to ensure that they have the information they need to make informed decisions.
- We are making good progress against the Putting People First agenda, particularly in relation to older people. At the end of September 2010, 765 service users held personal budgets, with 77.5% of these held by people aged 50 and over. We will continue to promote the use of personal budgets to enable older people to have more choice in the provision of their care and to reduce their dependency on the statutory sector.
- Working with our partners in NHS North Somerset, the council has developed a Go4Life programme, which encourages healthy and active lifestyles.

4.21 We recognise further work is needed to enable people to continue to live at home for as long as possible and to significantly reduce the number of long-term placements in residential care. As such, we commit to the following actions:

1. We will work to develop and implement our early intervention and prevention approach to reduce reliance on residential care, reduce isolation and maximise potential for independent living and quality of life. This will include working with older people to develop self-sustaining community support through the Community Connect scheme.
2. We will further develop and improve rehabilitation and enablement services.
3. We will promote the range of housing, care and support options available to enable older people to live independently in the community.

Support for carers

4.22 The North Somerset Carers Strategy sets out how North Somerset Council and its partners will implement the National Carers Strategy in our area. The aims are

to ensure that carers are identified as early as possible in order to provide them with information and advice, and to provide carers assessments. We also aim to ensure that carers:

- Have access to a break from caring.
- Have help in an emergency.
- Have access to emotional support.
- Are enabled to maintain their own health and well-being.
- Receive training to support them in their caring role.
- Have the same access to leisure, training, education and work opportunities as other citizens.
- Have a voice in terms of their own situation and are able to influence policy.

4.23 To ensure that this important work is prioritised, the North Somerset Partnership commits to the following actions:

1. We will continue to support carers to sustain the work that they do through ongoing implementation of the North Somerset Carers Strategy.
2. All North Somerset Partnership members will identify a "Carers Champion", to promote carers' interests within each organisation.
3. All agencies, particularly those who do not provide services aimed at carers, commit to developing their engagement and consultation with carers.

Care in the last phase of life

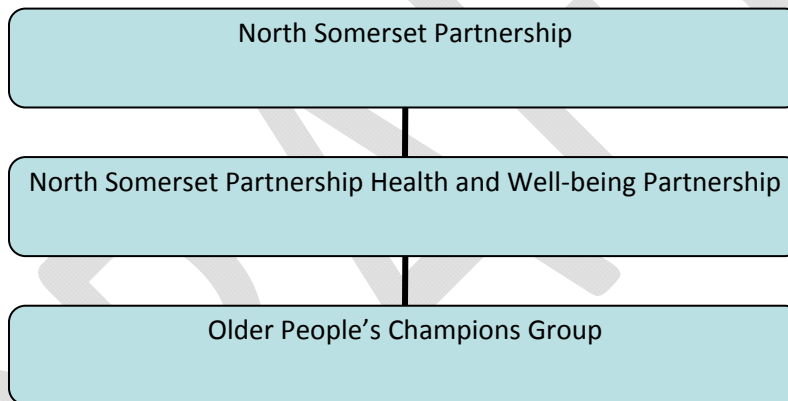
4.24 Partnership working is already established for the improvement of care in the last phase of life in North Somerset. NHS North Somerset has worked closely with the Marie Curie Cancer Care Delivering Choice Programme and NHS Somerset since June 2008 to implement a project to improve care in the last phase of life. A model of care was developed based on the findings of a health needs assessment and the redesigning of care pathways by staff. This model has been implemented since June 2010 and will be formally evaluated in 2011. To provide quality care in the last phase of life, we commit to the following actions:

1. We will implement the North Somerset End of Life Care pathway and framework, and clinical tools that will underpin improving care in the last phase of life.

2. We will support those in their last phase of life to make informed choices about their preferred place of care and establish services that enable them to achieve their preferred place of care.
3. We will improve the knowledge and skills of all staff from all professional groups and across all care sectors in care in the last phase of life.

Governance arrangements

- 4.25 It is important for us to ensure that the actions in this strategy are achieved. The governance structure for ensuring that we do this is set out below.
- 4.26 The Older People's Champions Group, which includes each of the key agencies and representatives from the Senior Community Link, will be accountable for regularly reviewing the North Somerset Partnership's progress in implementing the strategy. This group will then report directly to the North Somerset Partnership itself through the Health and Well-being Partnership. The diagram below illustrates this monitoring structure:



- 4.27 The Older People's Champions Group will monitor progress every 6 months from April 2011 and there will be an annual review of the strategy to make sure it is still relevant and appropriate, taking into account the changing economic environment. Reviews will include developing new actions to replace those that have been met during the year.