

## Valuing older people The Mayor of London's Older People Strategy



September 2006



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**Greater London Authority  
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## foreword by Ken Livingstone, Mayor of London

In my manifesto for the 2004 Mayoral elections I made a commitment to deliver an older people's strategy for London. I am pleased now to launch this strategy setting out my vision and aspirations for London's older people. The strategy's development and content has been informed by a detailed consultation exercise with many of London's older people. I believe that London's older people should have choice and control over their lives and have their contribution to London's society and economy properly valued. This concerns not only those of us who are older people now, but London's future generations too.

This is a strategy for London's older people but also for all of London. It will promote stronger, more sustainable communities and recognise the role that older people have to play in promoting the health and well-being of London.

This strategy sets out actions that aim to make a difference to the lives of all older people living in London. In particular I want to challenge negative perceptions and promote the contribution of older people, take action on pensions and income, promote good quality health and social care and support those valuable community services which can make so much difference to older people's lives.

Through this strategy I will use my influence with government, employers, service providers and others to ensure that older people's needs and aspirations are integral to the planning and delivery of services.



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Mayor of London



## introduction

### Vision and objectives

This strategy sets out the Mayor's vision of a London where older people have choice and control over their lives. At its heart is an appreciation of older people as active, vital members of our communities.

An ageing population presents challenges and opportunities, for both government and society at large. This strategy outlines the Mayor's commitment to ensuring that older Londoners and future generations respond positively to an ageing society and have the support they need to live independent, active and healthy lives. It provides a firm basis for the Mayor to exercise his powers and to influence government and other sectors, and to ensure that current and future generations of older people in London are adequately supported.

To achieve independence and wellbeing London's older population needs to be able to access a wide range of affordable and quality services, participate in and benefit from all aspects of London life, and live their lives in dignity, free from financial anxiety and discrimination. The Mayor has prioritised the following as key issues which have the potential to make a significant contribution to the quality of life for older Londoners:

- challenging perceptions and promoting the contribution of older people
- pensions and income
- supporting community services
- promoting good quality health and social care.

A commitment to diversity and inclusion underpins this strategy. Older Londoners are as diverse as London itself and it is important that all benefit from a changing society that celebrates London's diversity and provides appropriate types and levels of support.

The strategy focuses on people over pensionable age. However, in the case of employment it covers all people over 50, because in employment it is from this age that people come to be considered 'older' and discrimination begins.

### Partnership

Achieving this vision for older people in London requires contributions and action by a range of organisations, not just those controlled by the Mayor. This strategy has therefore been developed in partnership with a range of stakeholders and partners. These include older people themselves, health sector colleagues, London's local authorities, the



Department of Work and Pensions, employers and the voluntary and community sector.

### Developing the strategy

The strategy was produced with the active participation of representatives of older people's organisations in London and other key stakeholders. These were:

Mark Brangwyn	Association of London Government
Stephen Burke	Counsel and Care
John Coleby	Jewish Care
Irma Critchlow	Black Minority Ethnic Elders Working Group
Gordon Deuchars	Age Concern London
Ted Driscoll	National Pensioners Convention
Les Evans	London Older People's Strategies Group
Dot Gibson	National Pensioners Convention
David Huxstep	Department for Work and Pensions
Eva Hrobonova	Regional Public Health Group - London
Mohamed Kebbay	Black Londoners' Forum
Dr Raheem Khan	The Muslim Council of Britain
Mervyn Kohler	Help the Aged
Shu-Pao Lim	The Great Wall Society
Penny Marshall	Association of London Government
Graeme Matthews	London Older People's Strategies Group
Anisa Niaz	Policy Research Institute on Ageing and Ethnicity
Bolamle Onagbesam	Association of Greater London Older Women
Pat Prendergast	London Irish Elders Forum
Lindsay River	Polari
Lynn Strother	Greater London Forum for Older People
Marian Thom	Association of Greater London Older Women
Abdul Virani	Lambeth Pensioners' Action Group



### Sustainable development

As part of the Mayor's commitment to sustainable development, this strategy has been subject to a sustainability appraisal with input from external partners. The outcomes of this appraisal were considered by the Greater London Authority (GLA) and recommendations have been incorporated where possible.

The sustainability appraisal identified a need to strengthen the intergenerational aspects of the strategy, target the next generation of older people and highlight the role of older people in enhancing the environment.

### Equalities and health implications

An equality impact assessment has been carried out by the GLA and is available from [www.london.gov.uk/mayor/older\\_people/](http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/older_people/). A health impact assessment (HIA) has also been carried out to ensure that the final strategy makes a positive contribution to the health of older people. This is available at [www.londonhealth.gov.uk/PDF/ops\\_hia\\_finalreport.pdf/](http://www.londonhealth.gov.uk/PDF/ops_hia_finalreport.pdf/). Their findings were integrated into the strategy.

In particular, the HIA assessments identified the need for the strategy better to identify issues which affected particular groups of older people and to recognise the effects of multiple discrimination. A few of the key findings of the HIA include:

- the need to engage more excluded groups of older people in consultation processes
- the Mayor should work with others to improve the take up of benefits targeting disadvantaged older people
- the strategy proposals should address gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status and occupation as well as disability
- the Mayor should support increased take up of direct payments by older people
- future housing developments should specifically take account of the needs of older people.



### Consultation

The Mayor's strategy for older people in London was subject to a three-month public consultation, from 8 November 2005 to 8 February 2006. GLA staff attended 27 consultation events and received 565 completed consultation questionnaires and 80 written submissions. As far as possible the comments submitted have been incorporated into this strategy.

A summary of this strategy is available upon request from [www.london.gov.uk/mayor/older\\_people/](http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/older_people/).

Community language and alternative formats of the summary are also available on request from [publications@london.gov.uk](mailto:publications@london.gov.uk).

### Delivering this Strategy

As with developing this strategy, the important job of delivering the commitments contained in this strategy and its action plan will be done in partnership. The Mayor will be the London champion for older people. He will ensure that the GLA and its functional bodies the London Development Agency (LDA), Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA),

London Fire & Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) and Transport for London (TfL) all deliver the commitments made in this strategy.

But the Mayor cannot deliver many of the aspirations and commitments in the strategy alone. The Mayor will provide strategic leadership across London, will work with and support the boroughs, the health sector, the voluntary sector, business and employers and of course older people themselves to deliver this ambitious strategy. The Mayor will also take every opportunity to lobby government to ensure that London gets the resources it needs to ensure older Londoners have the quality of life they deserve.

The Mayor recognises that one of the key delivery mechanisms for this strategy is local area agreements and local strategic partnerships. These, alongside the creation of a single health authority for London, provide a clear platform to take forward the delivery of the strategy.

The GLA will publish a progress report on this strategy annually, so that the actions of our partners and the Mayor are transparent.



### **London's older people: responding to diversity**

London is often seen as a city of young people, but over 15 per cent of London's population - nearly 1.2 million people - are aged 60 or over. Almost a quarter of a million people in London are aged 80 or over. GLA projections indicate that London's 60 and over population will increase by 9 per cent between 2001 and 2021, compared with a rise of nearly 14 per cent in the population as a whole. The numbers in the 60 to 69 year old age groups will rise after 2006, while the 70 to 79 year old and 80 and over population will decrease up to 2016 and then start increasing again.<sup>1</sup>

Many of the issues that London's older people face are the same for all groups and older people tend to want the same things regardless of their backgrounds: to be treated with dignity, to have choice and control over services, to have financial security, to feel safe in their own homes and when they are out and about, and to have that little bit of help that can make all the difference to their lives when they need it. They want services that recognise and respect their needs and help them stay in control.

But understanding and responding to ageing in London also requires recognising the diversity of the older population and the different needs and experiences that exist between and within groups of individuals. The profile of older London will change dramatically in the coming years, particularly with the increasing proportion of older people from black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) groups - from 12 to 23 per cent by 2021. There are also other significant subpopulations of older people such

as LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) and disabled people. They have been ever present in London's population, even if their presence and needs have gone unrecognised. For many equalities groups, ageing has not been fully addressed as an issue.

Recognising and responding to London's diversity is a key element in the Mayor's vision of London as a sustainable city. Sustainable development is about ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come. This is only possible if we recognise and respond to the diversity that exists among London's older people and allow all Londoners to share in London's future success.

Addressing ageing in a positive way means embracing diversity and responding to individual need and choice; engaging with older people is vital. In taking forward this strategy the GLA will highlight London's diversity and will help to develop policies that respond appropriately to the opportunities and challenges it presents.

The London Older People Strategy Group is the primary means by which the Mayor engages with London's older population and it will continue to be so. More is said about the work of this group elsewhere in the strategy. However, the Mayor will also look for additional opportunities to engage with older people to ensure that London's diversity is represented in his work.

### *Multiple discrimination and multiple need*

The Mayor recognises that many older people have multiple needs and can suffer from discrimination based on more than one aspect of their identity; gender, ethnicity, age, disability, sexuality, income, family and social networks, beliefs, material circumstances, nature of migration, area of living, type and level of care needed.

For example, many BAME elders have unmet needs which affect their participation in wider society. Many have experienced disruption in their family structures, the challenges of growing older in a country where it may not have been their intention to stay, and a lifetime of discrimination and disadvantage. In these circumstances responding to individual need in a way that promotes choice and independence can present real challenges for services providers.

### *Gender*

A large proportion of older people are women. Women make up 56 per cent of all older people aged 60 or over and a larger proportion among older age groups. Women outnumber men by two to one in the 80 plus



age group and by three to one in the 90 plus age group.<sup>2</sup> Older women are therefore more likely to live alone, in many cases having outlived their partners.

Women are also more likely to be on lower incomes. Many have taken time out of paid employment to raise families so have earned less in their working lives. This means they are less likely to have savings for retirement, income from personal investment or an occupational or private pension.

Many of the issues in this strategy are of particular importance for women in the older age groups and the Mayor will continue to highlight issues in ageing that affect older women.



### *Ethnicity and country of birth*

London is one of the most diverse and cosmopolitan cities in the world. Over 300 languages are spoken in London and a third of the population is of BAME origin.

Because of the younger age structure of London's BAME population, this diversity is not yet fully reflected among London's older people. But this will change significantly in the coming years. GLA population projections suggest that the number of BAME Londoners aged 65 or over will increase by 50 per cent between 2001 and 2021. The proportion of the total 65 or over population who are from BAME groups will increase from 12 to 23 per cent.

Responding to the needs of older people from BAME communities is one of the most significant challenges facing London. But there is little data on BAME elders and social inequality. What evidence there is suggests significant differences between and within all groups.<sup>3</sup>

This inequality may have far reaching implications for the provision of services for older people in London. While they share many of the same needs as all Londoners, BAME groups also have distinct needs. There is a clear and urgent need to promote the development of services that are ethnically and culturally appropriate.

### *Refugees and asylum seekers*

London today, on available evidence, is home to most of the UK's refugees and asylum seekers, who make up a substantial part of the city's ethnic minority population. Refugees and asylum seekers often face serious deprivation and exclusion, and older refugees are particularly vulnerable. Refugees and asylum seekers have distinct needs and may face additional obstacles in accessing services. For example, many

refugees have experienced torture in their country of origin resulting in particular physical and mental health needs in later life.

Since spring 2006 the Mayor has had responsibility for leading and coordinating work across the city to ensure refugees are fully integrated into the city. He has set up the Board for Refugee Integration in London (BRIL) to develop a strategy to co-ordinate and promote refugee integration in London and oversee its implementation. This will provide the Mayor with an important opportunity to address the gaps in services for older refugees and will help to bring refugee integration into the mainstream of strategic planning. The Mayor has also established a Refugee Advisory Panel to influence the work of BRIL. The Mayor will ensure that the needs of older refugees are considered as part of this process.

There is, however, insufficient knowledge about the needs of older refugees. Age Concern England and the Refugee Council are undertaking an important research project into older refugees that will help to fill many of the gaps in knowledge concerning this group of people. This covers issues of health, housing and other services. The Mayor recognises the importance of this research and will ensure that the GLA fully supports it.

### *Faith*

It is important that health, social care and other public services are able to respond to the changing demography of older people and their cultural needs. Faith is often a key element of the community group for many older people. Older people are more likely than younger people to have a religion.

The 2001 Census recorded a religion for nearly 85 per cent of Londoners aged 60 or over: 74 per cent were Christian, 3.2 per cent Muslim, 3.6 per cent Jewish and 2.7 per cent Hindu. There is a strong association between religion and ethnicity, so the relative proportions of older people in different faith groups is likely to change in the next few decades as the proportion from BAME groups grows.

This will present challenges for service providers in terms of how they can respond to the diverse needs of different faith groups. Using places of worship to deliver public services may form part of the response to this challenge. This will be explored later in the relevant sections of the strategy.

### *Disabled people*

Twenty per cent of households in London contain a disabled person and the prevalence of impairment increases with age. After the age of 80,





49 per cent of men and 68 per cent of women have difficulty with mobility, while 8 per cent of men and 17 per cent of women are unable to go out on foot at all. By contrast, only 1 per cent of the 55-64 group cannot go out on foot and around one in five have mobility difficulties.<sup>4</sup>

Many older people face additional barriers and discrimination because of impairment. Statistics for older disabled people are not as readily available as those for working age people (available from the Labour Force Survey). However, the most recent government estimates suggest that there are more than 530,000 disabled people in London aged 60 or over. The estimated proportion of disabled people nationally increases from 30 per cent of those aged 65-69 to 84 per cent of those aged 85 or over.<sup>5</sup>

Disabled people continue to be excluded from many mainstream activities that other Londoners take for granted. Many lose out when it comes to work, housing, leisure, health and social care and are frequently denied the opportunity to participate fully as equal citizens.

The Mayor promotes the rights of disabled people and incorporates the social model of disability in all his policies and strategies. In brief, this states that it is not a person's impairment that results in an individual being excluded, but the way in which society responds to the individual with an impairment.

### *Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people*

London has the largest population of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and trans people (LGBT) in the country. Some estimates state that together they make up 10 per cent of the capital's population. However, monitoring of sexuality by public agencies is very limited, which makes it difficult to assess whether appropriate services are available to meet the needs of these groups.

A lack of awareness of the impact of discrimination means that mainstream services may not meet their particular needs. Older lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and trans people very often will not use services to which they are entitled owing to fear of homophobic or transphobic reactions from staff or users, or fear of breaches of confidentiality make which them more vulnerable to hate crimes.

The GLA was the first public body to offer recognition to same sex as well as heterosexual couples through the London Partnership Register, set up in 2001.

The Government recognised the need for legislative change with its Civil Partnership Framework. The 2004 Civil Partnership Act allows same sex couples to register their partnership with the new legal status of civil partners. The new legal rights include rights to survivor pensions, recognition for immigration purposes, equal treatment for tax purposes, including inheritance tax, protection from domestic violence and next of kin rights, which will mean no more problems regarding hospital visiting rights.

The Mayor welcomes the recognition of same sex couples but would also like to see the Government extend legal rights to all unmarried couples regardless of sexuality.

### *Living alone*

There has been a substantial rise in the number of older people living alone in recent years. This presents new challenges for services because people living alone are more likely to face social exclusion.

Over a third of people aged 60 or over in London live alone - 42 per cent in inner London and 33 per cent in outer London, compared with just over 30 per cent in England and Wales overall. The likelihood of living alone goes up with age and is higher for women and older LGBT people. Some 63 per cent of women and 47 per cent of men aged 85 or over in inner London live alone. In outer London the proportions of this age group living alone are slightly lower - at 55 per cent for women and 34 per cent for men.

The proportion of older people living alone also varies between different ethnic groups (as defined by the Census), although this is closely linked to the age structure of the groups and different migration patterns. White British and white Irish people are the most likely to live alone in London (39.6 per cent and 36.5 per cent, respectively) followed closely by black or black British people of black Caribbean or black other origin (both over 34 per cent).





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# Mayoral Priority

## 1 challenging perceptions and promoting the contribution of older people to London

**Policy 1** The Mayor will ensure that the positive contribution of older people to London's wellbeing is recognised and valued and that steps are taken to counter negative perceptions and discrimination.

### Introduction

- 1.1 Older Londoners make a tremendous contribution to London's economic, social and cultural fabric, as consumers, employees, volunteers, friends, neighbours, family members, carers, community activists, artists, teachers and as a huge source of local and cultural history and experience. Many have played a part in making London the city that it is today and continue to add to its vitality. The Mayor will champion older people's issues across London, promote their value, contribution, interests and inclusion and take necessary steps to combat negative perceptions and discrimination.
- 1.2 The involvement of older people in community life can help promote not only their own health and wellbeing,<sup>6</sup> but also that of the community. Sustainable communities require the participation of all their members, including older people. Such communities provide a better quality of life and opportunities for those that live there.
- 1.3 Studies have shown that older people are among the most satisfied members of society and many have a good or very good quality of life.<sup>7</sup> Retirement can provide the opportunity for older people to set up new initiatives and express themselves creatively. They therefore have much to offer the communities in which they live.
- 1.4 However, many older people experience age discrimination. Ageism can act as a barrier to their full participation in society and prevent them from receiving the opportunities, services and the support they are entitled to.



### Figure 1 Highlighting older people's contribution

- Nationally people over 50 account for 40 per cent of all consumer spending,<sup>8</sup> a figure that will increase in the coming years.
- They have 60 per cent of total savings and possess almost an 80 per cent share of UK wealth.<sup>9</sup>
- Together they have an annual income in excess of £166 billion and contribute around £200 billion to the UK economy.<sup>10</sup>
- More than 11 per cent of Londoners over state pensionable age - 114,000 people - are still in employment.<sup>11</sup>

- Over 140,000 Londoners aged 60 or over provide unpaid care for other adults. This is more than the total number of people employed in providing personal care.<sup>12</sup>
- Older people often provide care for their grandchildren. Age Concern estimates the value of this unpaid care to be over £500 million in London.<sup>13</sup>
- Over 400,000 people aged 50 or over are involved in some kind of voluntary activity in London.<sup>14</sup>
- Figures obtained before the 2006 local elections showed that over a half of local authority councillors were aged 55 or over.<sup>15</sup>

### Age discrimination



- 1.5 Research has revealed that many people in Britain hold negative, stereotypical images of older people.<sup>16</sup> Indeed, age discrimination is thought to be the form of prejudice most experienced by people over the age of 55.<sup>17</sup>
- 1.6 The Mayor considers it vital to challenge these negative perceptions. Whether direct or indirect, discriminatory attitudes can lead to practices that result in older people being excluded from community life, public services, consumer goods and employment opportunities, or make them invisible to policy makers and the media.
- 1.7 Exclusion can have a dramatic impact on the health and wellbeing of older people and can lead to social isolation, loneliness and ill health. For example, older non-working people are more likely to die of respiratory disease and suffer from diminished confidence or depressive disorders.
- 1.8 Furthermore, age discrimination is often compounded by other forms of discrimination, whether on the grounds of gender, race, faith, disability or sexuality. Many older people experience prejudice and exclusion in several dimensions at once.
- 1.9 Such attitudes are divisive, undermine the development of sustainable communities and lead to discriminatory attitudes and practices that exclude older people. They set boundaries on what people can expect and can achieve in their old age and also make it acceptable for older people to receive second class services and be discriminated against. What is needed is a change in culture that values older people, sees and appreciates what they have to offer and places their needs at the centre of service development and planning.
- 1.10 Further still, ageism has a monetary cost. It has been estimated that in 2002 alone, age discrimination cost the national economy £31 billion a

year in lost output and the Government a further £5 billion in extra benefits.<sup>18</sup>

### Challenging discrimination

- 1.11 Challenging discrimination is necessary to ensure that older people are not overlooked or excluded and that communities fully thrive by utilising the potential of all their members.
- 1.12 Older people themselves have done much to challenge negative views of ageing and will continue to do so - the number of older people who are active, fit and financially independent will be among the fastest growing groups of older people over the next decade. Many companies are also beginning to recognise the consumer power of the older generations; 'the grey pound'.
- 1.13 The Government is giving a lead in challenging ageism through its Opportunity Age strategy which sets out its vision for an ageing society. This is built upon in the health White Paper *Our Health, Our Care, Our Say*, which sets out the Government's plans for the development of community health services, and the Social Exclusion Unit publication *Sure Start to Later Life* which aims to deal with social exclusion among older people. We welcome these initiatives and will comment on the opportunities they offer in later chapters.
- 1.14 But the Mayor believes that to make the most of what older people have to offer and to help them remain active members of their communities, there must continue to be changes in how older people and ageing are viewed and in the policies that are pursued to promote the wellbeing of older people.
- 1.15 Challenging ageism and other forms of discrimination in the planning and delivery of services is a key theme throughout this strategy. Part of the task involves the engagement of a diverse group of older people themselves in the decisions that affect them. This includes those who traditionally are not heard, such as homeless older people or those from particular faith groups. The Mayor also recognises that challenging ageism across London and bringing about a cultural change in attitudes and services will require a partnership approach between national, regional and local government, the voluntary sector and business and employers. We say more about both of these issues in the next chapter.
- 1.16 The Mayor will provide a lead in tackling age discrimination across London. This will build upon the work he has already done in tackling other forms of discrimination. The Mayor will publicly challenge age



discrimination in London, highlighting the negative effects of prejudicial attitudes, and challenge employers, service providers and the public generally to respond positively to older people.

- 1.17 The Mayor will demonstrate the enormous contribution that older people make to London's wellbeing by ensuring that all GLA publications highlight the contribution of older people to London, and by continuing to support cultural events for older people such as the Capital Age Festival, as a means of recognising and celebrating their achievements.
- 1.18 The Mayor will also stage an exhibition in summer 2007 at City Hall that will highlight the contribution of London's older people to the diversity and success of London as a world city.

### Intergenerational events

- 1.19 Research suggests that intergenerational work - bringing together people of different ages - can help break down mutual prejudices between generations.<sup>19</sup> The Mayor is keen to support such initiatives as a means of combating ageism and promoting community cohesion.
- 1.20 The Mayor will host an event on intergenerational relations to explore what actions the Mayor can take to strengthen communities and promote understanding between generations.
- 1.21 The Mayor will also promote work that aims to transmit experiences across generations. A good example is the innovative work undertaken by Museum, Libraries and Archives London (MLA). This work records older people's memories and stories of their lives and is highly valuable; it highlights the valuable contribution of older people to present-day London, leaves a valuable record for future generations and is rewarding for the older participants themselves.

### A Single Equalities Act

- 1.22 Effective legislation can help tackle the discriminatory barriers that exclude older people.
- 1.23 The Government's Commission for Equality and Human Rights will oversee and enforce anti-discrimination legislation in the future, replacing the current three bodies. Three new areas of discrimination are to be introduced: age, sexual orientation and religion. For the first time there will be a body responsible for challenging ageism.



- 1.24 The Mayor believes, however, that a single commission, as currently proposed, will not have the necessary legal powers or adequate resources to ensure equal levels of protection for all groups. The Mayor believes that a Single Equalities Act is needed to provide equal protection for all the equality strands, by providing age equality rights and anti-age discrimination protection under law. The Mayor will continue to call for the introduction of a Single Equalities Act.
- 1.25 The Mayor has been consulted on the Government's Disability Law Review. A discrimination law Green Paper is expected to be published.

### Summary of actions

- P1 The Mayor will champion the interests of London's older people, promote older people's interests and inclusion across London and challenge service providers, employers and society generally to respond positively to older people in London.
- P2 The Mayor will publicly challenge age discrimination in London, highlighting the negative effects of discriminatory attitudes and demonstrating the positive contribution that older people make to London's wellbeing.
- P3 The Mayor will ensure that all GLA publications highlight the contribution of older people to London.
- P4 The Mayor will continue to support cultural events for older people as a means of recognising and celebrating the achievements and contribution of older people to London and challenging negative views.
- P5 The Mayor will host a conference on intergenerational relations that will explore what the Mayor can do further to strengthen communities and promote understanding between different generations.
- P6 The Mayor will stage an exhibition at City Hall to showcase the contribution of London's older people to the diversity and success of London as a vibrant world city.
- P7 The Mayor will continue to call for the introduction of a Single Equalities Act.



## 2 empowering older Londoners

**Policy 2 The Mayor is committed to ensuring that all older Londoners are able to have their say in matters which affect them.**

### Introduction

- 2.1 If planning for the future is to take account of older people's changing expectations and needs, it is important to engage directly with older people themselves. It is essential to listen to, recognise and respond to their views and priorities.
- 2.2 Empowering older people is also about enabling them to make informed decisions for themselves. The adequate provision of information, advice and advocacy is key.
- 2.3 The Mayor will seek out opportunities to help create an inclusive environment for older people, where their voices can be heard.

### Working with older people

- 2.4 Central to the Mayor's engagement with older people is the London Older People Strategies Group (LOPSG). LOPSG is a coalition of over 200 older people's groups in London, ranging from pan-London organisations such as the Greater London Forum for Older People and Age Concern London, to local borough lunch clubs, advocacy services and a wide range of groups representing London's diverse communities.
- 2.5 The Mayor works closely with LOPSG to help them deliver a planned programme of annual activities, events and meetings aimed at maximising the Mayor's engagement with older Londoners. For example, older Londoners are invited to the London Older People's Assembly, organised by LOPSG, to give their views and suggestions on London life.
- 2.6 The GLA sees LOPSG as a key partner in taking forward this strategy. It is our intention that LOPSG will be kept informed of progress in implementing this strategy, will be asked their views on issues arising and will be asked for their views on future issues of concern to older people that may be taken forward in further work on the strategy. The GLA will also produce an annual report on progress on key areas of the strategy. This will be available on the GLA website.
- 2.7 The GLA established the London Older People's Resource Facility in March 2004 to assist LOPSG and other older people's organisations across London to carry out their valuable work. The facility provides access to computer services, work space and officer support. It acts as an information resource on GLA policy and how it affects older Londoners. The resource also runs a regular programme of information and skills



sharing sessions on chairing meetings, public speaking, minute taking or basic computer skills. The GLA will continue to provide this valuable resource for older people to allow them to engage fully with the GLA.

- 2.8 If you are interested in using this resource please call 020 7785 3870 to arrange a time to visit.

### Wider networks

- 2.9 The Mayor has no direct powers in service delivery other than through Transport for London (TfL), the London Development Agency (LDA), London Fire & Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) and the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA). The Mayor is also responsible for the management of Trafalgar Square and Parliament Square.
- 2.10 However, the Mayor is an important part of London's wider policy making and consultative networks. This includes networks of groups that represent older, disabled, LGBT people, women and people from BAME communities and faith groups. The Mayor also has extensive contact with the voluntary sector, health and local authority service providers, and central and local government. This places the Mayor in a strong position to engage with older people and to promote their interests across London, and he will take every opportunity to do so.
- 2.11 The Mayor will continue to press central government to provide the extra resources that London needs in order to meet the aspirations of the Government's vision for an ageing society.
- 2.12 The Mayor will look for opportunities to engage with groups like the London Better Government for Older People Network (BGOP). Facilitated by the Association of London Government, it brings together local and London wide older people's groups including the London boroughs, health agencies and the voluntary and community sector, to promote and support the engagement of older people in the development of policy and practice in London governance and strategic Londonwide matters.
- 2.13 The Mayor welcomes the Government's intention to revitalise the local network of Older People's Champions - a network of people that promote older people's issues at a local level in health and social care - and will look for opportunities to engage with this network across London.
- 2.14 The Mayor will continue to work closely with colleagues in specific policy areas to ensure that older people's needs are met through mainstream services, and to support new types of service provision that cater for the needs of different communities. This is discussed in further



detail in the relevant chapters, for example, Chapter 12 on health and social care services.

- 2.15 The Mayor will also look for opportunities to work with the Government Office for London (GOL) in taking forward the Government's active ageing agenda. In particular the Mayor believes that the development of local area agreements, negotiated between local authorities and GOL, are an important opportunity to improve services for older people in London. The Mayor will seek to influence their development so that they fully take account of older people's needs especially at a sub-regional level and to make sure that individual borough local area agreements reflect the priorities of his strategies.



### **Older people, local authorities and local area agreements**

- 2.16 Local authorities are, of course, major service providers for older people and have a key role to play in promoting their inclusion and wellbeing. The Government argues that there is no single way to deliver a strategic approach to ageing locally. We agree with this. As major service providers for older people local authorities have a key role to play in promoting their inclusion and wellbeing and they must be free to respond to local priorities.
- 2.17 The Mayor believes that if we are to promote the inclusion and wellbeing of older people, then older people's needs have to be met through universal services that respond to their needs, as well as through services designed for older people.<sup>20</sup>
- 2.18 The overall effectiveness of local service delivery is assessed by the Audit Commission through the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA). The Mayor welcomes recent changes to the CPA, which now includes an assessment of how local authorities are improving the quality of life of older people by providing both better services and better engagement to shape those services.
- 2.19 The Government has promoted the role of local strategic partnerships (LSPs). These partnerships bring together local level public, private, community and voluntary sectors partners to determine priorities for their local area, and to tackle deep seated, multi-faceted problems, requiring a range of responses from different bodies. However, many LSPs have experienced difficulties in bringing together funding streams and promoting flexibility among partner organisations.
- 2.20 The Government has responded to these difficulties by introducing local area agreements (LAAs), which are agreed between Government, the local authority and its major delivery partners at borough level. They are

structured around four service blocks of which Healthier Communities and Older People is one. LAAs are negotiated locally and enable local areas to focus on delivery of a limited number of key outcomes, agreed jointly between local authorities, their partners and the Government Office for London (GOL). It is intended that they will rationalise funding streams, simplify auditing and monitoring processes and reduce bureaucracy. This means greater freedom and flexibility to find local solutions to local problems.

2.21 The Mayor supports the development of LAAs in responding to the needs of older people and will work with the GOL and Association of London Government to ensure the needs of older people are fully considered in the development of LAAs, and to address any arising strategic issues across London so that they reflect the priorities of his strategies.

2.22 The Mayor will also convene a meeting with LSPs in early 2007 to help develop further this agenda of joint working.

### **Empowering older people**

2.23 The Mayor believes that engagement with older people is a vital component in making services more responsible and appropriate, challenging stereotypical views of older people and their needs, and promoting inclusion. In turn, this contributes to the health and wellbeing of older people and the communities of which they are part.

2.24 The existence of older people's fora and groups which link into the national and local policy-making arenas has, in some areas, enabled older people to become engaged with local policy agendas and exert an influence. However, this development is patchy and not always effective in bringing about change.

2.25 The Government has strengthened the requirement to consult with older people in the planning and delivery of services through changes to the CPA (see above) and also in proposals laid out in the recent health White Paper *Our health, Our care, Our say*. The Mayor welcomes this but believes any meaningful attempt to involve older people must also include the development of long term partnerships and practical measures which enable them to play an effective role.

2.26 At all levels of government and across London the Mayor wants to see older people having an effective voice on service and planning issues, especially in local level decision making in primary care trusts, local authorities, local strategic partnerships and local area agreements.



- 2.27 The Mayor will bring older people's issues to the fore in existing partnerships, seek to influence the changing policy agenda, and promote publicly the inclusion of older people at all levels of decision making.
- 2.28 It is also vital to acknowledge the diversity of the older population in the engagement process, and the whole spectrum of their needs and aspirations. The Mayor recognises that many groups of older people are at a particular disadvantage in terms of making their voices heard. Some face cultural or linguistic barriers and even where these requirements are catered for some may feel uncomfortable dealing with professionals. With the number of older people from BAME communities set to rise, and diverse groups of people such as disabled and LGBT pressing for their concerns to be recognised, this is an increasingly salient issue.
- 2.29 In 2004 the GLA published *Working with disabled people for inclusive access* to provide guidance for organisations on how to consult disabled people to help them meet the organisations' duties under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). Many of the examples and advice given are applicable to all equalities groups and this document is freely available on the GLA website at <http://www.london.gov.uk/gla/publications/equalities.jsp>. The GLA has also produced an Equalities Toolkit which many service providers may find helpful in making meeting accessible. This can be found at [http://www.london.gov.uk/gla/publications/equalities/equalities\\_toolkit.pdf](http://www.london.gov.uk/gla/publications/equalities/equalities_toolkit.pdf).
- 2.30 Planning authorities may also find it useful to look at the Regions for All Ages publication *Regional Strategies and Demographic Ageing* which is an age proofing toolkit for strategy development. The LDA played a part in the development of this document which can be found at [http://www.ageconcern.org.uk/AgeConcern/Documents/regions\\_age\\_proofing\\_toolkit.pdf](http://www.ageconcern.org.uk/AgeConcern/Documents/regions_age_proofing_toolkit.pdf).
- 2.31 The Mayor will seek out opportunities to develop the GLA's partnerships with London's diverse older population and examine its own consultation processes.
- 2.32 The Mayor will ensure that all information provided by the GLA and the GLA group is in a wide range of formats accessible to older people, and that all GLA consultations are actively promoted to London's diverse range of older people.



### **Advice, information and advocacy**

- 2.33 The provision of appropriate and timely advice, information and advocacy is, in many ways essential in empowering older people; it can transform



their lives.<sup>21</sup> By enabling people to access the services they need, access opportunities on offer, and by assisting them to make appropriate decisions it helps combat social exclusion, and helps older people maintain their independence.

- 2.34 The Government has recognised the importance of advocacy and advice and this has become integral to its Linkage Plus pilot and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) initiative to combat social exclusion among the most excluded older people. The Mayor welcomes this development.
- 2.35 The huge diversity of London's older population poses a particular challenge for the provision of advice, information and advocacy in the capital. Provision needs to respond to this diversity so that services are adequate and appropriate for all individuals.
- 2.36 The Mayor will promote the provision of accessible advice, information and advocacy across London which caters for all of London's older people.

### Summary of actions

- P8 The Mayor will make the most of his position at the centre of a wide number of consultative and policy making networks to listen to older people's concerns across London and to promote their interests.
- P9 The Mayor will continue to press central government to provide the resources necessary for London to meet the Government's vision for an ageing society.
- P10 The Mayor will work with the government, Government Office for London and the Association of London Government to promote the development of Local Area Agreements at a regional and sub regional level to ensure that the needs of older people are fully considered and that the opportunities they present are maximised.
- P11 The Mayor will look for opportunities to develop the GLA's own consultation processes and for opportunities to promote good practice across London.
- P12 The Mayor will promote the provision of advice, information and advocacy across London for the diverse needs of older Londoners.

## 3 access to employment

### Policy 3 The Mayor will work to tackle barriers to employment for older people.

#### Introduction

- 3.1 Employment in later life produces numerous benefits. At the individual level it can provide older people with social contact, the opportunity to enhance their incomes, a sense of fulfilment, and contribute positively to their physical and mental health.<sup>22</sup> People will also be expected to work longer and to make greater provision for their old age. At a wider level, keeping people active and engaged in work can help to combat social exclusion, strengthen communities and enhance business productivity.
- 3.2 However, there are significant challenges in the recruitment, training and retention of older workers and older people face several barriers in accessing, returning to, or remaining within the labour market. London's rich diversity poses particular challenges.
- 3.3 Tackling these barriers is essential in achieving the Mayor's vision. He believes that promoting and enabling employment for people aged 50 or above is an economic and social necessity for London. This is also a key feature of the Government's vision of ageing Britain<sup>23</sup> and it has set itself a target of a million more older people in work nationally as part of its vision for an ageing society.<sup>24</sup>
- 3.4 For London the challenge is not just one of helping more older people stay in work, but also of responding to the needs of a growing BAME older population as well as the needs of other groups such as women and disabled people and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.



#### Older people in the workforce

- 3.5 Employment rates among people over 50 have risen in recent years in London. However, there remains a substantial difference in employment rates between age groups. Overall, 68 per cent (70 per cent for Britain) of people aged between 50 and pensionable age in London are in employment, compared with 76 per cent of those aged 25 to 49.
- 3.6 Research also shows that very few people retire from paid employment voluntarily before the age of 55. The most common reasons for leaving the workforce involuntarily before state pension age (SPA) are ill health and redundancy.<sup>25</sup>
- 3.7 The number of older people who are unemployed but would like to return to work in London is the subject of some debate and estimates range from 84,000 to over 250,000.<sup>26</sup> Research carried out by the DWP found

that up to 60 per cent of unemployed older workers would like to work again. Two-thirds of this group, however, do not expect to be given the opportunity to do so.<sup>27</sup> Many older people give up looking for work.

- 3.8 There are also significantly different rates of employment between subgroups of older people which suggests that some older people face multiple barriers of exclusion. For example, between the age of 50 and SPA men are more likely to be employed than women (71 per cent compared with 64 per cent, respectively). Similarly, older people belonging to BAME communities are less likely to be employed than their white counterparts. Data for 2004 showed an employment rate in London of 75 per cent for white people aged 16 to SPA rising to 80 per cent for white males; this contrasts with an employment rate of 57 per cent for all BAME groups and 66 per cent for BAME males.<sup>28</sup>



### **Barriers to older people's employment**

- 3.9 The Mayor believes that older people are as capable in the workplace as their younger counterparts. It has even been suggested that an older workforce brings added benefits: high retention rates, high productivity levels, low absenteeism, reliability, commitment and dedication.<sup>29</sup>
- 3.10 But it is clear that many older Londoners face considerable barriers to employment: discrimination, a lack of appropriate skills and access to training, and working patterns that do not suit their needs.
- 3.11 Age discrimination can act as a significant barrier for older people in the labour market and is frequently exacerbated by other forms of discrimination. For example, there is strong evidence to suggest that people from ethnic minority groups are particularly disadvantaged in the labour market (although there is significant variation between different ethnic groups).<sup>30</sup> Similarly, LGBT older people may have had their careers disrupted by discriminatory practice.
- 3.12 Having passed through the education system at a time when there was less focus on formal qualifications, many older people lack the credentials necessary to enter the employment market. Furthermore, many older workers miss out on training opportunities in the workplace so are less likely to have recently acquired skills.
- 3.13 This problem is compounded by London's job market. In their younger lives many older people were employed by manufacturing industry. However, the past 20 years have witnessed a steady decline in manufacturing jobs in London. The prevailing trend in London's economy is for highly skilled IT-based jobs, and professional and management jobs,

for which many older people lack the appropriate skills. The age profiles in these sectors are heavily weighted in favour of the middle age groups.

- 3.14 Many older people, particularly women, are carers, whether for sick or disabled partners, relatives or friends, or children or grandchildren. Balancing caring responsibilities with employment can pose significant difficulties and act as a barrier to undertaking full-time employment.

## Figure 2 Employment and older people

- In the 1970s the employment rate for people aged 50+ was 85 per cent for men and 58 per cent for women.<sup>31</sup> The employment rate in 2005 among males aged from 50 to SPA in London was 71 per cent compared with 64 per cent for women.
- 38 per cent of unemployed men aged between 50 and SPA have been unemployed for over 12 months compared to 25 per cent of those under 50. Many simply give up trying to find work.<sup>32</sup>
- Those who do manage to return to work earn on average 26 per cent less than in their previous employment. Only 32 per cent sustain their former pay level.<sup>33</sup>
- People with higher qualifications are more likely to stay in work: 81 per cent of people aged from 50 to SPA with a degree are in work compared to 52 per cent of people with no qualifications.<sup>34</sup>
- In 50 per cent of companies the over 50s make up less than 10 per cent of the workforce. However, older people frequently make up over 50 per cent of a company's customer base.<sup>35</sup>
- Only 17 per cent of men and 12 per cent of women retire in the year they reach state pension age; 90 per cent of people retire between the ages of 48 and 65.<sup>36</sup>

Statistics from *Third Age Employment Network Briefings*

### Working for older people

- 3.15 The Mayor believes that tackling barriers to employment and extending the working lives of older people requires a joint response from a range of partners including central government, private and public sector employers, training and skills providers and older people themselves. It also requires consideration of the specific challenges that London's diversity brings.
- 3.16 The Mayor, through the London Development Agency, seeks to tackle these challenges. He will back opportunities and initiatives aimed at challenging age discrimination, enabling flexible working, and promote





measures that help older people back into the workplace such as skills and training support.

### **The London Development Agency**

- 3.17 The London Development Agency (LDA) co-ordinates economic development and regeneration across the capital. It works in partnership with industry and the public and voluntary sectors to create new employment opportunities and develop the skills of the local population. It is also responsible for the Mayor's Economic Development Strategy, which sets out the Mayor's vision for a prosperous, sustainable and inclusive world city.<sup>37</sup> A key priority of the LDA is to ensure that the benefits of London's successes are shared across the capital.
- 3.18 The Mayor, through the LDA, will develop a strategic and joined up approach to its work for older people through the drafting and consultation of an evidence-based Generic Equality Scheme (GES). This will include measures to tackle issues facing older Londoners in terms of equality. Age will be considered alongside other areas such as race, faith, sexual orientation, gender and disability to highlight any areas of multiple disadvantage.
- 3.19 The recent Greater London Assembly report<sup>38</sup> into employment among older workers highlighted the uncoordinated nature of the response of employment service providers to the needs of older workers. In collaboration with the LDA, the Mayor will bring together all parties working to support employment for those over 50 in London, to help develop greater co-ordination and an overarching strategy.
- 3.20 The Mayor will continue to support the LDA project, Pathways to Work. This project works with a consortium of voluntary and community organisations already working within an equalities context, to provide job opportunities and employment with the public sector.

### **Tackling age discrimination**

- 3.21 Tackling negative perceptions of older people is a key aim of this Mayoral strategy. The Mayor believes that such attitudes are divisive and counterproductive. They undermine attempts to develop healthy, sustainable communities.
- 3.22 One of the main arenas in which older people face discrimination is in the workplace. One in four people aged 50 to 69 report experiencing age discrimination when working or looking for work.<sup>39</sup>

- 3.23 The Government has begun to tackle ageism through its Age Positive Campaign which highlights the benefits of an age diverse workforce and challenges discrimination in the workplace. The GLA is already an Age Positive employer and this is discussed in greater detail in the following chapter.
- 3.24 The Government is also introducing new legislation in autumn 2006 to outlaw age discrimination in recruitment, training, promotion and dismissal. The legislation will outlaw compulsory retirement below 65, except where objectively justified. It also provides for a national default retirement age of 65 which employees can ask to be extended. The Government intends to review the need for a retirement age in 5 years time but has a long-term aim to abolish it.
- 3.25 The Mayor, through the LDA and its business links across London will continue to promote the employment of older people to London's business community.
- 3.26 The Mayor will continue to use his Diversity Works campaign as a vehicle for promoting the employment of older people. The priorities of this campaign are to engage organisations in harnessing the benefits of a diverse workforce and supplier base, providing excluded Londoners - including older people - with the chance to share in the city's opportunities and prosperity.<sup>40</sup>
- 3.27 Further information can be found at <http://www.lda.gov.uk/server/show/ConWebDoc.867> or by emailing [DiversityWorksforLondon@LDA.gov.uk](mailto:DiversityWorksforLondon@LDA.gov.uk)

### **Flexible working**

- 3.28 Flexible working arrangements benefit both employers and employees. For employees, flexible working arrangements allow them to balance their personal and professional commitments. For employers, allowing staff to work flexibly enables them to retain skilled and experienced staff for whom full-time work may not be suitable.
- 3.29 Flexible working is one of the ways in which employers can help older people remain in paid employment. Many older people wish to remain in work on a part-time basis, whether because of caring responsibilities, health issues or a desire to make a gradual transition to retirement. However, there are generally less opportunities to work flexibly in London than elsewhere in the country.



- 3.30 The Mayor welcomes the government's commitment to extending the right to flexible working to those with caring responsibilities. The White Paper *Our Health, Our Care Our Say* recognises the importance of supporting carers in the invaluable role that they play. The proposals outlined in the recent pensions White Paper for more generous carers pension credits are welcome and will help to support carers.<sup>41</sup>
- 3.31 The Mayor recognises that older people are important childcare providers for their grandchildren, particularly in London where the high cost of childcare can result in a heavier reliance on grandparents. In turn, this can affect their own employment opportunities. The Mayor has developed a childcare strategy aimed at increasing the affordability and availability of childcare and should help more families balance child care responsibilities and employment opportunities.<sup>42</sup> The Mayor's child care strategy can be found at <http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/strategies/childcare/index.jsp>

### Older entrepreneurs

- 3.32 Older Londoners make a considerable contribution to London's economy through self-employment. There are more self-employed people over the age of 50 than in any other group. Of the over 50s workforce, 18 per cent is self-employed compared to 13 per cent for all other ages.<sup>43</sup> This can be partly attributed to the lack of employment opportunities for those over the age of 50, but also to the fact that older entrepreneurs are more likely to have the experience and assets needed to finance a business. Self-employment is also a very popular option for some people from BAME communities.
- 3.33 The Mayor recognises the importance of older entrepreneurs to London's economy. The Mayor will support older entrepreneurs across London and use his influence to ensure that the full potential of older entrepreneurs is harnessed for the benefit of London.

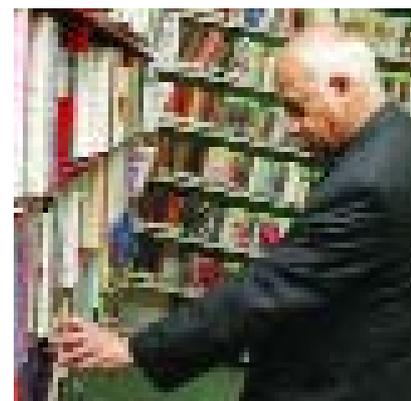
### Health and disability

- 3.34 Poor health and disability are a major cause of unemployment, particularly among older people. The majority of unemployed people from age 50 to SPA claim incapacity benefit (IB),<sup>44</sup> a higher rate than elsewhere in the country. Almost 13 per cent of people aged 50 to 59 in London claim IB compared to a national average of 12 per cent. In inner London this figure rises to 17.5 per cent, the second highest rate in the country.<sup>45</sup> The majority of those who start claiming IB expect to return to work. For most, this is a realistic expectation if the right help is offered. The Mayor supports increasing the availability of such help.

- 3.35 The GLA has published important research in this area. *Towards Joined Up Lives* examines the experience of disabled people across a range of issues including employment, with a view to working with employers to remove barriers to employment. The Mayor, working with the LDA and partners, will take forward the recommendations in this report.<sup>46</sup> This report and its recommendations can be found at <http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/equalities/joined-up-lives.jsp>
- 3.36 The London Health Commission was set up by the Mayor in 2000. It works with partner agencies across London to reduce inequalities in health and promote the wellbeing of Londoners. Its recently published prospectus identified improving the employment prospects of disabled people as a key priority.<sup>47</sup> All its partner organisations, including the LDA, are committed to increase significantly the number of disabled employees by March 2008, and to promote inclusive employment practices among organisations in their sphere of influence.
- 3.37 The Mayor, through the LDA, GLA and London Health Commission will use existing research and evidence to work with employers and promote good practice with regard to disability and employment. In particular, this work will focus on the removal of barriers to employment for disabled people and the effective retention of older disabled people in employment.

### Skills (for updating)

- 3.38 Access to training is crucial to retaining a strong, productive workforce and extending working life. However, those aged from 50 to SPA make up one-third of adults up to SPA but only 10 per cent of those are on employer or government training schemes.<sup>48</sup> Many employers are reluctant to offer training to older workers because of a misguided notion that it offers a poor return on their investment.
- 3.39 The Mayor recognises the importance of skills training in improving the job opportunities of older workers. Investment in this group is needed to develop their transferable skills, in order to meet the future information and communication technologies (ICT) needs of small and medium enterprises.
- 3.40 Following the review of his powers announced in July 2006, the Mayor will have a statutory duty to promote skills in London and will chair a new London Skills and Employment Board, drawn from business and other key partners. The Mayor will prepare a new statutory Adult Skills Strategy for London, setting priorities and directing budgets. The Mayor will ensure



that the needs of London's older workers are fully considered in developing this strategy.

- 3.41 The LDA will also target some of its investment into work with the over 50s in a pan-London project - OOPs 50plus - which will support those not in employment.

### Summary of actions

- P13 The Mayor, through the London Development Agency, will develop a strategic and joined up response to the LDA's work on older people through the development of an evidence-based Generic Equality Scheme (GES). This will include detailed measures for tackling issues facing older Londoners.
- P14 The Mayor will ensure that the LDA continues to use its Equality Impact Assessment processes to assess the impact of its work on all equality and community cohesion issues including age.
- P15 The Mayor, in collaboration with the LDA, will bring together all parties working to support employment for those over 50 in London to bring about greater co-ordination within an overarching strategy.
- P16 Through the Mayor's Diversity Works for London campaign, the LDA will promote the employment of all Londoners regardless of age and encourage businesses to tackle discrimination in all its forms.
- P17 The Mayor and LDA will use their influence to ensure that the full potential of older entrepreneurs is harnessed for the benefit of London.
- P18 The Mayor will work with partners to take forward the recommendations in Towards Joined Up Lives to make a real and irreversible improvement in the life chances of disabled Londoners.
- P19 The Mayor, LDA, the GLA and the London Health Commission will use the evidence base from existing research to work with employers to remove barriers to employment for disabled people and ensure effective retention of older disabled people in employment.
- P20 The Mayor will use his influence, through the London Skills and Employment Board, to help ensure that skills providers and employers respond to older people's needs for training and development.
- P21 Through the European Social Fund, the LDA will also, as a co-financing organisation, target some of its investment into work with the over 50s in a pan-London project called OOPs 50plus.

## 4 age equality - leading by example

### Policy 4 The Greater London Authority will be a beacon of equality for older people through its own policies and practices.

#### Introduction

- 4.1 The Mayor and Greater London Authority will lead by example in promoting equalities and inclusion in their capacity as both employer and strategic authority.

#### An Age Equality Scheme

- 4.2 The Mayor will ensure that the GLA acts as an equality and diversity champion, and will integrate equalities into policy development, implementation, evaluation and review throughout each part of the organisation and its work. This will include making sure that all GLA events and information are accessible to everyone.
- 4.3 Part of the Mayor's vision is the production of an Age Equality Scheme for the GLA, by December 2006. This will outline how the Mayor will promote age equality, challenge age discrimination in the work of the GLA, and ensure that age equality is at the centre of its policy and strategic work, service provision and employment practice. As part of this, the Mayor will develop and implement active measures to address age equality, which will be evaluated as part of its performance management framework.
- 4.4 The Mayor's Disability Equality Scheme was launched in January 2005. It sets out comprehensive measures to make London a more accessible and inclusive city for disabled and deaf Londoners, many of whom are older people.

#### The GLA as employer

- 4.5 By adhering to sound policy and practice in recruitment, retention, employment and training, the Mayor's aims to ensure that the GLA's workforce reflects London's diversity at every level of the organisation.
- 4.6 During the summer of 2006 the Mayor carried out an equalities review of the GLA's human resources policies. The Mayor will continue to review policies periodically and revise them where appropriate.
- 4.7 The Mayor has already taken a number of important steps towards making the GLA's policies supportive of older employees. The Mayor has committed the GLA to the Government's Age Positive initiative. This is run by the Department for Work and Pensions to promote the benefits of employing a mixed-age workforce and combating discriminatory practice.
- 4.8 The Mayor will set out a clear Age Equality Policy for the GLA group and lead all the functional bodies to work together to tackle age



discrimination and promote age equality. As part of this scheme the Mayor will consider whether to set a target for the employment of older workers at the GLA.

- 4.9 Historically, the GLA has operated a flexible approach to retirement, and managers have been encouraged to support workers who want to work beyond the national default retirement age of 65. As part of a wider review of its terms and conditions of employment, the organisation is moving towards the removal of a default retirement age to give the staff the choice to work up until the age they choose to retire.
- 4.10 It has been the policy of the GLA to grant employees the right to work flexibly in order to balance personal and professional commitments. The Mayor will consider ways to highlight these schemes more actively for older staff.
- 4.11 The Mayor intends to develop arrangements to support ongoing contact with retired staff, for example by developing mentoring schemes. These can aid the transition to retirement and reduce the potential isolation felt by retirees as well as assisting the GLA with succession planning.
- 4.12 The Mayor is committed to ensuring that all learning and development initiatives within the GLA promote and embed age equality. He will ensure that the needs of older workers and age-related issues are fully considered in the development and delivery of the GLA's programmes.

### Summary of actions

- P22 The Mayor will produce an Age Equality Scheme by December 2006 and develop and implement measures to address age equality. These will be built into the GLA's performance management framework.
- P23 The Mayor will periodically review and revise the GLA's human resource policies and ask other members of the GLA group to follow his lead.
- P24 The Mayor will set out a clear Age Equality Policy for the GLA group and support all functional bodies to work together to tackle age discrimination and promote age equality.
- P25 The Mayor will develop mentoring schemes to provide support and maintain contact with older or retired GLA staff.
- P26 The Mayor will promote flexible working policies for older GLA staff.
- P27 The Mayor will ensure that the GLA audits its annual learning and development programme to ensure that age equality is adhered to.

## 5 volunteering

### Policy 5 The Mayor will support initiatives to increase volunteering by older people in London.

#### Introduction

- 5.1 The Government's publication *Sure Start to Later Life*<sup>49</sup> highlighted volunteering as having a positive influence on the health and wellbeing of individuals, and as a key component in the development of stronger, thriving and more sustainable communities.
- 5.2 For older people volunteering offers a means of remaining active and engaged. It can bring physical and emotional health benefits, a sense of belonging and inclusion, and a feeling of doing something worthwhile. It can also help people update their skills, thus offering a route back into the workplace, and combat social exclusion.
- 5.3 Older volunteers bring maturity, skills, experience built up over their lifetime, dedication and loyalty to their roles. Over 400,000 people aged over 50 take part in formal volunteering activities every year in London,<sup>50</sup> the value of which is estimated to be over £400 million.<sup>51</sup>
- 5.4 However, formal volunteer rates – those volunteering through recognised volunteer groups – among people in their 50s and early 60s are lower than for younger age groups.<sup>52</sup> Lower still is the participation of older people from low income and some BAME groups.<sup>53</sup> For BAME groups, some of this can be attributed to problems of definition. Many people from BAME communities take part in volunteering through, for example, faith groups, but might not describe it as such. People may not recognise this as volunteering but as part of their duty to their faith and community. This is often not recorded in official surveys but needs to be supported, for example, through the provision of language support, and recognised and valued as an important part of civil society.
- 5.5 Despite this, the low take-up of formal volunteering opportunities among older people suggests that there are significant barriers to their involvement.

#### Barriers to volunteering

- 5.6 Age discrimination, lack of access for disabled people and issues regarding the image of volunteering can prevent older people pursuing these roles. Studies have highlighted the need for volunteer organisations to broaden their recruitment strategies and to work more effectively with community leaders and BAME groups to increase the diversity of their volunteers.<sup>54</sup>



- 5.7 London is fortunate in having a strong volunteer sector which plays an important role in promoting volunteering across the capital. Organisations such as Greater London Volunteering and Community Service Volunteers, LOPSG and the Retired Senior Volunteer Programme will continue to play the leading role in promoting volunteering in London.
- 5.8 The Mayor will work with the sector to build on existing work, and to support improved organisational recruitment strategies for older volunteers, particularly for older BAME, disabled and LGBT people.
- 5.9 The Mayor also recognises the important role of older people in promoting London's green spaces. The Mayor will work with the London Parks and Green Spaces Forum the London Biodiversity Partnership and other voluntary groups to promote the involvement of older people in friends groups and conservation work.

#### **The 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games**

- 5.10 London's 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games present an important opportunity for older people in London to contribute further to the life of London and to challenge the negative perceptions of ageing.
- 5.11 As volunteers, employees and entrepreneurs, older people will be able to contribute valuable experience and skills in the lead-up to and at the games, as well as benefiting from new learning experiences and increased social engagement and networks. For some, new skills may lead to employment, education or further volunteering opportunities.
- 5.12 The volunteering programme for the 2012 must capitalise on this opportunity to strengthen intergenerational and intercultural relations and endeavour to attract a balanced mix of volunteers from different generations and cultural backgrounds, in the Olympic spirit of goodwill and cohesion.
- 5.13 The Mayor will continue to promote the role of older people as volunteers for the Olympic and Paralympic Games.



**Summary of actions**

- P28 The Mayor will work with the London volunteer sector to build on existing work to support improved organisational recruitment strategies for older volunteers, particularly BAME, disabled and LGBT older people.
- P29 The Mayor will work with the London Parks and Green Spaces Forum, the London Biodiversity Partnership and other voluntary groups to promote the involvement of older people in friends groups and conservation work.
- P30 The Mayor will continue to promote the role of older people as volunteers for the Olympic and Paralympic Games.
- P31 The Mayor will promote and value the informal volunteering carried out by many older Londoners through their places of worship.





## 6 promoting inclusion and supporting community services

**Policy 6 The Mayor will work with partners to ensure local and community services promote the inclusion of older people and improve older people's quality of life.**

### Introduction

- 6.1 Community services are among the services most valued by older people. They provide low level support such as DIY, cleaning, shopping, gardening, chiropody, transport, befriending, day centres, leisure opportunities and advice services. In London they are provided by local authorities, the voluntary and community sector, primary care trusts and the GLA group. They are services that local authorities and other public bodies are not required to provide by law.
- 6.2 The Joseph Rowntree Foundation Older People's Inquiry found that older people highly value 'that little bit of help' that community services provide. The provision of these services can enable older people to live in their own homes for longer, thus allowing them to retain choice, control and dignity in their lives.
- 6.3 The Government, too, recognises the value of community services and they now form a central part of the Government's vision for successful ageing in Britain.
- 6.4 However, older people have reported to the Mayor that it is becoming increasingly difficult to access these services. This is a key issue for older people, and is one which the Mayor wants to support local authorities and their partners to address. The local area agreements provide a platform both to influence the provision of community services and to ensure that universal services are accessible to older Londoners.

### Sure Start

- 6.5 In its report *Sure Start to Later Life: Ending Inequalities for Older People*,<sup>55</sup> the Government highlighted the importance of community services in preventing decline in physical and emotional health, promoting the wellbeing of older people and preventing social exclusion. The Sure Start report outlines the Government's intention to tackle social exclusion among the most excluded older people, and to move to an agenda of prevention. A preventive approach recognises the value of lower level interventions in staving off potential health problems or social exclusion. Preventive services not only contribute to the quality of life of older people but they are also cost effective and save money in the long run.<sup>56</sup>



6.6 In July 2006 the government launched the national Sure Start pilots at Tower Hamlets, the only London pilot. The service is centred on responding to the impact of key life events – the loss of work, bereavement, loss of social networks, changes in health – which can render people vulnerable to exclusion. Sure Start will provide a single assessment gateway to a wide range of services in the community for older people. It is the intention that potential problems will be identified quickly and prevented from becoming worse. The Department of Health is also funding partnerships for older people projects to pilot innovative projects to provide person-centred and integrated care for older people and encourage investment in preventative approaches.

6.7 The Mayor welcomes this approach to promoting the health and wellbeing of older people and tackling social exclusion and will ensure that the lessons from Sure Start are applied across London. The Mayor will encourage the London boroughs to develop their own versions of Sure Start. To help in this process the Mayor will host a conference in conjunction with the Association of London Government (ALG) to help the London boroughs begin to develop their own sure start initiative.

6.8 The Mayor believes that boroughs may be able to build upon existing resources such as sheltered housing and children's centres to develop their own versions of sure start.

### Active ageing

6.9 Sure Start recognises that there is a need to provide individuals with active ageing opportunities, and that older people should be considered a target group. It calls on local providers to consider whether their provision of community services adequately meets the needs of excluded older people, emphasises the need for older people to be able to choose from a range of options, and highlights the need for older people to be involved in the planning of community resources and opportunities.

6.10 Lifelong learning and activities, such as arts and sport, are essential for active ageing and quality of life. Lifelong learning is particularly important for mental health promotion and in minimising social exclusion for older people. However, many older people are unable to access these opportunities and activities.

6.11 The Mayor is disappointed that while other government departments promote the health benefits of learning for the over 60s, the Department for Education and Skills is cutting funding for these courses. The Mayor believes that the role of adult education in promoting independence and



wellbeing must be fully recognised across government and that funding should reflect both its benefits and importance to older people.

- 6.12 The Mayor is concerned about the rising costs of leisure activities for older people. Recent reports highlight a drop of up to 25 per cent in the number of older people signing up for further education colleges in the wake of increased fees and reduction in courses, brought about by the Government's funding policy.<sup>57</sup>

### **More recognition for community services**

- 6.13 The Mayor welcomes the Sure Start approach to community services and active ageing. However, he is concerned that the full value and benefit of community services for older people is not being realised.
- 6.14 Many local authorities have prioritised access to mainstream services ahead of continuing to support community services. While the Mayor supports the inclusion of older people in mainstream service as an important part of promoting inclusion and challenging discrimination, and recognises the resource constraints of local authorities, he also believes there is a clear need for services targeted specifically at older people. The Mayor believes that the value of community services to both older people and to the wider community should be more fully recognised and that local authorities should take a much more strategic approach to supporting these services.
- 6.15 The consultation which informed the development of this strategy highlighted the concern that older people and their representatives feel about the future of community services. Many felt that the short-term funding of many community services is a real barrier to the long-term planning and development of services. Community services need a longer term approach to development that recognises their value as core services, does not subject them to time-limited funding and sees them as an integral part of a new approach to ageing.
- 6.16 The Mayor believes that the development of LAAs represents an opportunity for local authorities and their partners to prioritise the needs of older people. LAAs are intended to improve public services by increasing the effectiveness and the efficiency of the way in which the Government works with local authorities and their partners. The GLA, working with the Government Office for London (GOL) and the ALG, will promote the development of LAAs to ensure that the needs of older people are fully considered and that the opportunities that they present are maximised.



- 6.17 The development of schemes such as direct payments, individual budgets and methods for 'self-directed support' will also give older people greater choice and control over accessing a range of support services, and help stimulate the market for the services that people want and need. These are discussed at greater length in Chapter 12.
- 6.18 The Department of Work and Pensions, together with its partners, will work to ensure that opportunities for volunteering, lifelong learning and leisure activities are included in the piloting of Sure Start. The Mayor welcomes this.
- 6.19 As part of his commitment to promoting inclusion, the Mayor also intends to take part in a World Health Organisation project on age friendly cities. This global project, run in the United Kingdom by Help the Aged, will identify indicators of age friendly cities and produce a practical guide to stimulate and guide advocacy, community development and policy change to make cities age friendly.



### **The Freedom Pass**

- 6.20 The Freedom Pass is funded by the London boroughs and provides free travel on all public transport within the capital to Londoners over 60 and people with disabilities. Access to transport has long been identified as a key element in overcoming social exclusion<sup>58</sup> and the Mayor considers it essential to promoting a more inclusive London.
- 6.21 The Mayor will work with the boroughs to maintain the Freedom Pass concessions.

### **Summary of actions**

- P32 The Mayor will support the development of the Sure Start to Later Life model and the partnerships for older people pilots as a means of promoting the wellbeing of older people and preventing their social exclusion.
- P33 The Mayor will promote the value of community services as a valuable part of promoting the independence and wellbeing of older people and will urge the London boroughs to adopt a more strategic approach to the development of such services. This will include working with the ALG and other partners to consider how to support local strategic partnerships to deliver a better deal for older people in London.
- P34 The Mayor will work with the GOL, ALG and others as appropriate to explore how local area agreements can be used to improve the quality of life of London's older people.

## 7 culture and leisure

**Policy 7 The Mayor will support measures to ensure older Londoners can both contribute to, and benefit from, the capital's cultural and leisure activities.**

### Introduction

- 7.1 Participation in cultural and leisure activities can enhance older people's quality of life by enabling physical and mental stimulation, and by providing access to social networks. This is a central theme of the Government's report *Sure Start to Later Life*.
- 7.2 London has a huge range of cultural and leisure resources such as museums, theatre, dance, galleries, orchestras, sporting events and facilities and much more.
- 7.3 The Mayor believes that all Londoners should be able to access and enjoy these resources and will support measures to ensure that older Londoners can benefit from them.

### Cultural and leisure opportunities

- 7.4 The Mayor believes that cultural and leisure activities can act as a vehicle of social inclusion by providing an opportunity for different communities and generations to express themselves, share a common heritage or interest and generate mutual understanding.
- 7.5 Similarly, the Government's *Sure Start to Later Life* report identified access to leisure, lifelong learning and volunteering as important in promoting the inclusion and wellbeing of older people. It calls for local service providers to consider whether their provision of services and opportunities meets the needs of the most excluded older people. The Mayor welcomes this.
- 7.6 For many older Londoners, retirement offers the opportunity to enjoy more cultural and leisure activities and make the most of what the city has to offer. Others, however, face considerable obstacles in doing so. Fears about safety and affordability, inaccessible venues, concerns about travel and a lack of information can all act as obstacles to their participation. The Mayor recognises the impact that these barriers can have on older people's lives and believes that more can be done to make mainstream leisure and cultural activities accessible to older people across London. Some of these issues are dealt with in greater detail in subsequent chapters on transport and crime.
- 7.7 The Mayor believes that the role of adult education in promoting independence and wellbeing must be fully recognised across Government





and that funding should reflect both its benefits and importance to older people. As mentioned in Chapter 6, the rising costs of leisure opportunities, such as learning opportunities offered by further education colleges, may prevent older people becoming involved in such activities.

- 7.8 The Mayor believes that increased access to physical activities is also essential to promote the health of older people. Research commissioned by the Social Exclusion Unit found that lack of physical activity is a significant contributing factor to social exclusion. It can lead to poor mental and physical health which can, in turn, affect an individual's ability to participate in wider social, leisure and civic activities. A review of the provision of physical activity for older people in London found that current provision by the public, voluntary and private sectors is not meeting the needs of older people.
- 7.9 The Mayor has been working with Lifestyle Opportunities for Older People (LOOP) to deliver and promote a programme of physical activity for older people. The initiative set up a number of voluntary-based schemes, run and organised by older people, to promote the value of sport to older people, emphasise the benefits of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and suggest ways older people can get involved.
- 7.10 To promote healthy lifestyles, the Mayor is also developing opportunities for older people to walk and cycle in London. This is also part of the Mayor's vision for a sustainable city and is discussed in more detail in Chapter 9.

### **The Mayor's Culture Strategy**

- 7.11 The Mayor's Culture Strategy highlights the role of culture in promoting health and community safety, and outlines how the Mayor intends to support local cultural activities to address social inclusion.<sup>59</sup>
- 7.12 The London Cultural Consortium was established in 2005 to draw together key strategic organisations involved in culture in London. It is charged with identifying key issues affecting the cultural sector in London and taking forward the Mayor's Culture Strategy. It also seeks to promote the importance of culture in the capital by supporting partnerships and advocacy for culture. The Mayor will ensure that the consortium fully accommodates the needs of older people, their access to, and involvement in, the cultural life of London.
- 7.13 As mentioned elsewhere in the strategy, the Mayor sees intergenerational work as an integral part of combating ageism in London. He believes it is important to integrate intergenerational thinking into planning and

resourcing cultural, leisure and sporting facilities. The Mayor will continue to support initiatives which use creativity to build bridges between generations, through targeted campaigns such as Big Dance and other opportunities in London such as the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics.

- 7.14 The Mayor will work with LOSPG to stage an event in early 2007 aimed at celebrating the contribution of older artists to London's thriving cultural scene. The event aims to encourage more older people get involved in the arts by showcasing arts activity in the capital.
- 7.15 The Department for Culture, Media and Sport plans to publish a report on the participation patterns of older people in cultural, sporting and leisure activities. This will include measures to promote increased participation. The Mayor will consider the findings from this research and look at ways in which he can further develop opportunities for London's older population.

#### **GLA events**

- 7.16 The Mayor stages a number of cultural events each year which are well attended by all age groups, including older people. For example, older Irish groups take part in the parade in the St Patrick's Day Festival. The Vaisakhi and Diwali celebrations on Trafalgar Square also attract a large older audience.
- 7.17 The Mayor will continue to support cultural events for older people as a means of recognising and celebrating their achievements and contribution to London and challenging negative perceptions, for example, the Capital Age Festival.
- 7.18 The Mayor will also stage an exhibition at City Hall that will celebrate the contribution of London's older people to the diversity and success of London as a vibrant world city.



**Summary of actions**

- P35 The Mayor will promote cultural activity for older people through dialogue with cultural organisations, strategic bodies representing culture and local and national government.
- P36 The Mayor will ensure that the needs and aspirations of London's older population are fully considered in taking forward the Mayor's Culture Strategy.
- P37 The Mayor will ensure that older people's accessibility issues are considered in the work of the London Cultural Consortium.
- P38 The Mayor will continue to support initiatives which use creativity to build bridges between generations, through targeted campaigns such as Big Dance and events such as the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics.
- P39 The Mayor will use existing research to consider how cultural opportunities in London can be further developed for older people in London.



## 8 pensions and income

### Policy 8 The Mayor is committed to action to reduce pensioner poverty in London.

#### Introduction

- 8.1 The financial circumstances of older people span the entire spectrum of incomes, from the very rich to the very poor. Generally speaking, however, older people are found at the lower end of the range and pensioners have a higher risk of living in poverty than working age adults.
- 8.2 Poverty and low income can have a negative effect on the physical and mental health of older people and restrict their ability to live full, independent lives.
- 8.3 The Mayor is committed to addressing these issues.

#### Older people and income

- 8.4 There has been a considerable growth in the average income of people over pensionable age in the last 25 years. Average incomes are higher in London than in Great Britain as a whole, but as with all age groups, there is more divergence in the capital than elsewhere.
- 8.5 The likelihood of being on a low income, defined as below 60 per cent of the average, is higher for certain groups of pensioners than others.<sup>60</sup> Nationally, women make up two-thirds of pensioners living on low incomes. At all ages older women have a lower average income than men. This is because women tend to have shorter working lives than men. Many women have breaks in their working lives to raise families and care for older relatives and consequently have a reduced entitlement to occupational pensions on retirement. They also earn less on average while they are working.
- 8.6 Women are also more likely than men to live alone and older people who live alone are more likely to be poor than those who do not. Older pensioners are also more likely to be on low incomes with more women than men in the oldest age groups.
- 8.7 Nearly a third of pensioners from BAME groups are living on low incomes, compared with just over one in five white pensioners. BAME elders are more likely to have been in lower paid occupations than their white counterparts. They are also less likely to have an occupational pension. There is significant variation between BAME communities, however, which are hidden by these figures. For example, the employment rate of Indian





people aged between 50 and state pension age is 67 per cent – similar to the proportion for white British people – compared with 41 per cent for Pakistanis. Some older people originally from abroad choose to retire to their country of origin where the state pension from Britain may secure a much higher quality of life than it can in London.

- 8.8 Disabled pensioners are among the poorest pensioners in London and they face additional costs associated with their impairment. Very often, barriers to employment have affected their ability to work and their pension entitlements. In November 2003 one in five pensioners in London were receiving one or more disability or health benefit.
- 8.9 Older LGBT people may be on low incomes if their employment has been disrupted by discrimination. Before the introduction of the Civil Partnerships Act in December 2004, there were no rights to survivor pension benefits for same sex couples. These rights have now been recognised, but should a partner die, the survivor benefits will only be backdated to 1988, which could leave some older LGBT people in financial difficulty.

### **Pensioner poverty in London**

- 8.10 In 2000/01 a quarter of all pensioners in Great Britain were living in poverty, after housing costs. In London the percentage was slightly higher, at 26 per cent. Broken down further the figures reveal a poverty rate in outer London which was below the national average and a rate in inner London, which, at 36 per cent, was far greater than that for any region or country in Great Britain.<sup>61</sup>
- 8.11 The most recent data on pensioner poverty is for the year 2003/04 and shows remarkable changes since 2000/01. The national rate of pensioner poverty fell from 25 to 20 per cent. More strikingly pensioner poverty in inner London was 23 per cent in 2003/04, some 13 percentage points lower than it had been only three years earlier. Moreover, while inner London still had the highest rate of poverty in Great Britain, by a small margin, the difference between inner London and other areas was much less marked than in 2000/01.
- 8.12 The fall in measured pensioner poverty in inner London coincides with the introduction of measures specifically intended to raise the incomes of the poorest pensioners, and in particular increases in the Minimum Income Guarantee for pensioners in April 2001 and the introduction of the Pension Credit in October 2003. There are therefore grounds for optimism that targeted support for the lowest income pensioners is beginning to have the intended effect on poverty levels.

- 8.13 It remains the case that nearly a fifth of UK pensioners are living in poverty and low take-up of pension credit is a major contributor to this.

### **The impact of regional price differences**

- 8.14 Differences in prices between regions mean that pensions and benefits are worth more in some parts of the country than in others. While housing benefit should prevent low income pensioners in areas of high housing costs from losing out, pensions and benefit levels do not take account of other differences in the cost of living between areas. This means that living standards for pensioners who rely on state benefits for their incomes are on average lower in high cost areas such as London than elsewhere in the country. These differences in living standards are not captured in the incomes data used to measure pensioner poverty.
- 8.15 Pensioners in London have benefited from free public transport through the Freedom Pass and this makes an important contribution to dealing with cost of living differences. However National Statistics data on regional price differences indicate that the prices of personal and household services and fuel are significantly higher in London than in any other region.
- 8.16 The consultation which informed the development of this strategy demonstrated an overwhelming support for a London weighting for state pensions and pension credit. The Mayor has therefore asked GLA Economics to advise on the appropriate level of a London weighting for the basic state pension (BSP), the state second pension and the pension credit guarantee.



### **The future of pensions**

- 8.17 The Pensions Commission has now completed its final report and the Government has published its White Paper on pensions *Security in retirement: towards a new pensions system*. The key proposed changes are:
- Introduce low cost personal accounts to give those without access to occupational pension schemes the opportunity to save.
  - Reform the state pensions system by uprating both the guarantee element of pension credit and the BSP in line with earnings growth rather than prices.
  - Reform the state second pension so that it becomes a simple flat-rate weekly top-up to the BSP.
  - Reform the contributory principle by recognising contributions to society as well as paid work for those with caring responsibilities for children and the severely disabled.
  - Reduce the qualifying years for a full BSP.



- Gradually raise the state pension age to 66 by 2026, to 67 by 2036 and to 68 by 2046.

- 8.18 The Mayor welcomes most of these changes. In the draft of this strategy, the Mayor argued against compulsory private savings, and the fact that Government has not chosen this path is welcome. He also stressed the proven effectiveness of pension credit in tackling pensioner poverty and the Government has stressed that pension credit, as well as the BSP, will be linked to earnings. The Mayor believes that the Government has struck the right balance between continuing to improve incomes for the poorest pensioners while expanding the value and coverage of the BSP over time.
- 8.19 The reduction in the qualifying period for the full BSP is particularly welcome as this will mean that more Londoners born outside the UK will have full entitlements. While the Government has rejected the Pensions Commission's proposal for a residence basis for BSP entitlement, the reduction in the qualifying period will achieve a similar increase in entitlement to the Pension's Commission proposal more quickly, and will almost certainly include more Londoners than that proposal would have done. The Mayor therefore feels that this addresses a key issue for London.

### Summary of actions

- P40 The Mayor, in partnership with the ALG and the voluntary sector will support campaigns to increase the take-up of pension credit and other benefits that are important to older people.
- P41 The Mayor will commission a report on the appropriate level for a London weighting for state pensions and the guarantee element of the pension credit.



## 9 transport

### Policy 9 The Mayor will continue to promote measures to improve the accessibility, safety and affordability of London's public transport for older people

#### Introduction

- 9.1 The availability and accessibility of transport are major social inclusion issues. Good access to transport in London allows older people to keep in touch with family and friends and enjoy the capital's wealth of cultural and sporting opportunities. It enables them to access shops, banks and other amenities, services such as healthcare and places of employment. It enables older people to remain engaged with their communities and to retain their independence, and is therefore associated with a better quality of life.<sup>62</sup> Conversely, inadequate access to transport can create and reinforce social exclusion. The provision of adequate transport is therefore central to creating a sustainable, inclusive London.
- 9.2 The Mayor recognises that older people face a number of obstacles in using London's transport system, especially in relation to fears concerning personal safety. This chapter outlines the Mayor's commitment to improving the safety, accessibility and affordability of London's public transport system for older people.

#### Personal safety

- 9.3 Older people have major concerns about the safety of using the public transport network, particularly older women and people from BAME groups. In 2004 MORI produced the Annual London Survey for the GLA. The survey reported that 25 per cent of people aged 65 or over identified personal safety on transport as the biggest issue relating to public transport in London.
- 9.4 Many older people fear being attacked or subjected to anti-social behaviour. Badly lit streets, isolated bus stops and stations, long distances to walk, feeling intimidated by other passengers and the perceived lack of a police presence can add to the sense of fear felt by some older people.
- 9.5 The Mayor recognises these concerns and has taken active steps to ensure the personal safety of those travelling on public transport.
- 9.6 In 2002 the Transport Operation Command Unit (TOCU) was set up by the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) to tackle crime on buses and deal with illegal minicab activity. The Mayor has also funded an extra 200 British Transport police officers for the Underground and Docklands Light Railway network and 89 additional officers for the over-ground rail network. CCTV has now been fitted on all of London's 8,000 buses and



will also be installed at 200 London Underground stations as they undergo refurbishment by 2010. Staffed help points will also be established.

- 9.7 The Mayor and TfL are also working with train operating companies to improve safety and security at national rail stations in London. Over the next five years, TfL will invest approximately £25 million in these measures.

### **Improving accessibility of public transport services**

- 9.8 A significant minority of people are restricted in their ability to use the transport system owing to mobility issues; older people are particularly affected. The Mayor is committed to making London's transport system more accessible by removing the physical, attitudinal and communication barriers that affect independent mobility. The Mayor and TfL are currently implementing a range of measures to achieve this.
- 9.9 To make boarding and alighting easier for wheelchair users, all London buses are now low-floor and have wheelchair ramps. TfL has made it a requirement that no low-floor bus should go into service without a working ramp and it is monitoring this using mystery traveller surveys. Upgrading bus stops is a priority to ensure that they are compatible with low-floor buses. Around 85 per cent of bus stops are now accessible for people in wheelchairs.
- 9.10 Improving the accessibility of public transport for older people also means making bus journeys more comfortable by improving the driver's skills and awareness of older people's needs. TfL is training all bus drivers in disability awareness as part of a BTEC qualification. By autumn 2006 all bus drivers will have undertaken this training. The effectiveness of this training will be monitored by feedback on driver performance.
- 9.11 Older people with mobility issues can experience particular problems when using the Underground. Only 17 per cent of stations are currently step free. The national rail network also has few step-free stations, and many have long flights of stairs. The lack of facilities such as toilets, handrails and seating can also pose difficulties. The Mayor and TfL plan to make 25 per cent of Underground stations step-free by 2010 and 33 per cent step-free by 2013.
- 9.12 By 2012 all Underground stations will have improved facilities for people with disabilities such as audio and visual information displays, more help points and staff assistance, improved signage, improved hand rails and stairs, tactile surfacing and induction loops. It is also London Underground policy that where public toilets exist they should be available for customer use at all times while the station is open.



- 9.13 The Mayor and TfL are working with the London boroughs to improve conditions for pedestrians. This includes the renewal and resurfacing of pavements, to reduce the incidence of trips and falls, and a programme to remove barriers and obstructions in streets. There are also plans to increase the number of signalled road crossings to make crossing the road more safe.

### Toilets

- 9.14 Some older people may feel nervous about making journeys on public transport if there is inadequate toilet provision. The Mayor and TfL are conducting an audit of the availability and accessibility of toilets on London's transport network so that service users can be provided with more detailed information with which to plan their journeys.
- 9.15 TfL currently indicates toilet provision on tube maps. In addition, the *Access to the Underground* guide gives more detailed information on the precise location of toilets within or nearby the station. The TfL interactive map also gives information on stations with toilets managed by London Underground.<sup>63</sup> Around 110 stations have toilets in them, or nearby, and disused toilets are being reopened during the modernisation and refurbishment programme.
- 9.16 The Mayor and TfL are also working with researchers at University College London on the toilet requirements of different types of users, including older people. This will help TfL to determine how it can improve its service.

### Blue Badge parking

- 9.17 The Blue Badge Scheme is a national scheme that provides parking concessions for disabled people, allowing them to park close to the facilities and services they need.
- 9.18 Most London boroughs currently participate in the scheme. However four central London Boroughs (City of Westminster, Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, the Corporation of London and the London Borough of Camden south of the Euston Road) run schemes which vary from those operating in the rest of the country. The Mayor has made it a manifesto commitment to work towards harmonising the different levels of concessions in the four boroughs with the national scheme.
- 9.19 Parking is now free for all Blue Badge holders in valid Blue Badge bays in all London Underground car parks.

### Affordability of public transport

- 9.20 In London, the affordability of public transport is not an issue for older residents, as all London residents aged 60 or over are eligible for a



Freedom Pass which is funded by the London boroughs. This enables older Londoners to travel free on buses, Underground, Docklands Light Railway and the Croydon Tramlink except during morning peak hours.

- 9.21 The Mayor will continue to support the Freedom Pass for older people as a key element in his commitment to making London as accessible as possible for older people.

### **Provision of service information**

- 9.22 The Mayor and TfL are undertaking a number of measures to improve service information on the transport network. Clear, accessible information will help make London's transport network more accessible by making it easier to use.
- 9.23 The Mayor and TfL will invest £120 million in new technology to upgrade the radio and information systems for London buses. This work will commence in 2007 and will enable the provision of real-time passenger information at bus stops across London. TfL are also investigating the feasibility of providing audible announcements on buses and at bus stops. This will particularly benefit older people who are visually impaired. It is hoped that these improvements will be in place by 2009.
- 9.24 As part of the programme of refurbishment of Underground stations, electronic audible and visual information will be installed on all trains and in stations by 2010. This will improve accessibility for older people with hearing and visual impairments.
- 9.25 TfL is funding improvements in real-time passenger information on the national rail network as part of the investment programme to improve safety and security. By 2010 all national rail stations in London will have undergone installation of these systems and help points where customers can engage with staff directly to obtain up-to-date service information.

### **Door to door transport**

- 9.26 Some older people with severe mobility impairments may be unable to use public transport to make the journeys that they need. TfL and the London boroughs provide door to door services, through Dial-a-Ride, Taxicard and Capital Call.<sup>64</sup> Alternative transport provision of this kind can be a lifeline for older people by providing vital links with goods and services.
- 9.27 While these schemes provide a valuable service, concerns have been expressed about their efficiency, flexibility, reliability and distribution across London. There are also concerns about the level of information on these services - many older people do not know about them.



- 9.28 In September 2005, the TfL board endorsed a new strategy for door to door transport. This strategy advocates a single, integrated door to door service with a single contact point for users, using a range of vehicles from Dial-a-Ride, Taxicard and Capital Call and a common approach to user eligibility and entitlement. It is expected that the proposed new arrangements will offer customers a simpler, more efficient and effective service.
- 9.29 The Mayor and TfL have established a review further to develop the Door to Door Strategy. They will consult key stakeholders such as the London Older People's Strategy Group (LOPSG) to ensure that future service development reflects the needs and concerns of a wide range of older people. Informal consultation took place throughout the summer of 2006 with a wider, more formal consultation planned for 2007.

### Walking

- 9.30 Walking is free, accessible, healthy, sociable and an important means of getting to and from public transport networks.
- 9.31 The Mayor is working with Transport for London (TfL) and the London boroughs to make London's streets more attractive to pedestrians, with less pollution, congestion and crime. The aim is to make London one of the most walk-friendly cities by 2015.
- 9.32 The Mayor and TfL also work in conjunction with a wide range of organisations, such as Ramblers and Sport England, to promote walking and support walking campaigns.
- 9.33 *The Walking Plan for London* was published in February 2004. Under the plan, TfL has committed itself to fund six strategic walking routes across London (some 500km). These will be used as the basis for campaigns to attract more groups to walking. TfL also part-funds a wide range of local walking routes in partnership with boroughs and other partnership organisations.
- 9.34 TfL has developed a London walking website to provide a wide variety of walking information relevant to Londoners. The site includes 'Walkfinder', a guide to all the leisure walk routes in London.<sup>65</sup>

### Street environment

- 9.35 To encourage Londoners to make the most of the outdoor environment the Mayor and TfL have made a commitment to improving the street environment by reducing, removing and rationalising clutter on London's streets.





- 9.36 TfL is promoting a pedestrian audit tool. This will help identify where street clutter can be removed and where other features might improve access or the 'social' use of a street or space, for example, seating or lighting.

### Cycling

- 9.37 Some older people have shown an interest in cycling more. They have expressed concerns, however, about what they perceive to be a poor cycling environment. One of the main worries is about personal security.
- 9.38 The Mayor, TfL and the London boroughs are making good progress towards addressing some of these issues. Routes through parks and alongside London's waterways, for example, beside the Thames, in Richmond, Bushey, Hyde Park, Wandle and the Lea Valley now offer some of the best cycling in the world.<sup>66</sup>
- 9.39 A major investment programme is also underway to upgrade cycle networks and routes in line with new design standards. This will ensure that routes are appropriate for cyclists of all ages.
- 9.40 The Mayor and TfL are also investing in cycle training. This is delivered in partnership with the London boroughs and in many cases is free to residents.
- 9.41 In 2006/07 the Mayor and TfL are planning a joint education and enforcement mutual respect campaign targeted at cyclists and other road users, to reduce anti-social and intimidating behaviour.

### Summary of actions

- P42 The Mayor and TfL will continue to take steps to make London's transport network safer for all service users.
- P43 The Mayor and TfL will continue to take steps to make London's transport network more accessible for all users.
- P44 The Mayor and TfL will conduct an audit of the availability and accessibility of toilets on London's transport network so that service users can be provided with more detailed information with which to plan their journeys.
- P45 The Mayor and TfL will review the provision of door to door services across London and instigate service improvements.
- P46 The Mayor and TfL will continue to support walking and cycling as part of London's transport strategy.

## 10 crime and personal safety

### **Policy 10 The Mayor will continue to promote action to improve the safety of older Londoners and reduce the fear of crime.**

#### **Introduction**

- 10.1 Crime and personal safety are concerns for all members of the community, young and old. However, the fear of crime is particularly likely to affect the quality of older people's lives.
- 10.2 Crime and the fear of crime can seriously affect older people's perception of their safety. This can lead to loss of confidence and a reluctance to leave home. In turn, this can lead to social isolation and a general deterioration in their health and wellbeing. Some groups of older people might be particularly affected if they already feel vulnerable owing to their ethnicity or sexuality, or if they have poor mobility or a disability. It can also affect the vitality of entire neighbourhoods.
- 10.3 The Mayor recognises that crime and the fear of crime are major quality of life issues for older people. This chapter outlines how the Mayor intends to continue to tackle these issues.

#### **Crime and fear of crime**

- 10.4 While older people are more likely to be victims of certain crimes, such as distraction burglaries, than younger people, Home Office research for 2004/05 shows that the risk of becoming a victim of violent crime is considerably lower for older people than for other age groups. For older people, the fear of crime is often more prevalent than crime itself. This can prevent them from leading a normal life.
- 10.5 To address these issues, the Mayor recognises the need to monitor older Londoners' experience of crime. The Mayor will monitor key crimes such as burglary, robbery, fraud and forgery, violence, racist offences, domestic violence and homophobic and faith-hate crimes on a quarterly basis. The GLA, together with the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) and the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), will use this data to set targets to reduce the level of crime experienced by older people.
- 10.6 The Mayor, together with Counsel and Care, a charity giving advice and information to older people, their relatives and carers across the UK, will host a conference on older people and the fear of crime. It will highlight the damaging effects of living in fear of crime and promote measures that can help reassure older people about their safety.

**Figure 3**

In 2002, Age Concern conducted a survey on the fear of street crime among older people. It found that:

- 2 per cent of older people have been victims of street crime
- 18 per cent had experienced anti-social behaviour, such as being verbally abused or harassed in the street.
- Older people are less likely to report anti-social behaviour to the police.
- A third of respondents felt that fear of crime has affected their quality of life and made them feel lonely and isolated.
- 72 per cent thought that they are more likely to become a victim of street crime, as they get older.

Source: *Survey of Fear of Street Crime amongst Older People*, Age Concern England, 2003

### Safer Neighbourhoods

- 10.7 For older people, having confidence in the police can contribute to their own feelings of safety. However, the Annual London Survey 2005 revealed that people aged 65 or over are most likely to be dissatisfied with policing in London. Many believe that improvements to policing in London should be made a top priority.
- 10.8 The Mayor has taken a number of steps to help people feel safe in public places. He has provided a more visible and reassuring police presence on London's streets by allocating funds to recruit extra police officers and police community support officers. The Mayor's intention is to increase the size of the police strength in London to 35,000 by 2007/08. This compares to 25,300 officers in 2000/01 at the beginning of the Mayor's first term in office.
- 10.9 At the heart of the expansion in police numbers is the Safer Neighbourhoods programme, with dedicated community-based teams. The teams work with partners and members of the local community to drive down crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour. Safer Neighbourhood teams are already reducing crime and the fear of crime and increasing Londoners' sense of safety and security. All neighbourhoods in London have had a team in place since April 2006.
- 10.10 As outlined in Chapter 9, Transport for London is pursuing a major programme of investment across the tube and bus network, part of which will focus on improvements to public transport safety.<sup>67</sup>



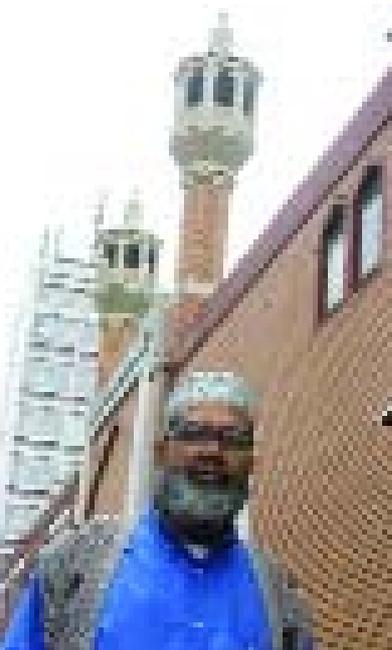
- 10.11 The Mayor is also developing best practice guidance on managing the night time economy. This will promote integrated management of neighbourhoods to make them safer, to reduce nuisance and disruption to local people and increase the diversity of night time activity.

### **Anti-social behaviour (ASB)**

- 10.12 Anti-social behaviour is a particular concern for older people. The Mayor is addressing this issue through the London Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy. The Strategy was developed in partnership with 11 cross-London agencies and aims to promote effective co-ordinated action at both local and regional levels. Published in 2005, it provides a regional framework for action on anti-social behaviour, builds on existing work and seeks to develop new active measures where necessary.
- 10.13 The strategy partners will focus on a number of key objectives, in conjunction with national initiatives, to improve the quality of life of London's residents. The partnership will provide direct support to local agencies to rid London's streets of litter, graffiti and abandoned cars, so that neighbourhoods feel cleaner and safer.
- 10.14 In March 2006, the Mayor launched a week of events to support the delivery of the London Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy. The events targeted issues which affect quality of life in London such as environmental issues like graffiti and fly tipping. It also showcased measures already being undertaken across London's boroughs to improve safety and quality of life.
- 10.15 The Mayor will monitor and publish the impact of measures taken under the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy to ensure that it benefits older people.<sup>68</sup> Further details of the strategy can be found at [http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/crime/antisocial\\_behav.jsp](http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/crime/antisocial_behav.jsp).
- 10.16 The Single Non-Emergency Number, which will initially focus on non-emergency services related to policing, crime and anti-social behaviour, will be a valuable tool for older people in reporting anti-social behaviour. The national roll out of the Single Non-Emergency Number is planned for 2008.

### **Intergenerational issues**

- 10.17 While sometimes misplaced, much of older people's anxiety about crime centres on the behaviour of young people. Overcoming those suspicions and fostering mutual understanding between generations is a major challenge for London's communities.



10.18 The consultation exercise that informed this strategy delivered a clear message; London's older population would like the Mayor to do more to improve intergenerational understanding.

10.19 The Mayor will explore opportunities to promote understanding between generations with relevant community groups. The proposed fear of crime conference will also consider this issue.

### **Hate crimes**

10.20 Hate crimes are targeted at people on the grounds of their race or faith, or because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Disabled people, including those with learning difficulties and mental health problems, also experience hate crimes. Older people belonging to those groups may have a particularly heightened fear of crime.

10.21 A high proportion of hate crimes go unreported. For example, research by Stonewall has found that less than one in five homophobic incidents are reported to the police. The MPS has developed a number of initiatives to encourage the reporting of incidents. Third party reporting sites in mosques, temples and community centres have been set up across London, as an alternative to reporting at the police station. The MPS will continue with these initiatives and seek to improve them.

10.22 Since the bombings in New York in 2001 and London in 2005 there has been an increase in the number of faith-related hate crimes. The Mayor will monitor these incidents and the ethnicity of both the victims and offenders.

### **The Mayor's Domestic Violence Strategy**

10.23 Many older people have been victims of domestic violence. The second London Domestic Violence Strategy, launched in November 2005, sets out next steps for addressing domestic violence in London and aims to benefit all Londoners at risk. Key aims of the strategy are to increase safer choices for those experiencing domestic violence, hold individual abusers accountable for their behaviour, and address actions that undermine social tolerance.

10.24 The priorities will be delivered and monitored through the Mayor's London Domestic Violence Forum, a multi-agency partnership that includes the courts, crown prosecution service and police. The needs of London's older people will be considered within the work of the Forum.

### **Elder abuse**

10.25 Elder abuse refers to all aspects of neglect, physical and mental cruelty and financial exploitation that older people may suffer at the hands of

others. Elder abuse can take place in a variety of settings (their own homes or in residential settings) and from a variety of people (from relatives to staff).

- 10.26 Elder abuse often goes unnoticed or unreported, either because the older person has no one to turn to, or is dependent on their abuser. Because of this, little is known about the prevalence of elder abuse. Research by Help the Aged found that 35 cases of elder abuse are reported each month in the national media. However, the actual levels of abuse in Britain are thought to be significantly higher.
- 10.27 The Care Services Minister recently announced that care workers looking after vulnerable older people, adults and children must be registered, trained and vetted. The Mayor welcomes this move.
- 10.28 The Mayor believes that research into elder abuse is vital if it is to be addressed. It welcomes the forthcoming research, to be carried out jointly between the Department of Health and Comic Relief, into the extent of elder abuse in private households and sheltered housing, and measures that can be taken to prevent it. The report is due to be published in 2007. The Mayor will use the findings of the report to consider what further actions can be taken.

### **Summary of actions**

- P47 The GLA will monitor older Londoners' experience of crime and disorder on a quarterly basis with a view to incorporating crime reduction targets into the next MPA/MPS Policing Plan.
- P48 In February 2007, the Mayor will host a conference on older people and the fear of crime. This will be in partnership with Counsel and Care and other partners.
- P49 The Mayor will monitor and publish the impact of measures taken under the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy to ensure that it benefits older people.
- P50 The Mayor will support intergenerational work as a means of breaking down fear and mistrust between generations in local communities.
- P51 The Mayor will ensure that issues for older women continue to be considered in the implementation of the second London Domestic Violence Strategy.



## 11 e-Government and access to new technologies

**Policy 11 The Mayor will support measures that enable more older people in London to take advantage of the benefits of new technologies.**

### Introduction

- 11.1 New technologies provide people with new ways of accessing information and support networks. For many, new technologies can transform access, as many goods and services become available online. Putting older people in contact with the goods services they need can help to promote their health and wellbeing.
- 11.2 Older people are the largest user group of government services. As the Government approaches its target of putting all its transactions and information online, those without access to the internet may be at a disadvantage.
- 11.3 Many older people do not have personal internet access. Among other groups with low internet access, such as single person households, those on low-income and people with a disability, older people were always less likely to have internet access than younger people.<sup>70</sup>

### Access to new technologies

- 11.4 The Mayor is committed to ensuring that the growth in new technologies and digital communications is enjoyed by all Londoners and does not lead to the exclusion of those without access.
- 11.5 Many older people do not have personal internet access. They may not be able to afford to buy equipment or need training to use it with confidence. GLA figures from the 2002 London Household Survey showed that older people were less likely than other age groups to have home internet access, with the vast majority saying that they did not want it.<sup>71</sup>
- 11.6 The Mayor believes it important to ensure that older people have the opportunity to use new technologies, should they wish to. They must have affordable access and targeted training in their use. The Mayor will support initiatives that aim to provide free public internet access centres such as the UK Online centres and libraries. These can play an important role in connecting isolated older people with society and in helping older people to develop confidence in using new technologies.
- 11.7 The Mayor has joined forces with Maxitech, one of London's top computer recycling companies, in a new initiative to recycle surplus computers from London's business community. Working with Maxitech and Age Concern, the project will place at least a dozen computers in each of Age Concern's London centres, allowing thousands of older people from all over London

to benefit from free training and access. Maxitech is an organisation run by the over 50s, so training is delivered by peers.

- 11.8 The Mayor recognises that not all older people want to access information through the internet. It is important, therefore, that new technologies complement, rather than replace, more traditional methods of communication and engagement. Where replacement is unavoidable, for example in the switchover to digital-only television, it is vitally important to inform and communicate with older people to avoid them suffering exclusion. The Mayor will ensure that the GLA continues to provide information in a variety of non-electronic and accessible formats.
- 11.9 The Mayor also believes that older people should be involved in the design of the local service strategies that are provided over the telephone or internet. The design of online and telephone services must be led by the users of those services rather than the capabilities of the technology. To improve service delivery options, it is vital that planners gain a better understanding of older people's preferred methods of engagement.
- 11.10 New technologies offer a wider range of personalised services in the home which can benefit older people by enabling them to remain independent in their homes for longer. Telecare, for example, refers to a number of communication and sensing technologies that allow people to signal for assistance from their homes, such as community alarms or careline services.
- 11.11 New technologies can also allow organisations to work more effectively with other health and social care providers. The Government is investing in innovative telecare services and assistive technologies as a means of enabling older people to live at home longer, and to improve social care service delivery for older people and their carers.





### Summary of actions

- P52 The Mayor, LDA, London Connects and others will continue to explore how to make low-cost internet access and computer equipment available to excluded groups, including older people.
- P53 The Mayor will explore opportunities to provide older people with specialised training to enable older people to take better advantage of the benefits of new technologies.
- P54 The Mayor will use The London Plan to support London's information and communications technology infrastructure needs and to promote a wider e-London agenda.
- P55 As part of the review of the Mayor's Information Technology and e-Government policy framework, the Mayor will consult, and take into account the needs of, London's older population.
- P56 The Mayor will work with London Connects and customer service managers to ensure that e-enabled customer service strategies and service redesigns take into account the needs of older Londoners.
- P57 The Mayor will ensure that the GLA continues to provide information in a variety of accessible formats.



## 12 social care and health services

**Policy 12 The Mayor will use his own powers and work with partners to secure improvements in the quality and availability of social care and health services for older Londoners.**

### Introduction

- 12.1 The provision of appropriate and good quality health and social care services is essential in enabling older people to lead independent lives for as long as possible. Many people live healthily into old age but significant numbers are likely to suffer poor health and become disabled as they grow older, and despite being the largest user group of health and social care services, often such services fail to address their needs adequately.
- 12.2 A number of significant policy developments have taken place in health and social care in recent years.<sup>72</sup> Many of these focus on developing services which support independence and allow greater flexibility, in order to be responsive to a wide range of individual needs. These changes present an opportunity for substantial improvements in service provision and better standards of care and support for older people.
- 12.3 The Mayor intends to use his powers and influence to secure improvements in the quality and availability of health and social care services for older Londoners.
- 12.4 As well as a general duty promote the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of London, the Mayor also has responsibility for transport and produces a number of environmental policies, such as air quality, which all have an impact on the health of older Londoners. Following the recent review of powers the Mayor will also have new responsibilities for energy, climate change, housing and health inequalities that will all contribute to promoting the health and wellbeing of older Londoners. All of the Mayor's statutory strategies are also subject to health, sustainable development and equalities impact appraisals that help to highlight any negative impacts and maximise positive benefits for London's older people.

### National Service Framework for Older People

- 12.5 The National Service Framework (NSF) for Older People sets out a programme of action and reform to address the problems experienced by older people in accessing quality care.
- 12.6 A key NSF target is to increase the numbers of older people receiving care in their homes. The framework also sets out measures to improve workforce development, introduce electronic personal care records and



ensure independent inspections of health, social care and council services. This work is supplemented by older people's champions within the NHS and councils whose role it is to ensure that older people have increasing choice in their care and that access to services is based on need rather than age.

- 12.7 Continuing this drive, in March 2005 the Health Minister announced funding of £60 million for councils in England to devise innovative approaches to supporting older people in healthy and active living. Three London boroughs - Brent, Camden and Southwark - were chosen for the first round pilots, Partnerships for Older People Projects (POPPs). These began in May 2006 and will last for two years.
- 12.8 The 'next steps' for the older people's NSF will involve ten programmes of activity to ensure that older people have confidence in the care they receive in all settings and are treated with respect for their dignity and human rights.<sup>73</sup>

#### **Age discrimination in service delivery**

- 12.9 Age discrimination in the delivery of services, whether direct or indirect, can prevent older people accessing the services they need, for example, upper age limits on certain types of services, screening and treatment, or discriminatory attitudes of medical staff or care givers.
- 12.10 The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) has issued guidelines on age discrimination to inform good practice.<sup>74</sup> However, a joint review of progress against the NSF in March this year found that significant further action is required to tackle age and other forms of discrimination.<sup>75</sup>
- 12.11 The Mayor will support older people's engagement in local scrutiny and patient and public involvement initiatives and promote measures to tackle age discrimination.
- 12.12 The Mayor will work with the NHS and other service providers in London to fight age discrimination in the delivery of health and social care services.

#### **Promoting health and tackling health inequalities**

- 12.13 There are significant inequalities in life expectancy and mortality across London. For example, there is significant variation between different boroughs and geographical areas; life expectancy for men in Tower Hamlets and Newham is 72.4 years, compared to 78.5 in Kensington & Chelsea. For women, it ranges from 78.6 years in Lewisham and Newham to 83.1 in Kensington & Chelsea.<sup>76</sup> It also varies across ethnic groups;



older Pakistani and Bangladeshi people are more likely to report higher levels of ill health than white people.<sup>77</sup> Furthermore, some groups of older people are also more likely to suffer from certain medical conditions. For example, coronary heart disease is high among South Asians but low among people born in the Caribbean; diabetes is high in older people from the Caribbean, Africa, Asia and the Middle East; infectious diseases are highest in people born in the Caribbean, Africa and Asia; accidents and injury are highest among older people born in Eastern Europe.<sup>78</sup> The Government's recent public health White Paper sets out its plans to tackle health inequalities through improved access to services and partnership working with local communities.



- 12.14 Keeping active is central to improving and maintaining older people's health; physical inactivity contributes to obesity, heart disease, cancer and depression. *Choosing Health*, the government's public health White Paper published in 2004, aims to provide NHS-accredited health trainers to give personalised support and advice on physical activity and health. There is a potential for recruiting health trainers from among older people. This is a welcome step since it will help ensure that older people receive support and advice that reflects their particular needs and experiences.
- 12.15 Healthy travel options such as cycling and walking are excellent ways to keep active and the Mayor has committed himself to promoting these activities among older people elsewhere in the strategy (see Chapter 9 on transport).
- 12.16 A nutritious diet is a central component of health. The Mayor's London Food Strategy addresses issues concerning the provision of and access to nutritious food in London. The Mayor recognises that older people may have particular dietary needs. For example, older people are at greater risk from suffering diet-related malnutrition. The Mayor will engage with stakeholders to ensure that the implementation of the strategy addresses the particular needs of older people. The Mayor will work to ensure that older people receive nutritious and culturally appropriate food from key services, for example by working with public sector providers.

### **Promoting the mental health and emotional wellbeing of older Londoners**

- 12.17 Older people, like any other age group, can suffer a range of mental health problems although some, dementia for example, are age related.
- 12.18 The number of people over the age of 65 suffering from depression is estimated to be between 5 and 13 per cent for men and between 8 and 25 per cent for women.<sup>79</sup> Dementia is estimated to affect 1 per cent of

those aged over 65, rising to 20 per cent for those 85 or over.<sup>80</sup> Anxiety is common among older people, although the number of those requiring specialist psychiatric treatment is low. There is evidence to suggest that factors such as isolation, stress, deprivation, the experience of racism and fear of crime, combined with inappropriate service provision, can lead to a decline in mental health. However, mental health services for older people are in a poor state in London.

12.19 A report by Better Government for Older People on mental health and older people, published in January 2005, focused on the need to promote mental health for older people through a broad-based approach, recognising the importance of learning and development opportunities and housing, leisure, environment and transport issues.<sup>81</sup> The Mayor will work with the NHS, the London Development Centre and other partners on the development of a strategic framework for mental health in London with the aim of promoting action on the social determinants of older people's mental health.

2.20 The Mayor welcomes the publication of *Everybody's Business*, the new Department of Health/Care Services Improvement Partnership (CSIP) service development guide, which sets out the key components of a modern, integrated mental health service for older people.<sup>82</sup>



### **Delivering improvements in social care**

12.21 The recently published Wanless Review of social care considers the amount of social care that will be needed in the future and how it should be paid for.<sup>83</sup> The review has pointed to evidence of significant unmet need, particularly among those people living in the own homes.

12.22 The King's Fund Inquiry into care services for older people in London found major shortcomings in the current care system.<sup>84</sup> Quality social care must be flexible and responsive to the individual needs of older people from a diverse range of backgrounds. But many London boroughs find it challenging to develop and deliver services to this standard. Low pay structures and the high cost of living in London mean that there is a severe shortage of skilled care workers in the capital. Furthermore, the high cost of land and property often make it difficult for service providers to get new developments funded, or to make an adequate return for investment to be feasible.

12.23 One of the most persistent problems in service delivery for older people is the separation of health and social care services. The Government is taking a number of steps to address this issue. Under the community services White Paper it will set up a taskforce to identify and unblock the

obstacles to delivering services in partnership. There will also be a new framework for NHS continuing care, with a national set of eligibility criteria to inform good practice. The CSIP and the Local Government Improvement and Development Agency will also develop a national improvement strategy for adult social care. This will offer practical support through a range of regionally tailored methods and approaches.



- 12.24 Appropriate, low-level services can enable older people to retain their independence and remain active and productive members of their communities. Increasingly, however, these services are being concentrated on those with high-level needs. The Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS) and the Local Government Association (LGA) have argued that there needs to be a shift in the focus of care towards promoting the quality of life and wellbeing of older people, and have called for a long-term shift of resources from acute to community-based health, social care, housing and prevention services.<sup>85</sup> The Mayor supports this.
- 12.25 The extension of LAAs into the areas of community health and social care represents a potentially important opportunity for the Mayor to influence provision at a local level. The Mayor will work with the GOL, the regional lead for LAAs in London, to influence the development of LAAs in line with the aims of this strategy.
- 12.26 The Mayor will consider the findings of the Wanless Review and other recent social care research and, where appropriate to the London context, will make the case for further investment to ensure that an appropriate level of quality care is available to older Londoners both now and in the future.
- 12.27 The Mayor will support wider measures that contribute to the independence and quality of life of older people. The provision of accessible local amenities, healthcare facilities and transport has a part to play in assuring this. Forthcoming supplementary planning guidance on diverse communities and best practice on health will reflect the needs of older people.
- New care homes and extra care housing**
- 12.28 There is a severe shortage of care homes in the capital; inner and outer London have 22 and 39 care home places per 1000 older people, respectively, compared to an England average of 48 places. Many London boroughs offer intensive home care as an alternative to residential care. There is also a lack of culturally appropriate residential services in London, where older people from BAME communities form a much higher proportion of the population than elsewhere in the country.



- 12.29 There is also a lack of extra care housing in inner London. Inner London has 26 units per 1000 older people, compared with 39 units in outer London and 44.1 in England on average (24.4 per cent).
- 12.30 The King's Fund Inquiry recommended that the Mayor should give the development of care homes and extra care housing a higher priority in his planning guidance, particularly in those parts of London where the current supply is insufficient to meet the specific needs and preferences of older Londoners. However, more research is needed to ensure that development takes place in the areas where it is most needed and to inform judgements about the appropriate balance between care homes, extra care housing and intensive home care.
- 12.31 In his alterations to the London Plan, the Mayor introduced a policy which directs boroughs to provide for special needs housing based on up-to-date estimates of need.<sup>86</sup> This includes sheltered housing with care support, staffed hostels and residential care homes.
- 12.32 The Mayor believes that access to good quality, independent advice and advocacy services is crucial in helping older people know their rights, make the right choices about residential care or other living arrangements and be protected from potential abuse (see Chapter 2 for a more detailed discussion of the Mayor's views on the importance of advice and advocacy services).

### **Workforce issues**

- 12.33 Low pay and poor working conditions for care staff affect the ability of the care sector in London to recruit and retain its workforce. This is a problem for older people because high turnover rates and poorly trained staff can affect the quality and continuity of their care.
- 12.34 The Mayor has set up the Living Wage Unit to address pay issues in the capital. The unit is charged with determining a realistic living wage in London and examining the causes of poverty pay. As well as looking at the determinants of pay inequality, the unit will also give specific consideration to eight low-paying sectors, one of which is the social care sector.
- 12.35 The Mayor will ensure that the living wage is implemented in the GLA group's own contracting practice. The Mayor is also seeking to work in partnership with other agencies such as the TUC and London Citizens to promote the concept of the London living wage.
- 12.36 Recruitment, retention, training and development are also issues in the care workforce. The Kings Fund Inquiry reported that employers find it

difficult to meet the costs of employing and training staff. This is a problem at all levels of employment and can have a negative effect on the effective planning and delivery of services. Small care providers are often best placed to provide innovative and more appropriate services to meet London's diverse needs. However, the changing nature of the care market requires managers and commissioners to develop a broad range of skills in order to develop their services. Small providers may struggle to diversify and compete in an open market without support to develop the necessary business infrastructure.

- 12.37 The Mayor will work with the ALG and other partners to bring progress in health and social care workforce reform in London, including the training and development of the care workforce.
- 12.38 The Mayor, through the LDA, will also offer support to smaller providers in helping them develop their businesses.

#### **User choice - direct payments and individual budgets**

- 12.39 Direct payments offer individuals increased choice and control over their care and support arrangements, and local authorities now have a duty to offer them to those who are eligible. However, the take-up of direct benefits is relatively low among older people, particularly in London. Research has shown that many older people have insufficient information about direct payments or the financial/administrative skills to manage them. Many care managers lack sufficient knowledge to be able to offer direct payments to older people as a viable option. Independent Living Support Services have been set up to guide people through the process, but not all local authorities have access to this service.
- 12.40 Individual budgets afford older people a further degree of choice and control. People can receive them in the form of cash, the provision of services, or a combination of both. Individual budgets are currently being piloted, including two in London, with a view to a national rollout from 2009/10 if they prove successful.<sup>87</sup>
- 12.41 The Mayor strongly supports the development of direct payments and individual budgets but believes they can only be successful if accompanied by clear information and support for older people. The Mayor will campaign for improved information and advice for older people on take-up of Direct Payments.

#### **Unpaid carers**

- 12.42 Many older people provide unpaid care for relatives, friends or their own partners. Some care for sons and daughters with severe physical





impairments, and others for grandchildren. In 2001 there were over 140,000 unpaid carers aged 60 or over in London - 12.3 per cent of the older population. This care is a huge contribution to London's community and economy; its monetary value is estimated to be in excess of £1 billion per annum.<sup>88</sup>

- 12.43 Balancing caring responsibilities with employment can be problematic. Many carers are therefore unable to take up paid employment; carers over 60 are estimated to be three times less likely to be in employment compared to non-carers of the same age.<sup>89</sup> The lack of flexible working options available to older Londoners is likely to compound this problem. Better advice and information on the support available is also needed.
- 12.44 Research recently carried out by Age Concern demonstrated the vital need for increased support for carers. Many of those interviewed felt isolated and neglected by health and social care practitioners, and called for an acknowledgement of the financial, social and emotional pressures that caring in later life can bring.
- 12.45 The Government has recognised the need to provide more adequate support for carers; its green paper on adult social care highlighted this.
- 12.46 The Mayor, too, recognises the vital contribution that carers make to London. He is working towards a pan-London Carers Alliance that will provide input for his strategies and identify lobbying priorities for London carers.
- 12.47 The Mayor will promote the involvement of carers in service development, campaign to increase the income of London carers and promote free services for carers. He will also ensure that the LDA's flexible working toolkit for small to medium enterprises takes on board the needs of older carers who are working.



**Summary of actions**

- P58 The Mayor will provide further advice and guidance to boroughs to ensure that new developments take account of the need to promote independence among older people.
- P59 The Mayor will work with the Regional Public Health Group and others to develop active measures to promote healthy and active lifestyles among older Londoners.
- P60 The Mayor will take into account the needs of older Londoners when implementing the Food Strategy.
- P61 The Mayor will work with the NHS, London Development Centre and other partners to develop a strategic framework for mental health in London and promote action on older people's mental health.
- P62 The Mayor will support carers by promoting their involvement in service development, campaigning to increase their income and promoting free services for carers.
- P63 The Mayor will ensure that the LDA's flexible working toolkit for small to medium enterprises takes on board the needs of older carers who are working.
- P64 The Mayor will campaign for improved information and advice for older people on Direct Payments and individual budgets.
- P65 The Mayor will support older people's engagement in local scrutiny and patient and public involvement initiatives and promote measures to tackle age discrimination by service providers.
- P66 The Mayor will act as an independent monitor of the distribution and cost of social care provision across London.
- P67 The Mayor will work towards health and social care workforce reform in London, together with the Association of London Government and other partners, including the training and development of the care workforce.



## 13 housing and homelessness

**Policy 13 The Mayor will use his new housing strategy and investment powers to address fully the housing needs of older Londoners.**

### Introduction

- 13.1 Adequate housing is essential for an individual's health and wellbeing; poor housing quality is linked to poor health. Well designed and suitable housing allows older people to retain their independence. However, older Londoners live in some of the worst housing in the country, often inappropriate to their changing needs.
- 13.2 The Mayor intends to address the issues raised in this chapter through his new housing strategy and investment powers, with a draft Mayor's Housing Strategy being produced in the summer of 2007. The Mayor's Housing Forum, which brings together regional organisations with representatives from the private and voluntary sectors, and a new Equalities Standing Group being set up by the Mayor to advise on housing equalities issues, will work closely with the Mayor on the strategy.

### Housing conditions

- 13.3 One of the aims of Capital Homes, the London Housing Strategy produced by the London Housing Board in 2005, was that vulnerable older households should not be living disproportionately in poor condition private sector housing. The strategy sets out specific targets to achieve this aim; 70 per cent of vulnerable private sector households should be living in decent housing by 2010 and 75 per cent by 2020. The government target is to make all social housing decent by 2010 and increase the proportion of private housing in a decent condition occupied by vulnerable groups.
- 13.4 A significant proportion of London's housing stock is deemed 'unfit'. Many of these properties are owned by older people who have difficulty maintaining their homes to a decent standard, usually because of their low incomes.
- 13.5 While often being 'cash poor', many elderly owner occupiers have large amounts of equity in their homes; 94 per cent of pensioner homeowners have equity of £100,000 or more. Equity release schemes can offer older people the opportunity to mobilise some of this capital in order to carry out essential maintenance, repairs and adaptations and quality of life improvements.
- 13.6 The Mayor has helped establish a Londonwide equity release scheme for older people - 'Houseproud'. The Mayor recognises the concerns that some older people have about equity release schemes. Houseproud is one





of several schemes in the market and provides a number of safeguards. It guarantees that no home will be repossessed while the person is living in the home, and through local authority involvement can provide a list of suitable builders and other workmen. The boroughs and voluntary sector can also provide assistance through grants and advice which can help older people through the process.

- 13.7 The Mayor, together with the Houseproud Steering Group, will promote the scheme in order to increase uptake of the scheme, to help more older people continue to live safely and independently in their own homes.

### **Access**

- 13.8 People's housing needs often change as they get older, yet many older people continue to live in their existing housing. The design and adaptation of their housing can affect their ability to cope with health problems. For example, many people become less mobile and find it increasingly difficult to get up and down stairs in their homes. Simple modifications to the home environment can alleviate some of these problems and allow people to retain their independence.
- 13.9 The lifetime homes standard is designed to accommodate the changing needs of occupants throughout their lives, for example by providing wider doorways, wheelchair access, downstairs toilets and space for stair lifts. The London Plan specifies that all new housing is to be built to this standard and 10 per cent of all new housing is to be wheelchair accessible or easily adapted to being so.
- 13.10 The Mayor is currently developing a London Accessible Housing Register, as part of Capital Moves, the pan-London choice-based lettings and mobility scheme. The register will improve access to and information about available accessible and adapted properties across London.
- 13.11 Helping older people remain in their own homes for as long as possible is a key aim for the government. However, in London but there is a shortage of qualified occupational therapists which can result in long waiting lists for housing assessments and adaptations. Budget restrictions mean that people often do not get what they need.
- 13.12 The Mayor is working with the London Housing Federation and the Housing Corporation to examine London's need for accommodation-based support, including sheltered and extra care housing. This study will be completed in early 2007.

### Housing and climate change

- 13.13 Older people are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 15. The Mayor is already committed to addressing the issue of climate change through a series of alterations to the London Plan and his other statutory and non-statutory strategies.
- 13.14 Climate change will affect all older people living in London, irrespective of their household tenure or wealth. The Mayor is working to ensure that it does not contribute further to health and income inequalities among pensioner households.
- 13.15 The Mayor will use his new strategic housing powers to develop robust guidance and targets for new and existing homes, to address the impact of climate change.

### Homelessness

- 13.16 Older homeless people are especially vulnerable to the known triggers of homelessness and the needs of homeless older people are more likely to go unmet. Services for homeless people are often more tailored to the needs of younger people and services for older people tend to assume that they are already housed.
- 13.17 Once housed, older people who have been homeless are more likely to have difficulty maintaining a tenancy because of their multiple physical/mental health needs, longer periods of homelessness and extreme isolation caused by a lack of support networks. They often require ongoing support to sustain tenancy.
- 13.18 The Mayor is committed to preventing homelessness and supporting homeless people. The Mayor's Equalities Standing Group will devise a wide-ranging housing equalities work programme, which will include specific issues concerning older homeless people and will feed into the development of the Mayor's Housing Strategy.

### Under-occupation

- 13.19 A significant number of older people are living in under-occupied properties (ie those with two or more unoccupied bedrooms above the 'bedroom standard'). While many enjoy the additional space, for others under-occupation can be a problem. Some would find a smaller home easier to keep warm and cheaper and more manageable to run.
- 13.20 Schemes to reduce levels of under-occupation can therefore help older people move to more suitable accommodation. This is also beneficial for



London where there is an urgent need for larger homes to meet the needs of families and, in particular, to tackle homelessness and overcrowding. However, many under-occupied homes are privately owned and therefore beyond the scope of schemes.

- 13.21 Many London boroughs have schemes which provide incentives for older people living in the social rented sector to move somewhere smaller. These can be successful if tenants are offered attractive alternative properties in the right location and practical support throughout the moving process. There may be the opportunity to increase the scope of these schemes by developing properties that are attractive to older people.

### **Housing-related support**

- 13.22 Housing-related support services such as community alarm provision, or floating support such as wardens in sheltered and extra care housing, can enable older people to remain independent in their homes for longer.
- 13.23 The Supporting People programme provides funding for housing-related support services for older people. However, the Government is currently carrying out a fundamental review of the Supporting People programme and there are concerns that specialist housing and housing-related support for older people will be decommissioned.
- 13.24 There is a large stock of sheltered housing in London for older people but it is of variable quality and does not adequately match current need. The Mayor supports the redevelopment of unpopular, outmoded or hard-to-let sheltered accommodation to provide housing that more closely meets current needs.
- 13.25 Development in the future is likely to focus on extra care housing, which provides older people with a range of facilities and 24-hour care and support on site when needed. Redevelopment of existing schemes may therefore involve transforming current housing into extra care sheltered housing or into provision for other client groups.

### **Housing development**

- 13.26 The London Plan outlines the Mayor's strategy for residential development and is underpinned by the vision of London as a sustainable city. Future residential development will be located to maximise the use of scarce land, conserve energy and be within easy access of jobs, schools, local amenities and public transport.
- 13.27 All new housing will be built to the lifetime homes standard. This will ensure that homes are more adaptable, flexible, convenient and

appropriate to changing needs. This will contribute towards redressing the severe shortage of accessible housing in London, and by enhancing choice and enabling independent living will help to create more balanced and inclusive communities.



### Summary of actions

- P68 The Mayor will develop a London Accessible Housing Register to improve access to and information about available accessible and adapted properties across London.
- P69 The Mayor's Housing Strategy will contain robust guidance and targets for new and existing homes in order to address the impact of climate change.
- P70 The Mayor will consider the specific issues that concern older homeless people as part of his housing equalities work programme.
- P71 The Mayor's Housing Strategy will encourage the redevelopment of inappropriate sheltered accommodation so that provision adequately meets the diverse needs of older people.



## 14 fire safety in the home

### **Policy 14 LFEPA will continue to promote fire safety measures to older people in order to reduce deaths and injuries in the home.**

#### **Introduction**

- 14.1 The London Safety Plan, prepared by the London Fire & Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA), identified that older people are at greater risk of fire in the home than others; over half the people who die in accidental fires are over 60 years old, 24 per cent of those are over 80. Ninety per cent of fires occur in the home, almost all of which are believed to be accidental and preventable.
- 14.2 LFEPA is committed to ensuring that its fire safety messages reach older people and works jointly with partner organisations to improve access to older people.
- 14.3 To support this strategy, LFEPA intends to develop a strategic plan for older people during 2006/07. This will bring together its current initiatives, aimed at reducing the incidence and risk of fires involving older people, and provide a framework and strategic direction for further action.

#### **Targeting advice and assistance**

- 14.4 The Mayor and LFEPA recognise that reducing the incidence of fire in the home involves making contact with those most at risk and persuading them to take preventive action. As part of its targeting advice and assistance programme, the LFEPA offers advice on how to prevent the occurrence of fire and how to fit a smoke alarm. It also encourages people to plan an escape route which can be used in the event of a fire. Older people are a priority target group.
- 14.5 The LFEPA conducts home fire safety checks to identify those who are at risk from fire. In 2005/06 it exceeded its target of 25,000 home fire safety checks and has set a new target of 35,000 for 2006/07. As part of this programme of home visits, the LFEPA will continue to install smoke alarms in higher risk premises free of charge. Older people will remain a priority target group within the programme.
- 14.6 The Mayor and LFEPA recognise that it can be difficult to access those older people who live more remotely from society, whether owing to mobility or other issues. They therefore work through agencies and individuals who already have access to these people and can provide a 'gateway'. A team of specialist fire community safety officers has therefore been set up to extend a programme of fire safety checks for older people. This team aim to raise home fire safety awareness amongst agencies working with older people and assist in developing an inter-

agency home fire safety check referral process. For example, LFEPA works with local handyperson schemes in several London boroughs. The schemes identify those people who have no working smoke detector, and workers have been trained by the brigade to carry out a home fire safety check and fit smoke alarm, provided by the brigade.<sup>90</sup> The Single Assessment Process (SAP) is also an opportunity to identify older people who may benefit from a home fire safety check.

- 14.7 The Single Assessment Process (SAP) is a set of principles and procedures to coordinate the assessment of the health and social care needs of an individual. The Single Assessment Process aims to make sure older people's needs are assessed thoroughly and accurately, but without procedures being needlessly duplicated by different agencies. After discussion with NHS officials, home fire safety is now included in the SAP.
- 14.8 The LFEPA will continue to work with the voluntary and community sector and other agencies to ensure that there is a cohesive approach to this important aspect of community safety work. It will continue to forge local and strategic partnerships with a variety of organisations to extend the programme of home fire safety checks to older people.
- 14.9 A second team of Home Fire Safety Practitioners undertake home fire safety checks, following referrals from partner agencies, and install smoke alarms in the homes of those with special needs, such as older people or those with impaired hearing, sight or mobility.
- 14.10 Both of these initiatives are supported by government funding, which will continue for at least another two years. London has also secured additional government funding for fire prevention initiatives which will benefit older people.
- 14.11 The London Fire Brigade's borough commanders recognise that any strategy to reduce deaths and injuries arising from fire must address the needs of older people. Every borough commander in London prioritises the safety of its older residents. Many borough commanders have developed partnerships for the supply of free smoke alarms to those most at risk.

#### **Access to information and assistance**

- 14.12 LFEPA has a fire safety call centre. The free telephone number (08000 28 44 28) is available 24 hours a day and operators can arrange a check and/or the supply and fitting of a smoke alarm.

**Summary of actions**

- P72 The London Fire & Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) will develop its strategic plan for older people during 2006/07. This will bring together initiatives aimed at reducing the incidence and risk of fires involving older people and provide a framework and strategic direction for further action.
- P73 Older people will remain a priority target group within the targeting advice and assistance programme.
- P74 The Mayor will work with the London Fire & Emergency Planning Authority to support the development of community fire safety measures that will increase the safety of older people in their homes.
- P75 The LFEPA will continue to install smoke alarms in high risk premises free of charge.





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NO BOTTLES  
NO DEPOSIT BOTTLES

Hills  
BREWERS

## 15 environment

**Policy 15** The Mayor will ensure that the needs of older people are addressed in the delivery of all his development and environmental strategies.

### Introduction

- 15.1 The Mayor has a vision of London as a sustainable world class city based on strong, diverse economic growth and social inclusiveness. Sustainability is about ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, now and in the future. To achieve this vision, the Mayor intends to make fundamental improvements in environmental management and use of resources.
- 15.2 London's environment has an impact on the health and quality of life of its inhabitants. Some older people are particularly vulnerable to extremes of weather or to poor air quality. Some older people also find their quality of life diminished because of noise pollution or littering.
- 15.3 Older people also have an important role to play in making London a better place to live and are often amongst the most important contributors towards the sustainability agenda, for example through participating in recycling schemes and by working as volunteers for environmental projects.
- 15.4 The Mayor will ensure that older people's needs and aspirations are recognised in the delivery of his environmental strategies.

### The London Plan and tackling climate change

- 15.5 The London Plan is the Mayor's blueprint for London. It provides the framework with which to balance the needs of economic growth and urban development with the health of individuals and the environment.
- 15.6 The Mayor is proposing substantial changes to the London Plan as part of his commitment to developing a sustainable London and tackling climate change. Climate change is a long term issue that will affect everyone living and working in London. London will become hotter and drier in summer and warmer and wetter in winter, with more extreme weather events such as heat waves and flooding owing to intense rainfall.
- 15.7 Older people are among the groups most affected by climate change. They might be affected directly by the elements themselves, or indirectly by factors such as the design and location of buildings and potential effects on incomes. In taking forward the London Plan, the Mayor will ensure that the needs of older people will be fully taken account.



- 15.8 Warmer winters may mean a reduction in the number of cold-related deaths and winter heating requirements, but the increased frequency, length and severity of hot weather will have a negative impact on health. It will become important to introduce measures to overcome overheating on public transport and provide more trees for shade in public parks and housing estates.
- 15.9 The Mayor will work through the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and the London Climate Change Partnership to identify how climate change will affect older people. The Mayor will consider what measures can be taken to adapt to climate change, including dealing with issues affecting older people. This may include the location of homes outside areas prone to greater heat and flooding and advice on the need to increase drinking water. The Department of Health has issued heat wave advice for older and vulnerable people. The GLA will assist the dissemination of this through its networks.
- 15.10 In developing the climate change strategy the Mayor will consult older people to identify the issues that specifically affect them and explore the role that older people can play in dealing with climate change.

### **Open spaces and biodiversity**

- 15.11 The Mayor's policies on open spaces are aimed at conserving and improving London's open space for all Londoners. Open spaces provide a valuable resource and focus for local communities. They can have a positive effect on the image and vitality of local areas, encourage investment and provide respite from the built environment or an opportunity for recreation. They therefore help promote health, wellbeing and quality of life.
- 15.12 The Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy recognises the value of contact with nature for city dwellers, including older people. Gardening offers a route for closeness to nature, whilst also providing an excellent creative outlet and good exercise. Growing vegetables in allotments or community gardens encourages healthy eating and promotes social cohesion, alleviating the loneliness which can come with old age. Many older people volunteer in local natural places or as members of friends groups for local parks. The Mayor will look for opportunities to extend older peoples involvement in these groups and in other conservation work.
- 5.13 Older people might experience difficulties in accessing London's green spaces. Concerns about security can be particularly important, especially for those who go out alone. Excessive litter can give the impression that a site is uncared for and unsafe. Making sure sites are well-maintained and



welcoming can therefore help to put older people at ease. Having staff on site, such as park rangers, during open hours can also be reassuring. Ensuring that public toilets are clean and open can also make a difference.

- 5.14 For those with impaired sight or mobility, it may be more difficult to access some of London's green spaces. However, these difficulties can often be alleviated through considerate design and the management of access points and footpaths, for example, by providing plenty of seats, placing handrails where people are more likely to slip, taking care about sight lines and trimming back overhanging vegetation along paths.
- 15.15 The Mayor will work with the London boroughs, the London Parks and Green Spaces Forum and other groups to make London's open spaces more accessible to and enjoyable for older people.

### Waste

- 15.16 Older people are generally the best recyclers, but the way recycling services are delivered has to meet their needs. The Mayor believes that recycling collections should be designed to ensure that older and disabled people can access the service with ease. Local authorities should offer collections from the doorstep rather than the edge of the property for older people and make sure this service is widely publicised. Older people may also need particular assistance with heavy items.
- 15.17 The Mayor is committed to improving the standard of cleanliness on London streets and is working with London boroughs to combat fly tipping, reduce litter production and raise awareness of these issues.
- 15.18 The Mayor will work with the London boroughs and waste authorities to ensure that older people's waste and recycling needs are considered in their work.

### Energy

- 15.19 The Mayor's Energy Strategy identified fuel poverty as a major issue for London's older people. It is linked to poor housing, inefficient heating systems and low incomes. The Mayor's Energy Strategy aims to tackle these issues by improving London's domestic energy efficiency in the capital's housing stock. The Mayor has established the London Energy Partnership to respond to the challenges of fuel poverty and climate change.
- 15.20 The London Energy Partnership has commissioned research into fuel poverty within the London region and initiated discussions about regional actions to promote affordable warmth. One of the main challenges is the character of London housing stock; the proportion of 'hard to treat'



households in London is higher than the UK average. This makes the application of conventional energy efficiency measures difficult. Although grants and assistance schemes are available for energy efficiency, London receives less than its per capita share because of this characteristic. The London Energy Partnership will launch a research programme to develop innovative measures relevant for 'hard-to-treat' housing.

- 15.21 A second challenge is the cross-sectoral nature of the fuel poverty problem. Solutions to fuel poverty must involve energy efficiency improvements but also improved incomes for vulnerable households. A range of agencies who work to support and provide care for vulnerable householders therefore need to be actively engaged including the Benefits Agency, the Department for Work and Pensions, Local Strategic Partnerships and Primary Care Trusts.
- 15.22 The London Energy Partnership has produced a discussion document which outlines the key issues relating to fuel poverty facing the capital and identifies a number of possible opportunities for cross-sectoral work. It will engage regional stakeholders, including LOPSG, to take this work forward.

### **Air quality**

- 15.23 Many people in London are exposed to high levels of air pollution, particularly those living close to busy roads. Older people are among the groups most affected by poor air quality, which can cause breathing difficulties and other health problems. Even older people who spend the majority of their time indoors can be exposed to high levels of air pollution.
- 15.24 The Mayor's Air Quality Strategy seeks to minimise emissions of key air pollutants and to reduce concentrations to levels which have minimal effects on health. As well as taking forward the Air Quality Strategy, the Mayor will continue to monitor research and studies into the medical effects of air pollution on older people and, where appropriate, incorporate the results into its own policies.

### **Noise**

- 15.25 As part of the development of the Ambient Noise Strategy, the Mayor carried out a review of the health effects of ambient noise. While evidence is limited, the review concluded that older people are among the groups most affected.
- 15.26 Older people can experience increased sensitivity to noise if it is concentrated at certain sound frequencies, such as from overflying aircraft or the low bass beat of amplified music. High levels of ambient noise can make it more difficult for people with hearing impairments to



communicate. Similarly, people with visual impairments, who use subtle differences in reflected sound to get a sense of their surroundings, may find it difficult to get a sense of the space they are in.

- 15.27 The Mayor will ensure that the Ambient Noise Strategy takes into account the particular effect of noise on older people.

### Summary of actions

- P76 In developing the Climate Change Strategy the Mayor will consult older people via LOPSG to identify the issues that specifically affect them and explore the role that older people can play in dealing with climate change.
- P77 The Mayor will work with the London Parks and Green Spaces Forum, the London Biodiversity Partnership and other voluntary groups to promote the involvement of older people in Friends Groups and conservation work.
- P78 The GLA will work with the London boroughs, the London Parks and Green Spaces Forum and others as appropriate to promote the enjoyment of open spaces by older people, through Open Space Strategies and other means.
- P79 The Mayor will continue to work with the boroughs and London's waste authorities to ensure that waste and recycling services consider older people's needs.
- P80 The Mayor will ensure that older people's representative groups via LOPSG are consulted so that the particular needs of older people are identified and addressed in any regional action on fuel poverty.
- P81 The Mayor will work through the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and the London Climate Change Partnership to identify what impact climate change will have, positively and negatively, on older people. Where appropriate, the Strategy will propose a range of policies to promote older people's health, comfort and prosperity with respect to climate change.
- P82 The GLA will continue to monitor research and studies into the medical effects of air pollution on older people and, where appropriate, incorporate the results into the development of policy.
- P83 The Mayor will have full regard to older people's needs in developing work on tranquillity and soundscape in open spaces.



## glossary of terms used in this strategy

**access** Access refers to the methods by which people with a range of needs (people with a disability, with children, or whose first language is not English) find out about and use services and information.

**ambient noise** This is ongoing unwanted sound in the environment, such as noise from transport and industry. It is distinct from noise caused by individual events, such as a noisy all-night party.

**Association of London Government (ALG)** The ALG represents all 32 London boroughs and the Corporation of London.

**biodiversity** This is the diversity or variety of plants, animals and other living things in a particular area or region. It encompasses habitat diversity, species diversity and genetic diversity. Biodiversity has value in its own right and has social and economic value for human society.

**bisexual** Bisexual is a man or woman who is emotionally, physically and/or sexually attracted to both males and females.

**BAME** BAME stands for black, Asian and minority ethnic.

**Care Services Improvement Partnership (CSIP)** CSIP has been created to support service improvement and development in health and social care across a range of all-age services which include prison health, mental health, physical disability or learning disability. CSIP became operational on 1 April 2005. It is made up of eight different initiatives: Change for Children, Health and Social Care Change Agent Team, Health in Criminal Justice, Integrated Care Network, Integrating Community Equipment Services, the National CAMHS Support Service (NCSS), the National Institute for Mental Health in England and the Valuing People Support Team. CSIP works at national, regional and local levels, with most of its output being through eight regional development centres.

**Comprehensive Performance Assessment** This is central government assessment of local authorities' performance in delivering services for local people, as a basis for improving services. Authorities are categorised as excellent, good, fair, weak or poor, and results are updated on an annual basis.

**direct payments** Direct payments are money provided by a local authority directly to a disabled person in lieu of services to pay for personal assistance.

**disability** This is the loss or limitation of opportunities, which prevent people who have impairments from taking part in the life of

the community on an equal level with others owing to physical and social barriers.

**disabled person (people)** A disabled person is someone who has an impairment, who experiences externally-imposed barriers and identifies themselves as a disabled person.

**Diversity Works** Diversity Works for London is the Mayor's four-year campaign to help companies develop and harness the benefits of a diverse workforce. The campaign will work with businesses to ensure that all levels of their workforce reflect the diversity of London's population. This will include older people.

**Economic Development Strategy** This is one of the eight statutory Mayoral strategies, setting out plans for the economic development and regeneration of London.

**e-government** This is a way for government to communicate with the population at large, using the internet, email and other modern electronic media.

**equalities** Equalities refers to all work addressing issues of discrimination and disadvantage, particularly relating to race, disability, gender, sexuality, faith and age.

**equality** Equality is the vision or aim of creating a society free from discrimination where individuals and groups can have equal access to opportunities and can be free from discrimination and oppression.

**ethnicity** This is an individual's identification with a group sharing any or all of the following: nationality, lifestyle, religion, customs and language.

**gay man** This is a man who is emotionally, physically and/or sexually attracted to men.

**GLA group** The Mayor sets the annual budget for five organisations known as the GLA group: the Greater London Authority, Transport for London, the Metropolitan Police Authority, the London Development Agency and the London Fire & Emergency Planning Authority.

**Government Office for London (GOL)** The Government Office for London delivers policies and programmes in the London region on behalf of nine central government departments.

**Greater London Authority (GLA)** The GLA is made up of the Mayor, Assembly and GLA group, who work together to make London a better place to live, work in and visit. There is a clear separation of powers within the GLA; the Mayor has an executive role and makes decisions on behalf of the GLA, whereas the London Assembly has a 'watchdog' role.

**Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA)** IDeA was created by, and for, local government in England and Wales. It is independent of central government and regulatory bodies and is wholly owned by the Local Government Association. It works in partnership with all councils, to improve performance and develop the sector as a whole.

**lesbian** This is a woman who is emotionally, physically and/or sexually attracted to women. Some women choose to identify as either gay or a gay woman.

**local area agreement (LAA)** These simplify funding, join up public services and give more flexibility to councils and other local delivery partners. They are structured around three key themes: children and young people; safer and stronger communities; and health and older people. Authorities and their partners will negotiate clear targets and outcomes with central government, but will decide locally how best to achieve them.

**local strategic partnership** This is a single non-statutory, multi-agency body, which matches local authority boundaries, and aims to bring together the different parts of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors at a local level.

**London Development Agency (LDA)** The LDA is one of nine regional development agencies covering England, and aims to further the economic development and regeneration of London. It is a member of the GLA group and the Mayor sets its budget and directs its activities.

**London Fire & Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA)** LFEPA is the third largest fire-fighting organisation in the world, protecting people and property from fire within Greater London. The Mayor sets LFEPA's budget and makes appointments to the GLA.

**London Health Commission (LHC)** Set up by the Mayor in 2000, the LHC works in partnership with agencies across the capital to reduce health inequalities and improve the health and wellbeing of all Londoners.

**London Older People's Strategies Group (LOPSG)** An umbrella forum for older people's organisations and individuals, set up in 2000 to engage with the Mayor of London on issues affecting the lives of London's older people. LOPSG is the Mayor's principal forum for consultation with older Londoners.

**London Plan (Spatial Development Strategy)** This is one of the eight statutory mayoral strategies that sets out strategic planning guidance for London.

**Mayoral Strategies** There are eight statutory mayoral strategies, which lay out a blueprint for the future of London. The strategies cover air quality, ambient noise, culture, economic development, spatial development, biodiversity, transport and waste management. In addition to these, the Mayor has a general power to develop strategies across a wide range of other areas important to Londoners' lives.

**Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA)** The MPA was established on 3 July 2000 to maintain an efficient and effective police service for the Metropolitan Police District (the Greater London area excluding the City of London). The Mayor sets the budget and makes appointments to the MPA.

**Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)** The Metropolitan Police Service is accountable to the Metropolitan Police Authority. The Mayor sets its budget.

**MPA/MPS Policing Plan** The Metropolitan Police Authority and the Metropolitan Police Service Policing and Performance Plan is published annually. The plan describes arrangements for policing for London over the coming year and gives details of: priorities and objectives, past performance and future performance targets, funding and use of resources, and work to support continuous improvement.

**OOPS 50 plus** OOPS 50 plus is a project supporting up to 300 Londoners aged 50 or over who are not in employment. Funded by the LDA and the European Social Fund, it is just one of several initiatives to benefit older people in which the LDA is involved.

**Opportunity Age** 'Opportunity Age' is the first ever cross-government strategy looking at the issues facing British society as people live longer healthier lives, such as enabling people to extend their working life, supporting active ageing in our communities and giving people more choice and independence in how they use the services at their disposal.

**Partnerships for Older People Projects (POPP)** POPP is a £60 million grant to encourage councils in England to team up with NHS, local government, voluntary and community sector partners to help older people avoid emergency hospital visits and to devise innovative approaches to establishing sustainable arrangements for supporting older people in active and healthy independent living. Awards will go to a cross-section of council-based partnerships across England.

**Pathways to Work** This project, run by the London Development Agency, works with voluntary and community organisations to provide job opportunities and employment in the public sector. It targets those overcoming particular barriers to employment - including the over 50s.

**patient/public initiatives** These are designed to make sure the public is involved in decision making about health and health services. There is a Patient and Public Involvement Forum for each NHS Trust.

**performance management** This is a process by which an organisation declares its vision, sets objectives to achieve it, gives people responsibility for these objectives, regularly reviews progress towards them and rewards successful delivery of them.

**Regional Public Health Group (RPHG)** The Regional Public Health Groups (RPHGs) are part of the Department of Health, linked to each of the nine government offices for the regions. They carry out a wide range of public health responsibilities such as improving health and tackling health inequalities, protecting health and building expertise. Their work is based mainly on the priorities for public health outlined in *Choosing Health - Making healthy choices easier* and for inequalities in *Tackling Inequalities: A programme for Action*.

**Retired Senior Volunteer Programme** This is a free-standing programme within Community Service Volunteers. It is targeted at the growing number of those aged 50 plus, encouraging them to participate in their local area.

**Safer Neighbourhoods** The Safer Neighbourhoods scheme aims to cut crime and make communities feel more secure by giving neighbourhoods a dedicated team of six officers - one sergeant, two police constables and three Police Community Safety Officers. Policing priorities for each team are identified through consultation with local residents, community groups and other organisations.

**sexuality** Sexuality is a person's emotional, physical and/or sexual attraction, and the expression of that attraction. It is not a choice that people make; rather, sexuality is something that people are born with. Sexuality refers to both gay and heterosexual (or 'straight') people.

**state pensionable age (SPA)** This is the age at which UK citizens can collect a pension. The age is currently 60 for women and 65 for men.

**Supporting People** A partnership of local government, service users and support agencies delivering housing-related services to vulnerable people and providing the opportunity to improve their quality of life and independence through a stable environment.

**sustainable development** A widely-used international definition of this term is 'development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (from *Our Common Future*, the Brundtland Report, 1987).

**trans people** These are people who have the desire to live and be accepted as a member of the opposite sex (men who feel they should have been born a woman and vice versa). Other terms commonly used are trans man (female to male) and trans woman (male to female).

**Transport for London (TfL)** TfL is a member of the GLA group, accountable to the Mayor for implementing his transport strategy. TfL has responsibility for the operation of buses, the Docklands Light Railway (DLR), Croydon Tramlink, the London Underground and for regulating taxis and private hire vehicles, and operations of the TfL road network.

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Αν θέλετε να αποκτήσετε αντίγραφο του παρόντος εγγράφου στη δική σας γλώσσα, παρακαλείστε να επικοινωνήσετε τηλεφωνικά στον αριθμό αυτό ή ταχυδρομικά στην παρακάτω διεύθυνση.

### Turkish

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### Urdu

اگر آپ اس دستاویز کی نقل اپنی زبان میں چاہتے ہیں، تو براہ کرم نیچے دئے گئے نمبر پر فون کریں یا دینے گئے پتے پر رابطہ کریں

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