

Themes for the Future



Older Persons Strategic Plan
2007 - 2017



Contents

	Page
Forward	2
Vision	3
Introduction	4
Strategic Outcomes	7
Strategic Aims	8
THEMES	
Active Citizenship	9
Well Being and Activity	11
Housing	13
Community Cohesion	15
Income and Employment	17
Access and Transport	19
Community Safety	21
Access to Information	23
Lifelong Learning and Leisure	25
Members of Strategy Development and Implementation Group 2006	Back Cover

Foreword

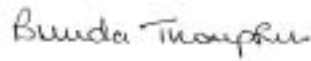
This is a ten-year vision for older citizens in Middlesbrough. When achieved it will improve the quality of life of older people and make Middlesbrough a better place in which to live. This vision has been created through listening to what older citizens say will make a difference to their lives.

Middlesbrough Council has a commitment to listening to and reflecting the priorities of older people. The challenge for all of us is making this vision become a reality.

This vision will be overseen by the Older Persons Partnership, an Executive Advisory Body of Middlesbrough Council. It will contribute to the town's community strategy. This will help all citizens have a sense of belonging and pride in themselves and their neighbourhoods, now and in future years.



Ray Mallon
Mayor



Cllr. Brenda Thompson
Elected Member Champion
for Older People

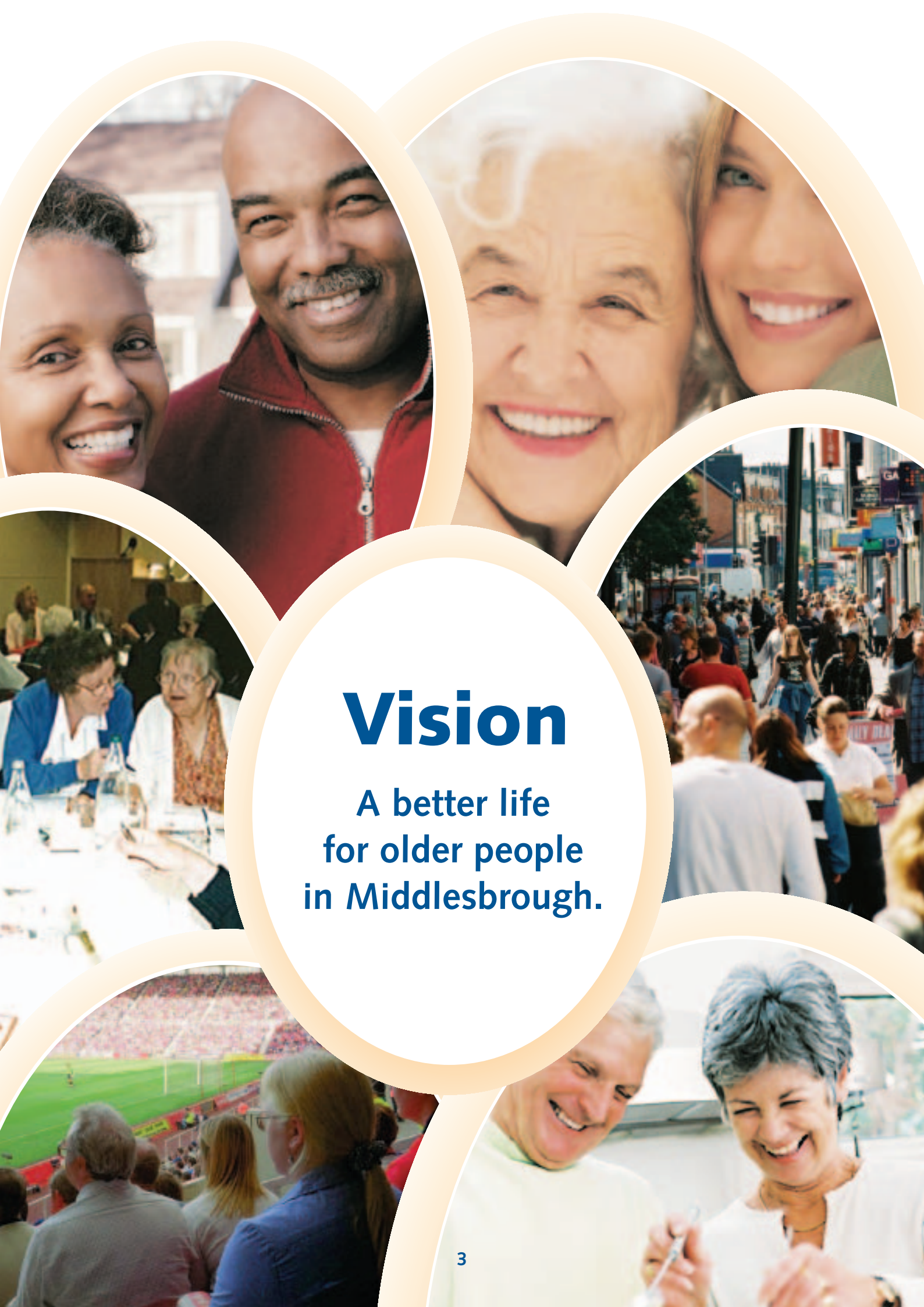


Jan Richmond
Chief Executive



Les Southerton
Chair, Local Strategic
Partnership





Vision

A better life
for older people
in Middlesbrough.

Introduction

There are 20 million people who are 50 plus in the United Kingdom. That equals 1/3 of the UK population.

People over 50

- own 80% of all private wealth,
 - own 60% of all savings,
 - are responsible for 40% of all consumer demand.
-
- By 2007 there will be 43,790 people over 50 in Middlesbrough.
 - By 2017 there will be 50,210 people over 50 in Middlesbrough.

Government policy must not only support older people now but also consider how they can be supported in the future.

The commonly held definition is that older people includes everyone over 50. This is the only shared characteristic of this group as a whole. Their needs and expectations are as diverse as the thousands of individuals who make up the 50 plus population. They are as varied, if not more varied, than any other age group. For example, mastering new computer skills at the age of 84 or flying in space at 77, shows that age is an increasingly unreliable sign of someone's needs and ambitions.

The age of 50 plus can be a time when people begin to think ahead and plan for the future. It is important to try and develop or maintain an active, healthy lifestyle. There can be new areas of fulfillment for those who have retired early and those who have taken career breaks to stay at home whilst their children are young. They may find different careers and new areas of achievement. As people move into retirement in the 60's and through to their 80's, some will become frailer and need greater care but the number of people who will stay fit and active for many years after retirement is increasing, and should be encouraged. More people are living into their 90's and through to 100.





There are important values and goals common to all older people.

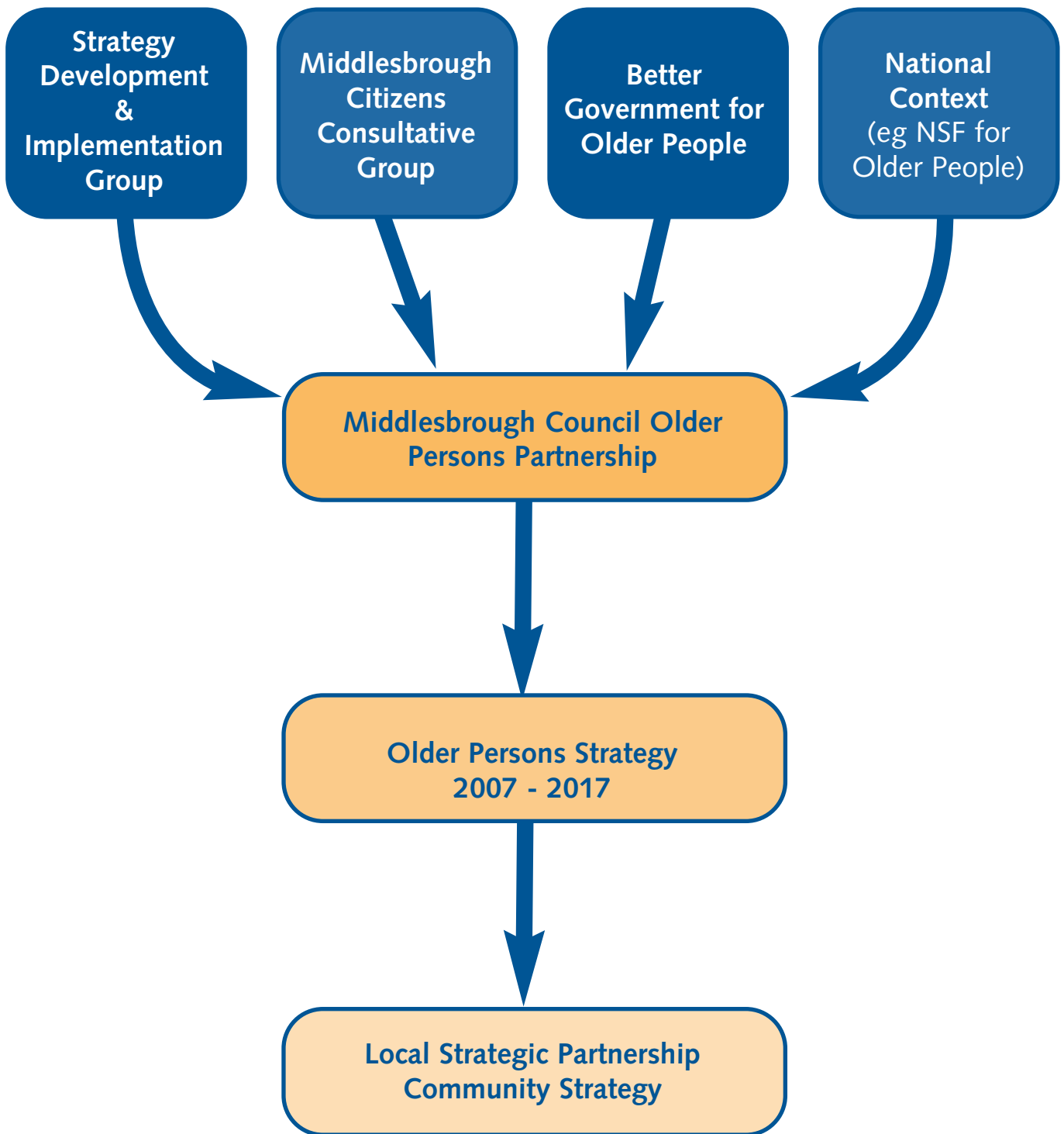
- Older people want as much choice and control as possible over their lives.
- Older people should be encouraged to challenge organisations and the services that are offered.
- Older people want their positive contribution to society to be recognised and valued.
- This growing 50 plus population will have significant implications for Middlesbrough and for the planning and delivery of local services.

There are five broad aims and five strategic outcomes which relate to the vision. The Strategy Development and Implementation Group has linked these outcomes to nine broad themes which have arisen out of consultation and meetings with older people.

There is also a wider national context, which also needs to be taken into account. This includes the National Service Framework for Older People, the Governments 10-year modernisation programme of health and social care, and the Better Government for Older People Programme.

It is expected that organisations will use this vision in their strategies/planning for older citizens.

The following diagram illustrates the links:



In developing this strategy, we have sought views from citizens aged 50 years and upwards and hope that this document reflects the issues, needs, aspirations and preferences of future generations of our older people. The Middlesbrough Council Older Persons Partnership has played a key role in facilitating this process and will ensure that its partners will deliver this strategy to achieve the vision.

Strategic Outcomes

1. People First

- That people do not feel discriminated against because of their age.
- That public services, private sector and the voluntary sector have tackled ageism in the workplace.

2. Social Inclusion

- That people can be involved in community activities irrespective of age, disability, religious or cultural backgrounds.

3. A Recognition of Diversity

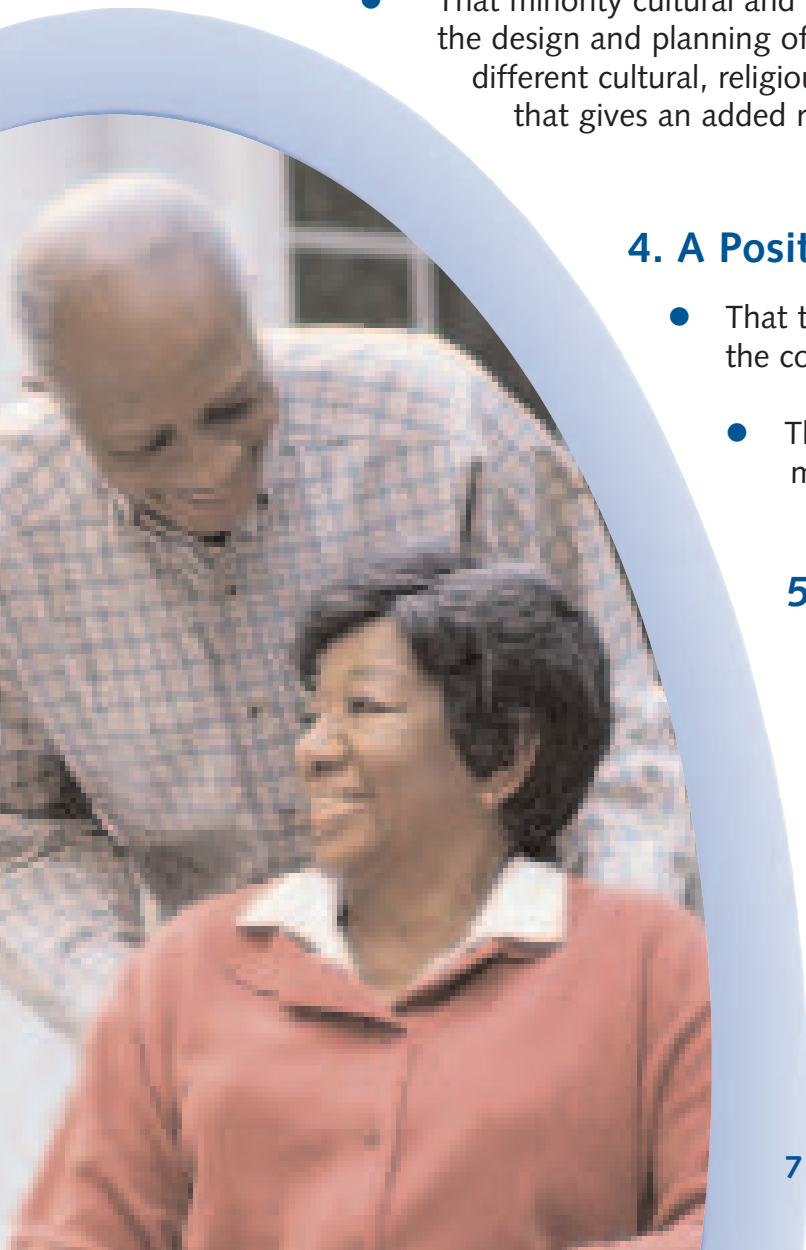
- That minority cultural and spiritual backgrounds are taken into account in the design and planning of facilities and services. There is a range of different cultural, religious and social backgrounds in Middlesbrough that gives an added richness to our social life.

4. A Positive View

- That the strengths and abilities of older people are at the core of our thinking.
- That there is an emphasis on independence and mutual assistance amongst older people.

5. Listen and Respond

- That older people, including those who are frail, hard to reach and vulnerable, are given opportunities for participating in decision making processes.



Strategic Aims

1. Information & Access

- That partner agencies consult widely with people in their planning processes.
- That as much information as possible about the facts and options, which guide decision-making, are given to older people so that they can participate fully.

2. Social Inclusion

- That no one is debarred from normal social activity by virtue of his or her particular circumstances, beliefs or characteristics.
- That the participation of all older people, is actively promoted in the planning and delivery of their local services.

3. Safety

- That agencies work together to reduce aspects of risk, particularly at home and to decrease the fear of crime and promote safety, particularly in public areas for older people.

4. Well Being & Activity

- That the positive focus of strength and abilities of older people is promoted emphasising independence and mutual assistance.

5. Partnership

- That public sector services work in partnership with the Voluntary Sector, Private Sector, and Faith Communities, co-ordinating their developments for the benefit of older people and reducing gaps in service provision.





1 Active Citizenship & Partnership

To actively promote the participation of older people, in the planning and delivery of their local services. There is an increasing number of older people who want to engage in planning their communities through consultation and direct participation. Co-ordinated development will reduce gaps in services and activities and ensure the full participation of older people in the development and delivery of policies and services.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF OLDER CITIZENS

- Listen to people who use services. Ensure services are run to meet the needs of people, not providers.
- Extend opportunities for the involvement of people in policy and planning services.
- Make it easier for people who are frail, housebound or less active to participate.
- Develop more public forums to share and exchange information.

EXAMPLES OF WHAT WE ARE ALREADY ARE DOING

- The Executive Member for Social Care is the Champion for older people.
- The Older Persons Partnership meets every other month
- The Middlesbrough Citizens Consultative Group meets every other month.
- There is a Corporate Consultative Strategy.

WHAT WE WILL DO – SOME EXAMPLES OF OUR FUTURE PLANS

- We will ensure that leisure venues become “access points” for information on Council activities and services.
- Establishment of Forum on Pension Reform by Age Concern, Teesside.
- Health and Social Care Agencies will continue to identify ways in which involvement is evident in the implementation of the White Paper on health and social care, particularly outside the hospital setting.
- The Middlesbrough Citizen Consultation Group will become a fully constituted group called the Middlesbrough Senior Citizen Forum.





2 Well Being & Activity

The benefits of physical activity on well being and maintaining a healthy life style are well documented. Healthy eating, regular exercise and not smoking are all essential ingredients to gaining and maintaining good health and general well being. Many older people are keen to get involved in sports and leisure activities. Balance and co-ordination, strength, flexibility and aerobic capacity will be improved and feelings of vulnerability reduced. Feeling physically and mentally well is vital to maintaining independence and inclusion. Fear of crime may be reduced by older people having more personal confidence through engaging with physical activity.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF OLDER PEOPLE

- There should be free access to leisure centres.
- Carer friendly GP and Hospital appointments.
- More evening sessions in leisure centres for 50 plus age group.
- Easily accessible and culturally appropriate services.
- Increased day time provision at local centres.
- Provision targeted at over 50s.
- Good rehabilitation and recovery services to avoid premature decisions to give up own homes.



EXAMPLES OF WHAT WE ARE ALREADY DOING

- Rehabilitation and re-ablement is available across a range of schemes following assessed need.
- Exercise on prescription is available - the “Get Active on Prescription” Scheme.
- Leisure Centre Carers Policy enables free access to any carer who is there to support a person who has to be looked after.
- Age Concern’s Phoenix Project supports and befriends older people with mental health issues.
- A range of health promotion initiatives are available to maintain health and well being e.g. falls prevention and prevention of hypertension.
- The 290 five a side football tournament, whose team players are 55 plus, is now an annual event.

WHAT WE WILL DO – SOME EXAMPLES OF OUR FUTURE PLANS

- We will establish more specific user focus groups.
- We will create a range of Activity Programmes for people over the age of 60+. This is in recognition of increased longevity and the desire to still be active.
- We will improve access, lighting and visibility at some venues.
- We will deliver a programme specifically designed to prevent falls, osteoporosis and promote bone health.



3 Housing

Housing quality is of particular importance to older people as they may spend a great deal of their time at home. Appropriate housing and support can significantly enhance quality of life. It is important that older people are enabled to secure and sustain their independence in a home appropriate to their circumstances. Making informed choices is critical. It is essential therefore that older people are able to access appropriate advice on housing and related services.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF OLDER CITIZENS

- Houses for life with easy access, bathing and domestic aid, small gardens and designed to be adaptable.
- Locally based community activities.
- Support to remain fit and active, specialist support workers/counsellors, night sitting services.
- Good access to health, shopping, community and recreation facilities.
- Safe environment with plenty of social activities.

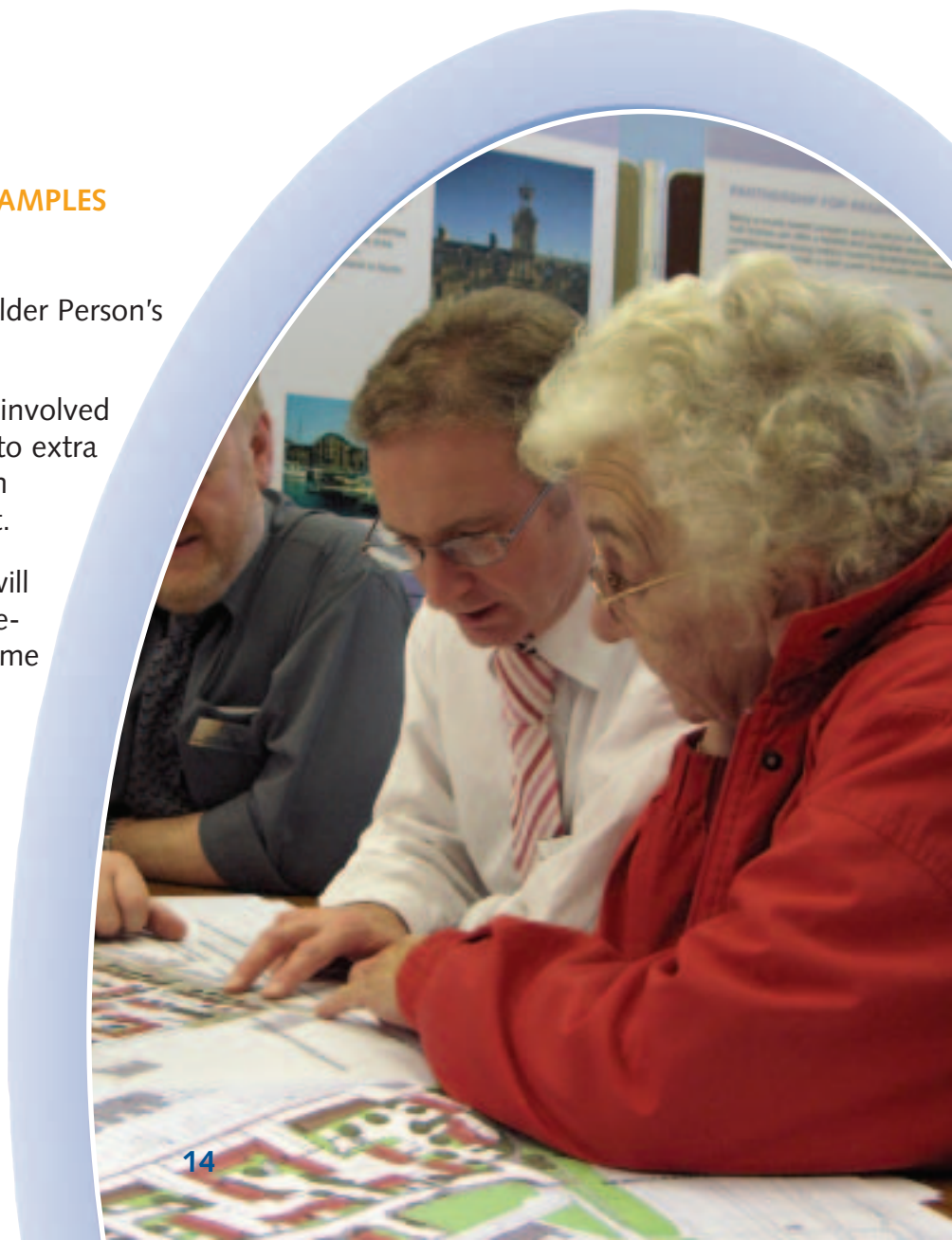
EXAMPLES OF WHAT WE ARE ALREADY DOING

- Developing an Older People's Housing Strategy in partnership with a range of stakeholders, including older people, to inform planning of housing and related services for older people.
- Providing adaptations and repairs through the Staying Put Agency to help maintain older people at home as long as possible.
- Working in partnership with older service users who are members of the Staying Put Agency Advisory Group.

- Aiming to raise standards in the double glazing industry by providing consumers with a register of traders who have demonstrated a commitment to open and honest trading, through Middlesbrough Trading Standards.
- A local Housing Assessment is under way which will include an assessment of the future housing needs of older people.
- Making changes to the Council's Housing Renewal Policy to tackle unsatisfactory housing conditions in the town's older housing area and offering repair and improvement packages to older people and other vulnerable households across the town.
- Implementing a number of major housing projects across the town to create safe, sustainable, mixed communities which will meet a range of housing needs and requirements.

WHAT WE WILL DO- SOME EXAMPLES OF OUR FUTURE PLANS

- Publish and implement an Older Person's Housing Strategy.
- Community Matrons will be involved in the development relating to extra care housing and their role in chronic disease management.
- Tees Valley Housing Group will open the town's first purpose-built extra care housing scheme in 2007.
- Explore opportunities to develop more Extra Care housing where there is evidence of need.





4 Community Cohesion

Community cohesion is about recognising, supporting and celebrating diversity. It is about creating an environment where there is mutual respect and appreciation of the similarities and differences that make people unique. Older Citizens are a source of unity and stability within a community. They are a community's memory and often possess untapped skills and experience. Moreover there is added value in involving older people in all aspects of service delivery from the outset. Older citizens play an essential role in contemporary Britain. They provide a great deal of unpaid care which keeps families together. They also play a major part in running volunteer groups, clubs and community organisations. It is important to ensure that no one is debarred from normal social activity by virtue of his or her particular circumstances, beliefs or characteristics.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF OLDER CITIZENS

- Mobility problems do not cause older people to be trapped indoors.
- People should be helped if English is not their first language.
- People should not be isolated because of hearing and visual impairment, learning disabilities and long term medical conditions.
- Recognise and value diversity.
- Ensure policies and services are culturally sensitive.

EXAMPLES OF WHAT WE ARE ALREADY DOING

- The Patient and Public Involvement Officer links with different communities.
- A Children and Older Persons Safety Calendar is published and distributed annually.
- There is an Older Asian Ladies Group which meets on a weekly basis.
- There is a Road Safety Organiser working with older members of Black and Minority Ethnic Groups.
- Middlesbrough Welfare Rights Unit employs dedicated staff for the Black And Minority Ethnic Groups.
- The Sports Mela has some activities suitable for older people and the focus is to engage more older people from ethnic communities in Sports and Physical Activity.

WHAT WE WILL DO – SOME EXAMPLES OF OUR FUTURE PLANS

- Having developed a baseline of where all the key agencies in Middlesbrough are in terms of equality and diversity, we will meet with them.
- Arrange meetings with agencies and service users.
- We are in a process of developing a Strategy for People with Physical Disabilities.
- We will develop a strategy for people with sensory loss.





5 Income & Employment

As people age, there is growing concern over financial security. People should be able to afford a good quality of life as they get older. They fear not having enough resources to finance what they want to do.

Many older people would like to work but encounter difficulties in doing so. Barriers vary but can include actual or perceived age discrimination by employers. Skill gaps or ill health can limit the type of work that they can do. There is a lack of information about relevant opportunities available to help older people return to work.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF OLDER CITIZENS

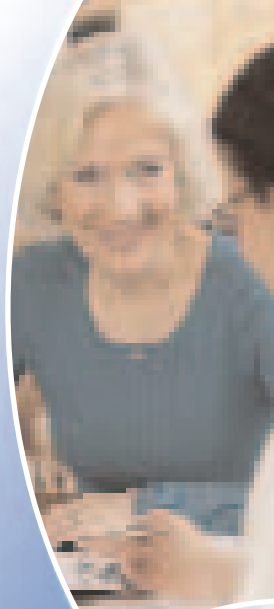
- Older citizens should receive all the benefits to which they are entitled and should not be living in poverty.
- Benefit and job application forms are easy to understand and written in appropriate languages.
- There should be more more joined up financial assessments.
- Employers should be flexible in relation to the needs of employees who are carers.
- More re-training opportunities.
- Ageism should be confronted in the workplace.

EXAMPLES OF WHAT WE ARE ALREADY DOING

- The local pension service has a team of staff who visits customers in their own homes to assess, complete application forms and signpost to other relevant statutory and voluntary organizations.
- Middlesbrough Welfare Rights Unit provides home visiting outreach surgeries at GP Practices, in the community and at James Cook University Hospital.
- Workers are specifically available for BME communities.
- Trading Standards hold money advice sessions at local Community Centres and Housing Offices.

WHAT WE WILL DO- SOME EXAMPLES OF OUR FUTURE PLANS

- Middlesbrough Council Welfare Rights Service are developing joint working with HBS, Middlesbrough Council Housing and council tax departments to provide information to enable targeted welfare benefit work to be carried out.
- We will encourage organisations to consider recent legislation, regarding age discrimination, to allow more older people to continue working.





6 Access & Transport

41% of households in Middlesbrough do not have a car therefore public transport has an important role to play. It is a key factor in relation to accessibility for many older people.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF OLDER CITIZENS

- Free bus travel.
- Park & Ride scheme.
- Circular routes for buses.
- Personalised public transport.
- Central and secure car parks.
- Introduction of congestion charges.

EXAMPLES OF WHAT WE ARE ALREADY DOING

- Introduced a new concessionary fares policy (Free bus travel at all times.)
- Road safety programme for Black and Minority Ethnic Groups.
- Provision of low floor bus platforms and low floor buses.
- Provision of dropped crossing points.
- Provision of dial a ride with a membership of 600 people.
- Friends of the Railway Station Group reheritage and accessibility of the railway station.

WHAT WE WILL DO- SOME EXAMPLES OF OUR FUTURE PLANS

- To continue with a rolling programme of works for the installation of low bus platforms and safer waiting areas.
- To continue to provide dropped crossings.
- To continue a programme of works for installation of CCTV at identified waiting facilities and on buses.
- To continue to achieve safer parking award status at all town centre car parks.
- To provide responsive bus services to James Cook University Hospital and to Riverside Park.
- A review of the 'Dial-a-Ride' service.
- To provide access for people with disabilities to platform 2 at Middlesbrough Rail Station.



7 Community Safety

It is important to work together towards reducing aspects of risk particularly at home to decrease the fear of crime and promote safety for older people.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF OLDER CITIZENS

- Improved street lighting to make the environment safer.
- For people to feel safe in their own homes and in control of the risks of injury and abuse.
- Older people, and children, may be more at risk of accidents from the layout of streets and shops or from increasing speed and density of traffic.

EXAMPLES OF WHAT WE ARE ALREADY DOING

- Operation Strongbow is a police operation to reduce distraction burglary.
- As part of the Police Operation Strongbow Partnership, there is a Volunteer project run by the Retired and Senior Volunteer Programme (RSVP). Trained, older volunteers help older people, particularly victims, to develop awareness and strategies to cope with doorstep crime and distraction burglary.
- Integrated Falls Service.
- Provision of CCTV at 16 bus waiting facilities and on 200 buses.
- Good lighting and CCTV cover at leisure and sports facilities.
- Videos developed from the 'Older, Safer, Wiser Initiatives' which comprised workshops for older people on doorstep crimes. These have been distributed to Community Councils.

WHAT WE WILL DO – SOME EXAMPLES OF OUR FUTURE PLANS

- Develop No-Cold Caller Zones in Middlesbrough.
- Develop a strategy for implementing fire safety initiatives across local communities with the Fire Service.
- The proposed Middlesbrough Mobile Repairs and Adaptations service will provide basic security measures.
- Establishing a protocol for Post Office, shop and bank staff - staff to recognise that older people are not subject to chip and pin fraud. Also to seek protection for older people who may be brought in by rogue traders to withdraw money from their accounts.





8 Access to Information

Older persons circumstances can determine whether they have less access to information than others. They can then be less able to participate in and take up services.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF OLDER PEOPLE

- A more user friendly information service that is easily accessible to older citizens.
- Accessibility to new technology for older citizens.
- Professionals need more awareness and understanding of older citizen's needs and aspirations.
- Information in a range of languages and methods.
- More opportunities for socialising and learning for older people.

EXAMPLES OF WHAT WE ARE ALREADY DOING

- Large print available in most leaflets.
- A selection of books, newspapers and magazines in other languages available in libraries.
- Applied plain English to letters and documents.
- A comprehensive consumer advice service.
- Patient Advocacy and Liaison Services.
- Computer taster silver surfer sessions in Libraries.

WHAT WE WILL DO- SOME EXAMPLES OF OUR FUTURE PLANS

- To introduce advocacy in relevant cases and re-open Trading Standards advice shop when staff are recruited and trained.
- Continue to commission advocacy services.
- Events to promote office software in libraries.
- Maintain legal accreditation scheme.
- Introduction of “Real Time” information boards at bus waiting facilities.





9 Lifelong Learning & Leisure

Older people value learning skills and knowledge which also allows them to widen their networks and meet new people.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF OLDER PEOPLE

- Non-vocational training should be available in local communities.
- Free adult education for older citizens.

SOME EXAMPLES OF WHAT WE ARE ALREADY DOING

- Commitment to encourage voices of learners and individual learning plans.
- Course fee concessions for retired people.
- Learning Shop in the Town Centre to help older people assess their skills and educational needs.
- Computer facilities to allow people with visual impairments and other disabilities to use library facilities.

WHAT WE WILL DO – SOME EXAMPLES OF OUR FUTURE PLANS

- We will develop courses which are not traditionally focussed.
- We will use the experience and skills of older people.



Members of the Strategy Development Group 2006

Dave Punshon (Chair)
Chief Executive
Age Concern Teesside

Phil Dyson
Head of Older People
and Physical Disability Services
Social Care Dept
Middlesbrough Council

Bridget Lambert
Partner Liaison Manager
Middlesbrough Local Pension Services
Department of Works and Pensions

Councillor Brenda Thompson
Executive member for
Social Care and Health
Middlesbrough Council

Paul Thwaites
Property Services Manager
Streetscene
Middlesbrough Council

Michael Quinn
Principal Housing Strategy Officer
Strategic Housing Services
Middlesbrough Council

Diane Fleet
Library Manager (Inclusion)
Library Services
Middlesbrough Council

Elizabeth Briggs
Director of Operations
Age Concern Teesside

Saadia Raja
Diversity Manager
Social Care Dept
Middlesbrough Council

June Dickinson
Engagement and Complaints Officer
Social Care Dept.
Middlesbrough Council

Louise Morris
Development Activities Manager
Sport and Leisure Service
Middlesbrough Council

Peter Warner
Middlesbrough Citizens
Consultative Group

Louise Wallace
Head of Planning
(Health Improvement)
Middlesbrough Primary Care Trust

Michele Fearon
Older Persons Development
Manager
Middlesbrough Primary Care Trust

Peter Thomas
Development Manager
Older Persons Partnership
Civic Centre
Middlesbrough Council

We will try to make a summary of this document available in other languages, Braille or large print on request.

