



The Time of Our Lives Strategy

Improving and promoting quality of later life in East Sussex
2008-2011

Contents

This strategy has been produced by East Sussex County Council in partnership with East Sussex PCTs, East Sussex older people's forums, Age Concern East Sussex, East Sussex Disability Association, Care for the Carers and Sompriti.

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The Time of Our Lives Strategy - Executive Summary



What is the *Time of Our Lives Strategy*?

The *Time of Our Lives strategy* aims to improve and promote the quality of later life for people in East Sussex. We (East Sussex County Council), the East Sussex Primary Care Trusts and a variety of voluntary organisations have produced this strategy with the help of older people. It serves as a framework for a wide range of activities that supports older people's quality of life and wellbeing.

The strategy aims to:

- 1 make sure a range of services and organisations focus on older people;
- 2 take forward new projects and ideas designed with older people and ageing in mind;
- 3 promote easier access to services and encourage organisations to use their resources more effectively by working together;
- 4 challenge stereotypes that present a negative image of ageing;
- 5 value older people as being at the heart of active communities; and
- 6 make sure that we understand and act on the priorities of older residents in East Sussex.

Who is the strategy for?

The *Time of Our Lives Strategy* is for older people in East Sussex both now and in the future. It explains what we are working towards to give people in East Sussex a better quality of life as they grow older.

What will happen as a result of the *Time of Our Lives Strategy*?

By bringing partners together to work towards these aims, we can make East Sussex a place that:

- values the contribution that older people make to communities;
- makes sure that people are able to make a contribution for as long as they want to, by developing services and initiatives that keep people healthy and independent and active; and

- provides extra help and support to people when they need it through services that have been designed and developed in partnership with older people.

The *Time of Our Lives Strategy* is not a one-off piece of work. It is an ongoing approach which will continue to be shaped by the views of older people, organisations and communities.

Why do we need a strategy to promote and improve older people's quality of life in East Sussex?

There is a national strategy for ageing called Opportunity Age. The Government published this strategy because it is increasingly recognised that the UK is generally becoming an 'older' or 'ageing' society. Part of the Government's response to this has also been to ask local authorities to show how well they are serving older people.

In East Sussex we already have the highest percentage of people in our population who are 85 and over compared to anywhere else in England. We have the second highest percentage of people aged 65 or over. We also expect that, due to fairly high numbers of people currently in their late forties and fifties living in the county, the numbers in these age groups are set to increase at a very fast rate over the next 20 years.

In 2005, with older people and other partners in the NHS and voluntary sector, we published a strategy for involving older people in improving public services. The 'involvement strategy' sets out the ways we can work with older residents in the county to hear their views about services. One of the ways we have done this has been to help set up a network of older people's forums in communities across the county, for older residents to take part in.

The *Time of Our Lives Strategy* will build on the work already done in East Sussex, by focusing on the different services and projects that influence older people's quality of life and wellbeing. To do this, we also need to

work with people at a stage where they are approaching later life, from the age of 50 onwards, as well as with people who are older. The *Time of Our Lives Strategy* sets out how we will start to do this.

What does the *Time of Our Lives Strategy* contain?

We have produced the strategy after consulting a wide range of people. It begins with the general approach we are taking, some information on ageing in East Sussex, and details about how we developed the strategy. It explains the principles we will take account of throughout all the work we do ('sustainability', 'diversity', 'inclusiveness' and 'clear information'). This is followed by information on our plans in each of nine areas of quality of life that older people and their representatives have told us are important to them.

- 1 Looking forward from 50.
- 2 Staying active and healthy.
- 3 Continuing to learn and develop and be culturally active.
- 4 Playing a part and contributing to community life.
- 5 Feeling safe and secure.
- 6 Getting out and about – transport and access to services.
- 7 Healthy finances.
- 8 Quality of life for older people who need care and support.

How to find out more and get involved

- 1 Annual action plan

The *Time of Our Lives Strategy* will have an annual action plan which we will monitor to keep a check on how well we are doing with the commitments we have made in the strategy. We will publish the plan alongside the strategy.

- 2 Quality of life partnership teams

We have set up teams on quality of life themes to support partnerships between different organisations to take forward ideas, projects and schemes. If you would like to join a team or if your group or organisation is doing work that could contribute to the *Time of Our Lives Strategy*, please get in touch with us or come along to the meetings.

- 3 Older people's forums in East Sussex

If you live in East Sussex, you can get involved by becoming a member of your local older people's forum. These are independent organisations that are led by older people, for older people. They play an active role in their community as well as helping two-way communication to take place between public services and older residents. There are seven forums in the county and we can put you in touch with the one that covers your area.

To find out more about any of these things, please contact Vicky Smith, Older People's Involvement Manager, East Sussex County Council.

E-mail: vicky.smith@eastsussex.gov.uk

Phone: 01273 481565

Address:

Adult Social Care
County Hall
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Lewes
East Sussex
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The **Crystal Mark** applies to the **Executive Summary** (pages 4 and 5) only.



Introduction: a vision of later life in East Sussex



Quality of 'later life'

East Sussex has the highest percentage of people over the age of 85 in any county in England and we expect this number to increase at a fast rate after 2010. The county also has higher than average numbers of all people aged over 65 and this is also set to increase over the next ten years. In response to these circumstances, as well as views expressed by older people about accessing a range of services – from support with enjoying a healthy and active life to receiving more specialist help when needed – partners in health, housing and social care have recently developed a *Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People (2007–2010)*. As part of that Strategy, this document is designed to provide the first stage of developing our understanding of the strategic action we need to take to make sure people can have a healthy and active old age for as long as possible. It is responding to what older people have told us, over the last eighteen months in a variety of settings, about their priorities for old age. In keeping with the agenda set by older people themselves, it begins thinking about later life from the age of fifty onwards.

Older People, strong communities

East Sussex is a county of both urban and rural characteristics. Within the county there are also very strong and distinct communities. This strategy is looking at ways that we can improve quality of life for older people living in East Sussex, through an approach that places older people at the heart of villages and towns and allows them to make a contribution to the sustainability of their local communities. Older people are a huge asset to the county due to the wealth of knowledge, experience and skills that they have. This strategy acknowledges this as well as recognising that improvements can only be achieved through a partnership between older people themselves and the organisations and agencies that work in the communities where they live.

How can a strategy help to deliver quality of later life?

The *Time of Our Lives Strategy* starts to bring together and guide our work over the next three years for supporting a healthy, independent and active later life in East Sussex. It is also to help to raise awareness about our common vision for what people should be able to expect in terms of quality of life and wellbeing as they get older. It makes some suggestions about the way we can improve older people's quality of life in the county by working in partnership as organisations, forums and groups working with older people. It is a multi-agency strategy and as such it puts forward the focus for partnership work to achieve shared goals should be.

It is widely recognised – internationally, nationally and locally – that older people's quality of life is an important factor in the sustainability of communities. In East Sussex we have taken the view that a wide range of public services – in the statutory, voluntary and community sectors – have a role to play in improving quality of life and wellbeing for older people. In response to both of these agendas the *Time of Our Lives Strategy* aims to:

- reflect the priorities of older people in East Sussex, as identified by older people themselves;
- bring together key agencies that can help deliver those priorities; and
- support partnership action with older people in their local communities across the county.

“Social well-being is the satisfaction people experience when they see themselves as part of a community they have helped create – a community in which all have an opportunity to live a satisfying life.”

(Abridged from Community Action Network, Texas)



Targeting services with an ageing population in mind

Various types of health, social care and housing support services are specifically planned to meet the increased needs some people have as they grow older. There are also other services that impact on older people's quality of life that aren't actually targeted at people because they are 'older'. Services such as learning opportunities and transport are more general or universal, meaning that they are available to people whatever their age. To improve and maintain older people's quality of life we must ensure that these services take into account their needs.

Plans for care and support services for older people in East Sussex are covered in detail in the *Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People* and its related implementation plans. By providing a stronger focus on the other quality of life issues which older people have told us are important, the *Time of Our Lives Strategy* will provide the bridge to planning in other service areas.

It has also been recognised that some sections of the older community are more likely to experience increased social exclusion and discrimination due to the fact that they are older. This document seeks to tackle this by ensuring that there is a balance in the way that public services of all types are planned and delivered with an older age group in mind.

"Older people have an important role and contribution to make in our community – a lifetime of knowledge, skills and understanding"

John Appleyard, Chair of East Sussex Seniors' Association – Your County, Autumn 2007

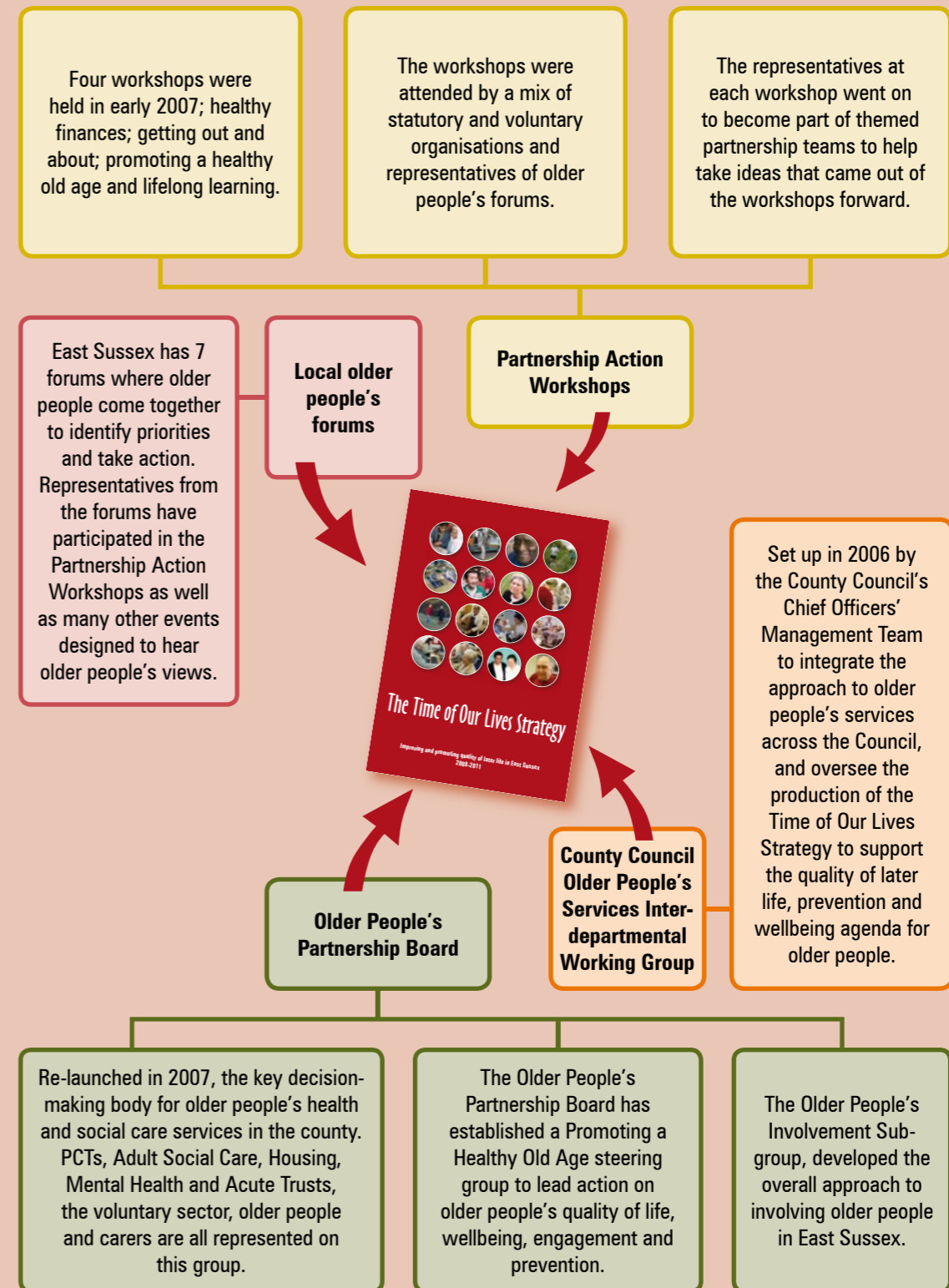
A participative strategy

The *Time of Our Lives Strategy* has been produced as a result of listening to both the views of older people, and the organisations that work with them. A draft of the strategy was produced and formally consulted on between August and October 2007. The diagram on the following page shows some of the different elements of the participative process used to develop the strategy. A full list of organisations that contributed to the development process is on page 22 of the strategy.

Resources

There are no additional resources attached to the *Time of Our Lives Strategy*. The strategy provides a clear framework to help ensure that current service improvement plans are able to take account of the priorities for older people. This will enable better use of existing resources available to the county by setting the direction for more streamlined planning of services for older people. In articulating aims that are shared by different organisations, and therefore strengthening the platform for partnership working, the strategy also signals the direction for the pursuit of new external funding opportunities for specific project development.

Who has been involved in producing this Strategy?





Guiding themes for improving quality of later life

These themes are important to the whole of the *Time of Our Lives Strategy* and its work with older people:

Diversity and ageing

Ensuring that all older people have fair and equal access to services whatever their background, culture or differing abilities might be. In future we will need to take into account differences in the older population and how this might impact on the experience of growing older. This means working with older disabled people, older people with learning disabilities, older people with mental health problems, older Black and minority ethnic people and Gypsies and Travellers, older lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people to understand their quality of life issues further.

Social Inclusion

Making sure that circumstances of poverty, poor housing and social isolation, etc, are minimised as far as possible for older people.

Sustainability

Sustainability is about action that supports the economic, social and environmental well-being of an area whilst safeguarding the prospects of future generations. It is also about making sure that the impact of what we do is positive both now and for generations to come. This extends to making sure that the projects and services we develop are sustainable based on decisions that are the best in the long-term.

Information

Being clear about what services are available in a way that reaches all older people. Information is crucial to people's ability to exercise independence, choice and control and this strategy will link with a variety of initiatives aimed at increasing access to timely and accurate information, that reflects different communities in the county.

We will apply these themes throughout the production of this strategy and its later implementation by testing our ideas and suggestions to see what impact they have in terms of diversity, social inclusion, sustainability and information. Some projects and schemes will be specifically designed to take forward these themes; other projects will need to take the themes into consideration as part of their implementation.

"Information is crucial to people's ability to exercise independence, choice and control"

An example of putting themes into action

When complaints were received about the quality of written requests for information to do with charges for social care services volunteers from older people's forums formed a 'reading group'. The group worked with Adult Social Care to simplify the letters making them easier to understand and therefore more user-friendly.

This resulted in both an improved service for older people and better information.

What do 'quality of life, independence and wellbeing' mean?

Older people in East Sussex have told us that good quality of later life cuts across the following areas:



Most of the areas on the diagram are part of wider planning processes that take into account the needs of the whole community in East Sussex. In some areas partnerships exist that have a wealth of information about needs and issues that need to be addressed, gained through consulting and working with communities in their own right. These partnerships may also have to produce their own plans and strategies, covering all members of the community, showing how they will meet these needs. There is more detail about each area in the following pages of the strategy.

Action

In order to develop our strategic planning with the 65-85 year olds of tomorrow we will:

- In taking forward action to improve older people's quality of life we will make links with the appropriate lead planning partnerships and bodies in each of these areas and ensure that older people's priorities are taken into account as part of strategic planning and delivery.
- The *Time of Our Lives Strategy* will have an action plan covering the partnership projects that will help us to deliver older people's priorities in the next 12-36 months (2008-2011).



In 2005 we demonstrated our commitment to involving older people by publishing a strategy



Looking forward from fifty

Later life as a stage of life

There are different definitions of what it is to be an 'older' person. In East Sussex we have adopted the government's definition of 'older' meaning people aged fifty and over. This age group covers people at the very beginning of entering the 'later life' stage through to the 'oldest old' of 85-plus.

People's needs and priorities will vary greatly over this period and these changes are a natural part of life. There will be different types of action needed at different stages of later life. In the *Time of Our Lives Strategy* we have broken this down into two distinct areas:

- Understanding what our approach should be to working with people who are currently 50-65 to promote their quality of life and wellbeing as they move into later life.
- Improving quality of life and wellbeing for people in East Sussex who are currently between 65 and 85-plus.

Details about the second area are covered in the following pages of the strategy. We are at the early stages of developing ideas about the work that should take place to better understand the needs and expectations of people in the 50-65 age group. Through discussions we have agreed to make a start with this by focussing on the following three areas:

1 Promotion of healthy lifestyles

From a public health perspective evidence suggests that people in the 50-plus age group are among the most inactive in the population. Lack of physical activity is a major risk factor in the onset of diseases like cardio vascular disease, type II Diabetes and osteoporosis in later life.

2 Learning, development and leisure

The impact of an ageing workforce in the UK will have an impact across the South East region. The contributions and needs of present and future generations of older people need to be taken into account in the planning process to ensure continued economic viability. This has implications for the skills market as well as the leisure,

learning and cultural opportunities that people will aspire to have as they enter into later life. There also some people in their fifties who have been out of paid work for a long time, for reasons of ill-health or caring for others, but wish to return to paid employment. Targeted approaches are needed to ensure people are supported effectively in returning to work or in making other life-choices.

3 Future expectations about models of health, social care and housing support services

Different generations will have different ideas about what they will want from care and support services in the future. In the context of the broader national agenda about how care and support services are funded we are being encouraged to think creatively and innovatively about how services are both provided and funded. New initiatives such as Individual or Personal Budgets and Direct Payments (schemes to give people cash to arrange and purchase their own care) are creating more opportunities to tailor care around individual needs and allow for more autonomy, flexibility and choice for people who receive funding for care. This can be someone's own care and support needs or to support the needs of a person being cared for. There is also the need to support people who are in a position to fund their own care to make informed decisions about appropriate care services.

Our Assessment and Care Management Strategy and pilots such as the Support To Access Care Services (STACS) project (a service to support people who are funding their own care) will help to increase our understanding about what works and what doesn't work for individuals in different circumstances. We would like to develop our understanding further about the impacts of these and other policy changes on people's expectations about future care and support services.

Partnerships and planning bodies that have a role to play in looking forward from fifty

- East Sussex Strategic Partnership.
- East Sussex Adult Learning and Skills Partnership Board.
- Older People's Partnership Board, in particular the Promoting a Healthy Old Age Steering Group.
- County Housing and Support Group for Older People.
- Locality housing and support groups.
- Local health planning groups.
- Local Strategic Partnership health improvement boards.
- Carers' Strategy Group.

Key local strategies and action plans

- District and borough-based community strategies.
- Pride of Place: The East Sussex Integrated Sustainable Community Strategy.
- East Sussex Adult Learning and Skills Strategy (to be developed).
- Adult Social Care Assessment and Care Management Strategy.
- Local Area Agreement Economic Development and Enterprise Block.
- Local Housing and Support Strategies for Older People and Carers.

Action

In order to develop our strategic planning with the 65-85 year olds of tomorrow we will:

- Continue to work with partners to develop and promote effective health promotion programmes targeted at the 50-plus age group.
- Learn from the outcomes of pilots and schemes to support small business and social enterprise development targeted at people over 50.
- Work with the East Sussex Adult Learning and Skills Partnership Board and its operational subgroups to tackle economic skills issues around an ageing population and workforce.
- Work with the East Sussex Adult Learning and Skills Partnership Board and its operational subgroups to help meet the needs of older learners for personal development and/or leisure learning.
- Continue current work to increase employability of workless residents in the 50-plus age group.
- Work with the Carers' Strategy Group, voluntary sector partners and carers to understand further the needs of carers who are over 50 whose circumstances change.
- Explore research opportunities aimed at engaging with people over 50 in order to better understand expectations about models of health, social care and housing support services in later life.
- Continue to monitor and evaluate the Support To Access Care Services (STACS) pilot within the context of the Assessment and Care Management Strategy.

"I reached 50 last year and far from being distressed by that supposedly defining moment, I've never felt better"

It's official: happiness resumes at 50 - The Guardian, January 2008



The 2002 Cross-Cutting Review into Tackling Health Inequalities recommended targeting the over 50s, as this is where the greatest short-term impact on life expectancy can be made

Tackling Health Inequalities - Department of Health, 2003

Staying active and healthy

A proactive culture of health and fitness in the widest sense should be a part of later life and there are clear benefits that this can bring for both physical and mental wellbeing into old age and preventing the onset of ill health.

Partnerships and planning bodies that have a role to play in leading the promotion of a healthy old age

- Older People's Partnership Board, in particular the Promoting a Healthy Old Age Steering Group.
- Local health planning groups.
- Local Strategic Partnership health improvement boards.

Key local strategies and action plans

- Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People 2007-2010.
- National Service Framework for Older People.
- Adult Social Care Three Year Plan 2007-2010.
- Local Health Improvement Action Plans.
- Choosing Health.
- Pride of Place: The East Sussex Integrated Sustainable Community Strategy.
- Local Area Agreement Healthier Communities and Older People Block (LAA HCOP).
- Strategy for library and information services for older people.
- East Sussex PCTs Mental Health Strategies and action plans.

Action

To promote staying active and healthy into old age we will:

- Directly inform the 'fit and well but growing older' work stream of the *Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People* to help ensure that quality of life, wellbeing and prevention targets are successfully implemented. This includes working in partnership on public health initiatives.
- Support the promotion of East Sussex Community Information Service (ESCIS) as a tool for the general public and staff in finding out about local services and resources.
- Explore opportunities for joint learning with European communities to investigate different approaches to longevity, illness-free old age and active older communities.
- Support participation in guided walks programmes through partnerships with the voluntary and community sector and older people's forums.
- Develop a handbook with helpful advice and tips for a healthy and happy later life (Note: this is a cross-cutting project), and make this widely available to the public.
- Promote positive images of older people and ageing and celebrate International Older People's day every year.
- Continue to support opportunities for supported exercise in a range of settings.
- Work with older people who have mental health problems to look at ways to promote mental wellbeing and engagement.



In the summer of 2007, as part of the Exploring East Sussex Guided Walks programme, 1980 of the 3168 people who took part in 202 walks were over 55

East Sussex Local Area Agreement Healthier Communities and Older People Block, Target 10.1.2

Continuing to learn, develop and be culturally active

Keeping an active, healthy mind is an important part of later life. People also continue to need fresh opportunities to learn new skills, take on new roles and to renew, stretch and change on a personal level. Although the reasons for learning can vary widely from 50-plus to 85-plus generally learning needs in later life fall into two areas.

- Learning for life – sometimes known as cultural, personal or leisure learning.
- Learning for work – both for the pre-retirement post-fifty age group as well as older retired people who would like to be economically active.

We have provided more detail on pages 12-13 about specific action with the fifty-plus age group.

Key partnerships and planning bodies that have a role to play in leading lifelong learning

- East Sussex Adult Learning and Skills Partnership Board.
- East Sussex Arts Partnership.

Key local strategies and action plans

- District and borough-based community strategies.
- Pride of Place: The East Sussex Integrated Sustainable Community Strategy.
- East Sussex Adult Learning and Skills Strategy (to be developed).
- East Sussex County Council Cultural Strategy.
- Strategy for library and information services for older people.

Action

To promote access to opportunities to continue to learn and develop we will:

- Work with the East Sussex Adult Learning and Skills Partnership Board and its operational subgroups to help meet the needs of older learners for personal development and/or leisure learning.
- Integrate older people's views into the planning processes for adult learning – both for skills and cultural or leisure learning – and participate in a co-ordinated approach to learning provision in the county.
- Work together to provide information in innovative ways about the learning opportunities that are available in local areas.
- Look at initiatives to share independent-living skills within communities.
- Develop learning opportunities in different accommodation and care settings through partnerships with the voluntary sector and older people's forums.
- Explore opportunities for intergenerational projects on learning themes.
- Providing opportunities for older people to take part in and contribute to arts and cultural projects in East Sussex aimed at combating ageism and negative perceptions of ageing.
- Support the U3A and others to develop more community-based learning groups and increase their membership.



There are now 13 University of the Third Age (U3A) groups involving over 2,700 learners in villages and towns across East Sussex

Figures from the Sussex U3A Regional Association, January 2008



Playing a part and contributing to the community

Older people are one of the most active groups of volunteers in the county, whether this is as informal volunteers, for example in a caring role, or as part of organised activity with voluntary organisations and community groups. This symbolises a massive resource within the county contributing on an economic level as well as to the social fabric and cohesion of local communities. In East Sussex we have understood that the participation and involvement of older people is fundamental to improving quality of later life. Because there are over 215,000 people over the age of 50 living in East Sussex (based on Mid-Year Estimates 2006) we have developed a structured way to relate directly to older residents through the older people's forums. These are independent local forums led by older people for older people which can help the following things to happen:

- Allow a broad spectrum of older people's views about public services and their priorities to be heard.
- Ensure that older people living in East Sussex can have a direct voice in the strategic planning and decision-making about services that affect them.
- Provide a focus for bringing older people together in their local communities

Action

To ensure that older people continue to have opportunities to play a part and contribute we will:

- Continue to implement the older people's involvement strategy work plan, including continuing to increase the number of older residents taking part in the forums and raising awareness with public service providers about the forums' role.
- Continue with ongoing work to support older people to be involved in a wide range of decision-making, service planning and design opportunities.
- Work with older people's forums to build on their role in local communities, including specific projects aimed at targeting socially isolated older people.
- Work with the East Sussex Seniors' Association as it develops its agenda.

"Seniors possess that very valuable commodity – time"

Deputy Lieutenant Kathy Gore speaking at the East Sussex Seniors' Association launch in July 2007



to take forward ideas and projects in partnership with like-minded agencies and organisations.

The older people's forums in East Sussex have formed an Association to link up issues across the county.

Key partnerships and planning bodies that have a role to play in promoting older people's involvement

- Older People's Partnership Board Promoting a Healthy Old Age Steering Group.
- The East Sussex Local Involvement Network (LINK) – from April 2008.
- East Sussex Seniors' Association.

Key local strategies and action plans

- Strategy to ensure older people's involvement in the improvement of public services.
- Local Involvement Network (LINK) implementation plan.
- Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People 2007-2010.
- Older People's National Service Framework.
- Local Area Agreement Healthier Communities and Older People Block and Safer and Stronger Communities Block.
- Strategy for library services for older people.

Feeling safe and secure

Whilst levels of crime in East Sussex are generally low compared to some areas of the UK, fear of crime and general levels of personal safety can often prevent older people from feeling safe and secure in their own homes which in turn impacts on quality of life and wellbeing. This feeling can also be a barrier to participating in activities outside of the home, leading to people becoming socially isolated. In addition to the perception about the threat of general crime feeling safe and secure can specifically impact on older people in the following ways:

- Having the confidence to answer the door to strangers calling to sell or promote things. This can especially affect older people who live on their own.
- Living in accommodation that is free from risks such as fire, and trips and falls.
- Feeling safe in public spaces, including being able to walk and drive safely.

Key partnerships and planning bodies that have a role to play in feeling safe and secure

- East Sussex Safer Communities Steering Group.
- District and Borough Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships.
- Local Action Teams (LATS).

Key partnerships and planning bodies that have a role to play in healthy finances

- District and Borough Crime and Disorder Reduction Delivery Plans.
- County-wide safer communities plan (timetabled to be produced in June 2007).
- Local Area Agreement Safer and Stronger Communities Block.
- Local Area Transport Strategies.

Action

To make sure older people feel safe and secure in East Sussex we will:

- Develop projects aimed at increasing understanding and cohesion between younger and older generations, as well as amongst older people who are part of other communities within East Sussex, for example, gypsies and travellers and asylum seekers.
- Continue action to reduce doorstep crime, such as distraction burglaries.
- Support ongoing work like the Buy With Confidence Directory of approved traders.
- Learn from local good practice such as the Crime and Safety Special Interest Group of the Hastings and St Leonards Seniors' Forum work to promote pedestrian awareness in partnership with the Police Authority, Fire and Rescue Service, Primary Care Trust, schools and voluntary organisations and District, Borough and County Councils.
- Look at ways to further enhance communication at the local level to reassure older people about crime and develop understandings about the perception of crime within older communities.
- Continue ongoing work with partners such as carrying out Home Safety Checks and installing aids and adaptations to ensure that people can live safely in their own homes.



"There's a myth about crime and how bad crime is. I know if there is one mugging... that's terrible... but everybody seems to think there's a lot of it going on, and actually there's not that much"

Participant in the Growing Older, Being Heard Research Project commenting on the fear of crime, 2007



Getting out and about – transport and access to services

The ability to get out and about has a key impact on people’s lives as they get older. In some cases a lack of adequate transport can be the main factor in causing social exclusion, and the provision of easily accessible transport can increase older people’s quality of life in urban as well as rural areas. Transport needs tend to fall into three areas for older people:

- Enabling access to health and social care services.
- Visiting shops and general services to maintain independence.
- Ensuring people can participate in social, leisure, cultural and educational opportunities.

All of these aspects of accessibility affect the level of independence and control older people have over their lives – independence, flexibility and choice lead to increased wellbeing and overall quality of life.



Key partnerships and planning bodies that have a role to play in transport planning

- Local Accessibility Forums.
- Local Quality Bus Partnerships.
- East Sussex Rural Transport Partnership.
- Local Area Agreement Access Group.
- Safer Sussex Roads Partnership.

Key local strategies and action plans

- Local Transport Plan 2.
- Local Area Transport Strategies.
- Accessibility Strategy.
- Outcomes of the Executive Review of Passenger Transport.
- District and Borough Council Local Development Frameworks.
- Strategy for library and information services for older people.

Part of increasing accessibility to services also involves bringing information and services to people in their villages and communities through using IT resources and mobile facilities.

“Best thing I think we ever had was the free travel it really makes a difference to me, I can go out and about now go shopping, do my photography and I don’t have to worry about the money”

Participant in the Growing Older, Being Heard Research Project commenting on the free bus pass for the over-60s

Action

To improve the ability to get out and about and access services we will:

- Build on good practice to integrate older people’s views into transport planning at both a strategic and local operational level, to ensure that all transport resources can be utilised to the maximum benefit of local communities.
- Work with partners to ensure that older people in East Sussex benefit from the roll out of the national Concessionary Fares Scheme.
- Continue to look at ways to bring services and information into communities using existing infrastructure like libraries and community centres.
- Make links with safer communities and falls prevention initiatives so that people can use public spaces safely.
- Work with the voluntary and community sector to explore sustainable approaches to empowering local communities and villages to develop their own transport solutions.

Healthy finances

Adequate levels of income are a crucial factor in ensuring that older people can enjoy the benefits of old age. Lack of money prevents people from being able to take part in activities that can enhance their overall quality of life. Poverty in old age can also mean going without things like repairs to homes which reduces the energy efficiency of the home, the ability to access adequate affordable warmth and a balanced diet, all basic things that make a fundamental contribution to preventing ill-health. Information should be provided effectively about the range of universal benefits that accompany ageing as well as the range of other benefits that are available to meet specific needs at times of change, especially where change means a reduction in income.

There is also the need to enable people to have advice about important financial decisions in relation to care and support needs if they arise, so that people can get the most out of their personal resources and also access the right kind of care.

Key partnerships and planning bodies that have a role to play in healthy finances

- Older People’s Partnership Board.
- Local Strategic Partnerships.
- East Sussex Joint Team Project Board.

Key local strategies and action plans

- Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People 2007-2010.
- Local Area Agreement Healthier Communities and Older People Block.

Action

To ensure that older people have access to healthy finances we will:

- Pilot and evaluate the County Connect referral system – enabling agencies to make sure that older people are receiving all the support that they are entitled to, to help them to live safely and independently in the community.
- Strengthen joint planning and working between all the agencies that have a role in providing individuals with access to benefits, advice and advocacy, through mechanisms like the Pensions Partnership Forum and by supporting county-wide approaches to income maximisation for older people.
- Continue with plans to streamline financial information across organisational boundaries by only asking people to provide details once.
- Look at ways to enable older people to become informal holders of vital signposting information in their villages and communities.
- Ensure systems and processes are in place to enable help to be accessed at the earliest opportunity, for example, the Joint Team’s hospital based advice worker providing support with disability benefits claims to help people return home.
- Explore ways to give people the choice to remain economically active into old age.
- Continue to work with partners on a range of ways to support people to make informed financial decisions in later life in relation to care and support needs. For example the Support To Access Care Services (STACS) pilot project (more detail about this is provided on page 12) and other voluntary sector initiatives.



County Connect is a referral system which can give a person access to a range of services through one single visit. Between July and December 2007 the pilot made over 272 successful referrals

East Local Area Agreement, Healthier Communities and Older People Block target 9.1

Quality of life for older people who need care and support



The planning and provision of health, social care and housing support services for people when they need extra help should incorporate outcomes that lead to increased quality of life. At a very basic level this can mean ensuring that people are treated with dignity, respect and feel in control of their circumstances. Specialist health, social care and housing support services that are provided to people with low, medium and high levels of need can also proactively promote wellbeing and prevent further decline. The Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People 2007-2010 sets the direction for these specialist services, and this document aims to build on this work by considering specifically the ways that care and support services can contribute to quality of life and maintain independence and wellbeing.



Carers' wellbeing

Many older people with care needs continue to live in their own homes, often supported informally by a family member or friend. A significant proportion of informal carers in East Sussex are aged between 50 and 65, and many are older. Carers need support to be able to undertake this valuable role effectively, and the wellbeing of the carer often influences the quality of life for the person being cared for. Quality of life for carers is an issue being looked at by the Carers' Strategy Group but efforts will be made to link the work strategically with the *Time of Our Lives Strategy* to ensure that we get the most out possible joint work in this area.



Key partnerships and planning bodies that have a role to play in promoting quality of life and wellbeing in care settings

- Older People's Partnership Board.
- Primary Care Trust locality groups.
- County Housing and Support Group for Older People.
- Locality housing and support groups.
- East Sussex Local Involvement Network (LINK) from April 2008.
- Carers' Strategy Group.



Key local strategies and action plans

- Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People 2007-2010.
- Older People's National Service Framework.
- Joint Commissioning Strategy for Carers' Services 2007-2010.
- Local Area Agreement Healthier Communities and Older People Block.
- Local Health Action Plans.
- Supporting People Strategy 2005-2010.
- Area Housing and Support strategies.
- Outcomes of the Scrutiny Review into Preventative Services.
- Adult Social Care Assessment and Care Management Strategy.
- Local Housing and Support Strategies for Older People and Carers.

Plans for care and support services for older people are covered in detail in the Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People 2007 – 2010. The Strategy was developed with older people, their carers and voluntary organisations



Action

So that we can promote quality of life and wellbeing for older people who need care and support we will:

- Continue to target projects at people who have low to medium levels of need to prevent situations becoming worse, such as those being piloted under the Independence First programme, for example, the Navigator Service, the falls prevention service and improved access to advice about Occupational Therapy.
- Continue to roll out the use of assistive technology (Telecare) for people identified as having particular support needs such as increased risk of falling or vulnerability due to memory loss.
- Ensure that services provided to people with high levels of need in settings such as day care, nursing and residential care, respite care, community hospitals and supported housing accommodation promote clear quality of life and wellbeing outcomes, for example, access to activities that promote exercise and continued learning.
- Make sure that there are a range of opportunities for older people to continue to be actively involved in designing, inspecting, monitoring and evaluating health, social care and housing support services.
- Support the adoption of the national Dignity in Care campaign in local service settings.
- Understand lessons from the national Individual / Personal Budgets pilot and take forward local planned programme of pilots.
- Develop and implement the Assessment and Care Management Strategy ensuring quality of life and wellbeing outcomes for all users of services and carers, and maximising independence, choice and control.
- Improving arrangements for timely access to care and support services, for example, the use of person-centred self-assessment where appropriate.
- Link with work being taken forward by the *Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People* to ensure that quality of life, wellbeing and prevention outcomes are integrated across the 'pathway of care' for older people.
- Continue to work with voluntary and community sector partners to increase the range of complementary services available to older people aimed at supporting independence, wellbeing and quality of life.

"My daughter is my full time carer - the advice and demonstration of the bath seat will preserve her health and back"

"Without the help and support of the team during the last weeks I would not have been able to cope with my husband"

Feedback from the Independence First Quality of Life Survey, 2007

Organisations who contributed to developing this Strategy

The diagram on page 9 shows the process of developing the *Time of Our Lives Strategy*. The organisations below contributed directly to the Strategy through:

- 1 Participating in one or more of the action planning workshops:
 - Healthy Finances (the Pensions Partnership Forum) 21st February 2007
 - Getting out and about 14th March 2007
 - Promoting a healthy old age 27th March 2007
 - Learning in later life 19th April 2007
- 2 Commenting directly on the draft Strategy during the formal consultation period 1st August – 31st October 2007
- 3 Participating in other consultation events held over the last two years that have been used to inform the Strategy e.g. the Open Space conference in Eastbourne, December 2005.

Abbeyfield Society
 Action in Rural Sussex
 Age Concern East Sussex
 Age Concern Eastbourne
 Age Concern Hastings
 Care for the Carers
 Eastbourne Association of Voluntary Services
 Eastbourne Borough Council
 Eastbourne Homes Ltd
 Eastbourne Forum for Older People

East Sussex County Council

- Adult Social Care
- Transport and Environment
- Policy and Communications
- Law and Personnel
- Childrens' Services
- Corporate Resources

East Sussex Disability Association
 East Sussex Downs and Weald Primary Care Trust
 East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service

East Sussex Healthy Homes (Energy Centre for Sustainable Communities)
 East Sussex Local Pension Service
 East Sussex Rural Transport Partnership
 Guinness Care and Support
 Hastings Borough Council
 Horsham Amateur Radio Club (HARC)
 Hastings & Rother Crossroads
 Hastings & Rother Primary Care Trust
 Hastings & St Leonards Seniors' Forum
 Hastings rainbow Alliance
 Herstmonceux Luncheon Club
 Help the Aged
 Lewes District Seniors' forum
 Lewes and Seaford Citizens Advice Bureaux
 Mayfield & Five Ashes Community Cars
 Meridian Coast and Downs Mature Citizens' Community Forum
 Navigator Service
 Newhaven & Peacehaven Access Group
 Rother District Citizens Advice Bureau
 Rother District Council
 Rother Seniors' Forum
 Rye University Third Age (U3A)
 Seaford & Newhaven Access Group
 Seaford Seniors' Forum
 Serco
 Sompriti
 South Downs Council for Voluntary Services
 Sussex Police Authority
 Sussex Voluntary and Community Sector Learning Consortium
 U3A Surrey and Sussex Region
 University of Brighton
 University Centre, Hastings
 Wealden District Council
 Wealden Senior Citizens' Partnership
 WRVS
 1066 Housing Association

Note: many other organisations were contacted as part of the formal consultation on the *Time of Our Lives Strategy*.



These organisations all contributed to the *Time of Our Lives Strategy*

Photographs and quotes are used with kind permission:

Age Concern England
 Community Action Network Texas
 East Sussex County Council
 East Sussex Seniors Association
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 Mature Citizens' Forum, University of Sussex and University of Brighton, January 2008

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