

1 National Housing Strategy for an Ageing Society – An overview of the National Strategy on Housing for an Ageing Society

The National Strategy on Housing for an Ageing Society, *Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods*, is a cross-government strategy published jointly by Communities and Local Government (CLG), Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and Department of Health (DH).

Why is it important?

It is about the present and the future and takes account of rapidly changing demographics – there are currently under ten million people over the age of 65 but in 30 years time this will rise to 17 million, together with a large increase in those aged over 85.

Taking the demographics into account means different ways of thinking about, and planning for, our ageing society. This is reflected in the strategy, which is about ordinary homes and neighbourhoods – rather than just specialist housing for older people.

What does the strategy include?

The strategy highlights the importance of good quality, well-designed, safe and secure housing and the contribution it can make to health and wellbeing – such as reducing falls and excess winter deaths and supporting people to return home after a stay in hospital. Taken together, these preventative services can save money for health services as well as improving the lives of older people.

The strategy assesses the housing aspirations and lifestyle choices of older people, while considering new projections of older households in local areas and predicting the numbers of older people who will need care and/or support to maintain independence at home.

What next?

The strategy aims to launch a public debate on what we want for ourselves in terms of future housing options and recognises that the status quo is unsustainable. The future will focus much more on the aspirations of older people, active ageing, participation and empowerment.

The key action areas are:

- One stop housing advice and information
- Expansion of handyperson services
- Increased funding for Disabled Facilities Grants
- More homes and more choice through improved local planning
- Lifetime Homes
- Lifetime Neighbourhoods, and
- Investment in specialist housing such as extra care through the Private Finance Initiative (PFI), the DH extra care housing fund and the Homes and Communities Agency development programme.

Further information on these actions can be found in the other sheets in this Information Pack and recently published Implementation Plan from the CLG, *Delivering Lifetime Homes*. Copies of the Implementation Plan are available at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/housingageingsociety>.

You might also find useful the Housing LIN's briefing/toolkit for commissioners and providers for housing, care and support for older people – *More Choice, Greater Voice*. Copies are available at www.icn.csip.org.uk/housing. <http://networks.csip.org.uk/IndependentLivingChoices/Housing/Topics/type/resource/?cid=2545>.

Other Sheets in this series:

Sheet 2: Lifetime Homes: housing design

Sheet 3: Lifetime Neighbourhoods

Sheet 4: Housing, Health and Care

Sheet 5: Specialist Housing: extra care and sheltered housing

Sheet 6: Disabled Facilities Grant

Sheet 7: Home Improvement Agencies

Sheet 8: Private Sector Involvement

Sheet 9: Advice and Information

