

# Essex Later Life Strategy Summary

All citizens aged 65+ in Essex to have opportunities and rights in line with the rest of the county leading the way to enhanced quality of life, where age is not a barrier to life in a society which views later life with optimism and respect and recognises that with age one's rights are not diminished.

## Background

Over the last year, we have undertaken our largest ever consultation to understand what our public service priorities for Essex should be. This has informed the development of our sustainable community strategy *The Essex Strategy*, our new Local Area Agreement *Liberating Potential*, and our vision *Essex Works*. Together these define our ambition to deliver the best quality of life in Britain and to support people to achieve their potential. Alongside these, we have developed the Essex Later Life Strategy, which articulates how we will improve quality of life specifically for those in Later Life.

## Aim

The aim of the Essex Later Life Strategy is to address inequality and make a measurable difference to those in Later Life in Essex by enhancing independence and wellbeing. The strategy has a citizen led approach at its heart and has been developed with the involvement of many older people. It seeks to raise the profile of older people in Essex and challenges the stereotype of older people as dependent. It seeks to maximise collaborative working from all partners to develop joined up responses to the needs and aspirations of the diverse population of older people in Essex.

## Introduction

This Essex Later Life Strategy addresses issues of an ageing population and seeks to realise the benefits that should come with living longer. This can only be achieved by holistic partnership working looking at the bigger picture and not focusing solely on health and social care, but instead paying attention to **transport** issues, **housing** issues, **neighbourhood** issues, **Life Long Learning opportunities**, **culture and leisure** activities **community cohesion** issues, and increasingly, **economic and employment** issues to develop a platform for enhanced wellbeing for all Essex citizens in Later Life regardless of status. The issues addressed in the strategy have been identified by local people in Later Life and confirmed by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). The recent concordat 'Putting People First' emphasizes that 'the time has now come to build on best practice and replace paternalistic, reactive care of variable quality with a mainstream system focused on prevention, early intervention, enablement and high quality personally tailored services'.

To align with the common age of retirement, later life is defined in this strategy as those aged 65 or over. There is a growing recognition that older adults needs are much wider ranging and that there is a need to shift the focus away from crisis response services to a much wider engagement of all services with older adults, encouraging and supporting older adults to remain active citizens within their communities. There is still a need however to make sure that the right services are available to older adults at times of need.

The Essex Later Life Strategy will be of interest to anyone who has a role to play in contributing to the wellbeing of those in later life in Essex and is specifically relevant to all agencies and organisations that have responsibility to develop/deliver public services and opportunities in partnership with older people.

The Community Wellbeing and Older People Board will take accountability for the delivery of the strategy, but will require the engagement of all departments in the delivery. It is suggested that an Older People Champion is identified within each directorate.

### **National Drivers**

An ageing population is not unique to the county of Essex. Globally one in every 10 persons is now aged 60 years or older. By 2050, the United Nations projects that 1 person of every 5 will be aged 60 or older, and this is set to rise to 1 in every 3 people by 2150. Concurrently, the numbers of younger people under 16 will steadily fall. The implications of this are that unless people reach old age in a healthier state and the health of the older population is maintained, there will increasingly be larger numbers of dependent older people who require support from a diminishing pool of younger people.

The needs of older people have been recognised in housing, health and social care policy but are largely invisible in other areas such as employment and training. However, this is now changing as the government develops its approach around five key themes.

- a need to plan for the older population as a whole, not just the 15% of older people who are frail;
- the need to recognise the contribution older people can make and to focus on their quality of life and wellbeing;
- the need to work in partnership with older people;
- the need to change how services are planned and delivered so that older people can control their own lives; and
- The increasing role of the voluntary, community and faith sector in providing services to the whole of the community.

### **Public Service Agreement 17 - : “Tackle poverty and promote greater independence and well-being in later life”**

The 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) includes a Public Service Agreement (PSA) aimed at ensuring that the specific needs of the older population are given due priority. It sets out the outcomes the Government seeks to achieve over the three year spending period, providing a clear focus for planning and delivery by national and local service providers. It also lays the foundations for building a successful ageing society beyond the CSR period.

As with all PSAs this reflects the Government’s high-level priorities and sets out the specific improvements that the Government wants to achieve and identify performance indicators that will be used to measure progress.

**Indicator 1:** The employment rate of those aged 50-69 and difference between this and the overall employment rate.

**Indicator 2:** The percentage of pensioners in low income

**Indicator 3:** Healthy life expectancy at age 65

**Indicator 4:** The proportion of people over 65 who are satisfied with their home and neighbourhood

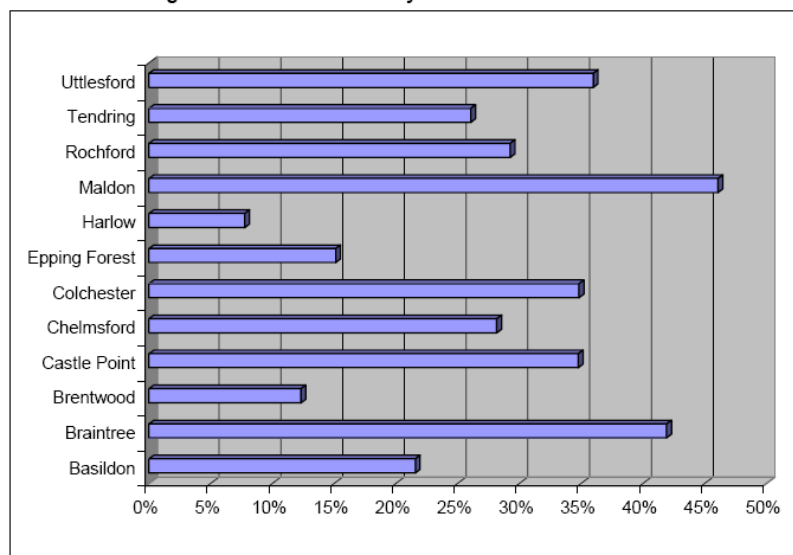
**Indicator 5:** The extent to which people over 65 receive the support they need to live independently at home

### Local Drivers

We know that Essex's population is changing and getting older. By 2028, Essex's over-85 population will have doubled from 26,800 to over 58,200.

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment provides a detailed breakdown on the demographic changes across the county but of particular interest in this summary is the percentage change of older people expected in each of the localities. The table below highlights the need to consider the impact of an ageing population upon all services that affect one's life and not just the requirements on providing social care. In addition we now have the opportunity to view those in later life as an important contributor to society with many skills and knowledge as opposed to a burden.

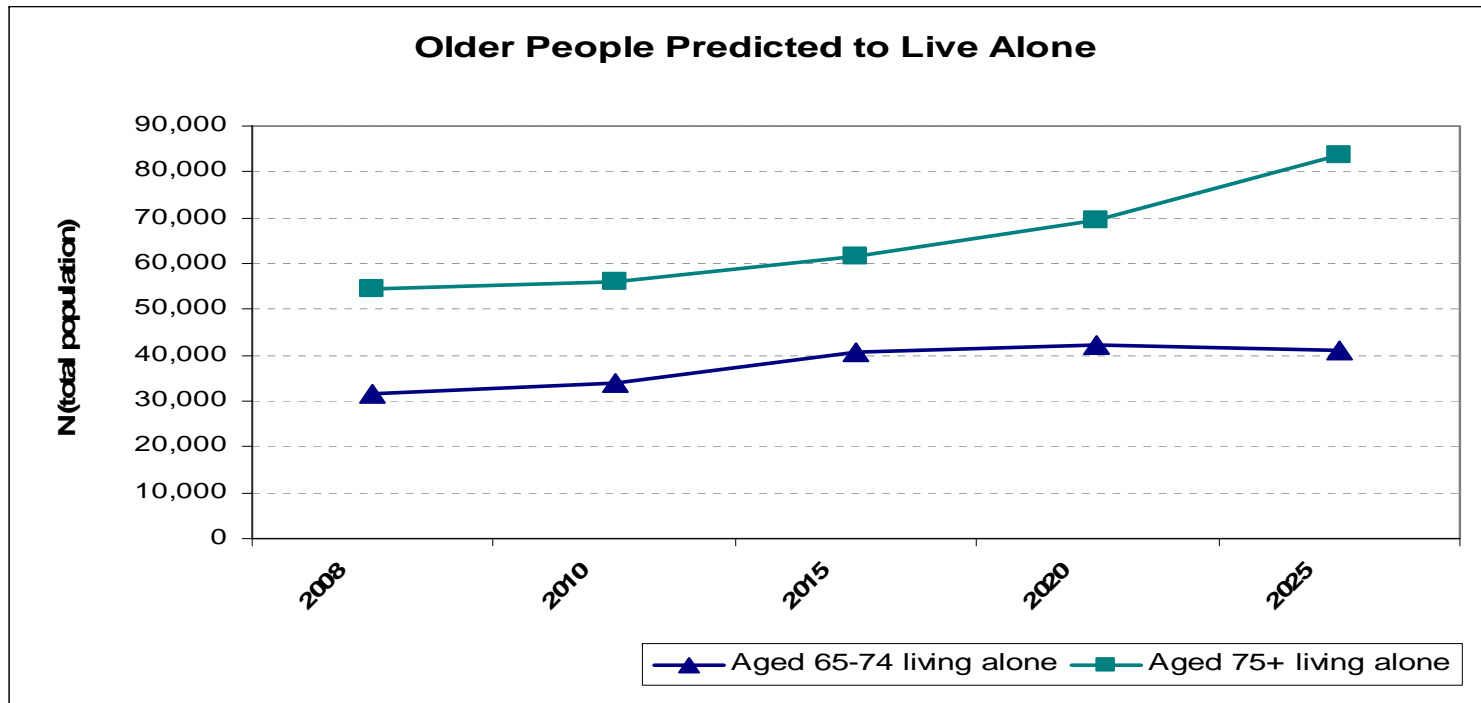
Chart 1: Percentage increase of over 65's by district 2005 – 2015



Source: National Statistics (2003 based projections), IPC analysis

The estimates of the current population of over 65's (in 2005) show a total of 231,500 people, with the size of district populations ranging from 10,200 in Maldon and 11,600 in Harlow, to 38,000 in Tendring and around 25,000 in each of Basildon, Chelmsford and Colchester. If this population is projected forward to 2015 there is shown to be a continuing increasing number of older people in Tendring (just under 48,000), with Colchester, Chelmsford, Basildon and Braintree each having around 30,000 older people, and Harlow around 12,500 and Maldon 14,900.

Perhaps of more significance in terms of planning future services is the percentage increase in this older population (28% overall) in each of the districts from 2005 to 2015. For example, Maldon, with one of the smaller older populations, face the largest percentage increase of 46%; Braintree is looking at a 42% increase; and Uttlesford, Castle Point and Colchester about 35%



#### Outcomes from the Essex Later Life Strategy

- Increase healthy life expectancy at age 65
- Increase the number of people over 65 stating that they receive the support they need to live independently at home
- Reduce the percentage of pensioners in low income
- Reduce the number of falls reported in each locality
- Increase the number of 65+ accessing life long learning opportunities
- Increase the employment rate of those aged 50-69 to reduce the difference between this and the overall employment rate

- Improve the feelings of safety for citizens in later life
- Promote Independence in the home
- Dispel the myth that people in later life are a burden

### **Domains of the Essex Later Life Strategy**

The Essex Later Life Strategy has seven domains for improving the quality of life for older people in Essex based on the 7 principles of independence for older people.

1. Housing and the home
2. Neighbourhood
3. Social activities, Networking and keeping busy
4. Getting out and about
5. Income
6. Information and access to services
7. Health and healthy living

These domains are all interrelated and have elements of being dependent on one another to achieve a better quality of life for our older citizens

## 1. HOUSING AND THE HOME

**National indicators 136, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160**

**Supporting PSA Indicator 5:** The extent to which people over 65 receive the support they need to live independently at home

Having a safe, comfortable and well maintained home is crucial to a person's quality of life. Older people can find themselves living in accommodation that they struggle to maintain to a decent standard without help. In addition, the increasing likelihood of living alone as you get older makes help with practical tasks crucial as an important way of preventing accidents and maintaining independence.

### **What Essex citizens in later life suggest about housing and the home:**

- Increase and actively promote services for minor repairs like 'handyman' or small repair schemes.
- Deliver more joint home and personal safety checks with Health, the Fire Service and the Police.
- Provide advice and information on how to improve their home
- Develop new initiatives which enable older people to live in their own homes for longer and reduce the need for residential care e.g. assistive technology
- Provide older people with increased choice in location and design of housing, whatever their needs
- Support and promote programmes which increase the safety of older people in their homes and crime prevention in neighbourhoods
- Increase access to information, education, services and projects to reduce risks and accidents in the home and improve the safety of older people in their homes
- Increase access to support service to allow older people to live independently in their own homes
- Increase the number of support plans through the use of personal budgets to older people to prevent admissions into residential , nursing care or hospital
- Develop round the clock care support services so that where necessary older people can have visits during the night based on assessed needs
- Monitor in-house and agency staff providing care support services to ensure that they deliver quality services
- Ensure that older people are aware that any complaints that they make about the standard of care provided to them will be taken seriously and confidentially
- Having the information available to be able to move to a more appropriate home before becoming too old
- The availability of Assistive Technology to be improved and more information on the benefits provided.

## 2. NEIGHBOURHOOD

### National indicators 2, 5, 21, 23 and 24

**Supporting PSA Indicator 4:** The proportion of people over 65 who are satisfied with their home and neighbourhood

In November 2007 Communities and Local Government jointly produced a discussion paper with the International Longevity Centre ILC, focusing upon the theory of Lifetime Neighbourhoods: Designing sustainable communities for all. This has highlighted the need for neighbourhoods to be offering everyone the best possible chance of health, wellbeing, and social, economic and civic engagement regardless of age. Consequently, benefiting all generations and enhancing integration between ages. Older people would not just be beneficiaries of the creation but also play a key role in their formation. This concept of lifetime neighbourhoods is not a new one but demonstrates a method of planning development around the need to provide inclusive, well-designed living environments for all ages. Although, the concept is yet to feature extensively in government guidance the principles behind the theory can be explored to improve the wellbeing of our citizens. **To allow for this to happen planners must seize strategic opportunities and plan for an ageing population with better representation from those in later life.**

#### What Essex citizens in later life suggest about Neighbourhoods:

- Develop planning guidance for ECC and partners to use as a comprehensive awareness tool in planning for current and future later lives
- Deliver a co-ordinated older peoples community safety programme to include:
  - Working with partners to deliver home safety checks for both health and personal safety
  - Extend 'no cold calling' zones across Essex
  - Promote the 'trading standards approved' register more actively with older people and carers
  - Link Assistive Technology development with community safety wherever possible
  - Ensure advice, information and guidance about community safety is incorporated into initial assessments of social services clients
  - Developing more road safety awareness raising for older people, particularly around the use of prescribed medication and driving

### 3. SOCIAL ACTIVITIES NETWORKING AND KEEPING BUSY

#### 'Adding Life to years'

#### National indicators 6, 8, 9, 10 11

Reported levels of loneliness are higher among those who live alone compared to those who live with others but this link is not universal. Reduced social contact, being alone, isolation and feelings of loneliness are consistently associated with reduced quality in older people's lives. Consequently understanding the extent of isolation and loneliness among older people, the trajectories underpinning these experiences, and the factors associated with these states, is important in both theoretical and policy terms, for developing our understanding of quality of life and contributing to 'adding life to years'.

#### What Essex citizens in later life suggest about social activities networking and keeping busy:

- Develop more opportunities for people in Later Life to enter life long learning
- Organising festivals for bringing older people together in a different format
- Provide more opportunities for older people to volunteer and encourage others to participate in their communities through local campaigns/ closer working with the county's volunteering groups
- Develop intergenerational projects/team specifically to break down the barriers between older people and younger age groups by encouraging active participation by both groups. Learning from countries where this is already well developed.
- Leader of the council publicly challenge age discrimination in Essex, highlighting the negative effects of discriminatory attitudes and demonstrating the positive contribution that older people make to Essex's well-being/quality of life.
- Ensure provision is available for older couples.

### 4. GETTING OUT AND ABOUT

**National indicators** – none specific but restricted mobility limits access to services, friends and increases social isolation

The built environment could be excellent for older people however if they are unable to get there then the services to these people become redundant. Losing the ability to get out and about has proven knock on affects to other areas of ones life not just physical health but also mental health and a sense of purpose. The level of help required by those in later life is dependent upon their personal circumstances and not age alone. It is necessary for all in later life to have a degree of mobility regardless of their personal circumstances.

We want to make it easier for people to get out and about by reducing the difficulties people experience. We will make sure that people have a say on plans to develop local transport, and community transport schemes. Some of the restrictions to older people getting out and about are not about large transport infrastructure but about lighting in a local area, conditions of the pavements, provision of public conveniences and benches in town centres. An holistic approach is required to successfully integrate older people into society with the freedom to move around.

#### What Essex citizens in later life suggest about getting out and about

- Work with Borough and District Council colleagues on addressing hazards such as poor lighting, uneven pavements, and potholes etc which can contribute to the rate of falls and discourage those in later life from being mobile
- Use the older peoples planning team to produce diaries of a 'week in the life' to illustrate first hand experiences of issues and opportunities - for ECC and partners to produce detailed action plans to address these issues
- Raise awareness of improvements made to infrastructure
- Review of public conveniences
- Improving transport links and access to free transport.

## 5. INCOME

### National indicators 151 and 153

**Supporting PSA Indicator 1:** The employment rate of those aged 50-69 and difference between this and the overall employment rate. **Indicator 2:** The percentage of pensioners in low income

Having sufficient income makes the difference between a poor and good quality of life. It is increasingly likely that as people are living longer, they will have to work beyond the current retirement age of 65 and will need to plan for this. Anxiety about budgeting and avoiding debt are key issues for older people. The Department for Work and Pensions estimates that, in February 2005, around one in every five people over 60 did not claim their full entitlement. People who have a low income and/or modest savings may be entitled to extra money. To ensure that older people receive what they are entitled to, information and advice on the full range of welfare benefits and entitlements needs to be available.

#### What Essex citizens in later life suggest about income

- Support older people and carers to take up statutory and non statutory benefits and grants by introducing new ways of accessing information (for example a dedicated website and drop-in clinics at local GP surgeries or

neighbourhood centres)

- Work with local business and Job Centres to champion the skills and experience of older people and deliver better recruitment methods.
- Promoting options for people to work beyond 65 if they choose to
- Explore potential of retirement courses expanding to reach more local businesses in Essex
- Promote volunteering as a route into employment
- Adult Community Learning - consider the needs of older people when planning programmes and ensure these needs are met
- Support older people in setting up own business
- Creating more flexible and phased retirement part-time working – job sharing
- Pre-retirement courses promoting community wellbeing and the importance of being active

## 6. INFORMATION AND ACCESS TO SERVICES

Like everyone, those in later life want to know what is going on in their local area so that they can make the most of services, activities and facilities. We are committed to providing up to date information and advice for older people, including information on housing, social care services, health, leisure, lifelong learning, and transport.

### What Essex citizens in later life suggest about information and access to services

- Look at potential for interactive mapping to show where services are from where you live – showing modes of transportation and offering ‘something new’
- Improve the co-ordination of advice and information in easily accessible formats across the Council to enable older people to access the full range of community-based leisure, and lifelong learning opportunities
- Support and train 50 older people (10 people a year) to undertake ‘mystery shopping’ exercises in older peoples services, to help inform service delivery and quality.
- Use the older peoples planning team to produce diaries of a ‘week in the life’ to illustrate first hand experiences of issues and opportunities
- Incorporate access to those services which contribute to wellbeing (e.g. leisure, culture and lifelong learning) into our social care assessment process
- Explore drawing up an older Citizens Charter, in partnership with Borough and District Council colleagues
- Running at least 4 intergenerational activities for older people and children by working with Children’s Centres and Extended Schools
- Prioritise the engagement and involvement of excluded older people

## HEALTH AND HEALTHY LIVING

**National indicators 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 123 125, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133 and 135**

**Supporting PSA Indicator 3: Healthy life expectancy at age 65**

Low levels of life expectancy at age 65 and unhealthy life expectancy at age 65 are an extremely bad outcome. In areas of low healthy life expectancy many older people have shorter life expectancies and a higher number of these years are spent in poorer health.

### What Essex citizens in later life suggest about health and healthy living

- To keep older people informed about their choices for a healthier lifestyle with particular focus on obesity and smoking.
- Promote older peoples rights to have mainstream services which are inclusive and accessible, including healthy lifestyles, active walking and prescription for exercise
- Make our existing education, leisure and social activities more accessible for older people by actively promoting them, improving information about them, and enabling transport where necessary.
- Develop a buddying programme with the PCT to motivate and support older people participate in exercise and services like smoking cessation, weight management and relaxation
- Deliver a falls prevention programme with our partners including training and awareness raising as set out in the Local Area Agreement
- Awareness of MH and help and support – particular dementia and stroke services
- Deliver a medicines management programme through PCT's/Pharmacists

## Summary of Proposed Actions

Many of the actions relating to traditional social care are already embraced within the Adults, Health and Community Wellbeing Commissioning Strategy and are being implemented through the Self Directed Support Transformation programme so this summary focuses on areas that need to be addressed by Essex County Council Colleagues and our partners, outside of Adult Social Care. It is important to note that the Later Life Strategy will not be delivered by AHCW alone, but is a commitment from the wider organization to deliver improved quality of life to those in later life. It is not our intention to have a stand alone Later Life Action plan, but instead, through the completion of Equality Impact Assessments incorporate this work into mainstream delivery.

Proposed outcome and summary of action required	Lead
<p><b>Dispel the myth that people in later life are a burden</b></p> <p>The Leader of the council, supported by a publicly recognised champion continues to actively challenge age discrimination in Essex, highlighting the negative effects of discriminatory attitudes and demonstrating the positive contribution that older people make to Essex's wellbeing/quality of life.</p>	Communications
<p><b>Promote Independence in the home</b></p> <p>Increase the provision of handyman schemes, especially in areas of deprivation and promote information on accessing funds to complete repairs and adaptations.</p>	Supporting People
<p><b>Improve the feelings of safety for citizens in later life</b></p> <p>Conduct Equality Impact assessments on CDRP plans to ensure the following is addressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Review impact of street lighting on Older People</li> <li>○ Working with partners to deliver home safety checks for both health and personal safety</li> <li>○ Extend 'no cold calling' zones across Essex</li> <li>○ Promote the 'trading standards approved' register more actively with older people and carers</li> <li>○ Link Assistive Technology development with community safety wherever possible</li> <li>○ Ensure advice, information and guidance about community safety is actively promoted and available</li> <li>○ Developing more road safety awareness raising for older people, particularly around the use of prescribed medication and driving</li> <li>○ Develop intergenerational programmes to challenge the perceptions of both young and old</li> </ul>	CDRP to lead

<p><b>Increase the employment rate of those aged 50-69 to reduce the difference between this and the overall employment rate</b></p> <p>Conduct Equality Impact Assessment on Greater Essex Prosperity Forum Action Plan to ensure that that need of 50-69 year olds are being met.</p>	<p>Greater Essex Prosperity Forum</p>
<p><b>Increase the number of 65+ accessing life long learning opportunities</b></p> <p>A Later Life Adult Learning action plan to be developed to increase the number of people in later life accessing courses</p>	<p>ACL</p>
<p><b>Reduce the number of falls reported in each locality</b></p> <p>Work with Borough and District Council colleagues on addressing hazards such as poor lighting, uneven pavements, and potholes which can contribute to the rate of falls and discourage those in later life from being mobile, ensuring that improvements are consistently fed back to citizens</p>	<p>CDRP</p>
<p><b>Reduce the percentage of pensioners in low income</b></p> <p>Conduct Equality Impact Assessment on Greater Essex Prosperity Forum Action Plan to ensure that that need of those in later life are being met.</p> <p>Conduct and Equality Impact Assessment on the work of the Essex Benefits Network to ensure that the needs of those in later life are being met.</p>	<p>Greater Essex Prosperity Forum</p>
<p><b>Increase the number of people over 65 stating that they receive the support they need to live independently at home</b></p>	<p>Community Wellbeing and Older People Board</p>
<p><b>Increase healthy life expectancy at age 65</b></p> <p>Through the application of Equality Impact Assessments, keep older people informed about their choices for a healthier lifestyle with particular focus on obesity and smoking and ensure our existing education, leisure and social activities more accessible for older people by actively promoting them, improving information about them, and enabling transport where necessary. Increase the take up of physical activity.</p>	<p>Community Wellbeing and Older People Board</p>

**Next Steps**

LAA2 is currently being consulted on and detailed action plans are being developed at a district/borough level. If the focus of the Essex Later Life Strategy is supported then detailed action plans will be developed and monitored by the Community Wellbeing and Older People Board, linked to the baseline data and targets set by the LSPs.