

Please email your response to evidence@cpa.org.uk by **14th November 2014**.

This is not a questionnaire. The questions included are for guidance and to act as a prompt. It is not necessary to answer all of the questions or even to use this form to submit your evidence if you find it more convenient not to do so.

The role of local authorities in preparing for the opportunities and challenges of an ageing society.

The Centre for Policy on Ageing has been commissioned by the Local Government Association (LGA) to undertake a call for evidence on the role for Local Government in respect of an ageing society. A cross-cutting Task and Finish group has been established by LGA to consider the opportunities and challenges that an ageing society presents and how local authorities might prepare themselves in the immediate and longer term to respond to these. The intention is for this programme to be completed and its report published by March 2015.

We would welcome your views on the contribution that Local Government can offer, and the changes Local Government should make, to adjust to their local ageing communities and to maximize the opportunities for local citizens and communities to age better. It would be helpful if you can cite examples where you are aware of good or innovatory practice

Section A

Person answering the call for evidence

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Section B

The questions that follow are for guidance and to act as a prompt. It is not necessary to answer all of the questions or even to use this form if you find it more convenient not to do so. We are also happy to receive local reports and evaluations where appropriate.

The call is particularly interested in looking beyond traditional 'care and support' services to strategies that improve older-age quality of life, provide an age-friendly environment and include 'prevention' measures that promote healthy ageing in place.

We would like to hear of any innovative and groundbreaking work that you are doing, or planning to do. Examples may come from any area including strategic planning, commissioning, service design and delivery or activities developed in partnership with local networks of older people and communities.

1. What are the main benefits to your community with regard to an ageing society?

In Newcastle upon Tyne, an underpinning principle of our approach to an ageing society is that increased life expectancy is a social good. An increased number of older people can contribute to the social and economic fabric of the city. It also creates major opportunities for growth and innovation in developing an infrastructure which adapts to the changing age structure of our population. The following national and local data supports our approach:

- Older people as consumers: National data shows the older population is responsible for 40% of the consumer demand in the UK spending £200 billion per year.¹
- Older people in the workforce: NE currently has a low percentage of older people in the workforce² compared with other parts of the UK, but the need to address this has been identified and is a key part of Newcastle's Age Friendly work, including skills transfer to younger generations.
- Older people as entrepreneurs: senior entrepreneurship is at its highest level ever (GEM 2013), and Newcastle's Age Friendly work aims to identify ways in which potential entrepreneurs can be supported to develop successful businesses.
- Nationally, Over 65s contribute £61 billion to the economy through employment, caring and volunteering.³ In Newcastle, 4,291 people aged 50+ provide more than 50 hours unpaid care per week.⁴

¹

² Older worker employment rates by region, 2011/12 - Annual Population Survey (APS) – Office of National Statistics

³ Ready for Ageing Alliance Manifesto – September 2014

⁴ www.knownewcastle.org.uk – ONS Census 2011

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2. What are the key issues for your community with regard to an ageing society?

We recognise that our wellbeing and health isn't just about our genes, our age or the services we use. It is created through the economic, physical and social conditions in which we live out our lives. We need to get these conditions right for all people who live in the city – whichever part of the city they live in, whatever their age and irrespective of the communities of interest, identity or experience they are part of.

Historically work on age and ageing has been seen in terms of older people and oldness and therefore on what services are provided to those with issues such as poorer health, social isolation or housing needs in later life. In Newcastle, we have shifted to frame this work as ensuring that all people can age well and adapting our city to the wider demographic change. Key to this is ensuring that our work to adapt to demographic change is not seen as a separate project or silo of activity, but rather that we need to embed 'ageing in all policies' (alongside other considerations such as health; equity; and adapting to climate change).

These considerations have led us to pay particular attention to how the ageing demographic impacts on the economic development of the city, and to engaging partners in the city and wider region (through the Local Enterprise Partnership) in developing a response to maintaining skills and our labour force at a time of demographic change and to developing opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship in response to the emerging market for products and services.

We have also identified Housing as an issue where a more innovative response is required to meet the needs and changing aspirations of our ageing demographic, whilst at the same time addressing the overarching need to improve the quality of our existing housing stock for existing residents, to help create mixed and affordable sustainable communities that people choose to live in. We are working towards engaging with housing developers to identify opportunities for new development and/or retrofit solutions to housing in an age-friendly city.

The quality of the public realm is a very important dimension of an age-friendly city and has a significant impact on the ability of people of all ages to use the outdoor space for recreation and to move safely and easily through the city, making the most of the amenities in the city centre and neighbourhoods. We are working with Newcastle University EPSRC funded MyPlace (Mobility and Place for the Age Friendly City) research project to develop an on-line toolkit and platform that will enable members of the public to engage with local councils and other organisations more effectively in the research, planning and design of the urban environment

3. In your opinion or from your perspective - are local authorities important as contributors to a society adjusting to an ageing population? In what ways can they contribute? What should they do?

We see ourselves as having a key role in this agenda – as a lead facilitator and enabler of societal change. In particular, we see ourselves as crucial in:

- Playing a leadership role in championing the ageing agenda and facilitating multi-agency action which draws on the expertise and resources of partners (private sector; academia; other public sector partners).
- Developing narratives in relation to ageing which speak to other key agendas (e.g. economic development; climate change) so that ageing becomes embedded in all policies.
- Supporting partners and citizens to recognizing that the ageing agenda is not exclusively about older people and 'oldness', it is about both the direct and indirect effects of an ageing population on all of our people and therefore impacts on how the city does business. Furthermore, this isn't about 'other people', it is about all our tomorrows.

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- Ensuring that we approach what we do in a way that recognizes and build's on people's (often untapped) skills, strengths, aspirations and networks and enables them to be active in improving their own, and others wellbeing and health, rather than passive recipients of services.
4. *If you are not part of a local authority - How might local authorities complement and support your work and what might you envision or what are your particular hopes for local government to achieve?*

N/A

5. *How do local authorities need to adapt to enable older people to achieve their full potential?*

Responding to an ageing demographic shouldn't be seen in isolation of the wider public sector reform agenda. This is an integral part of shifting services to prevent (rather than cure) problems and using the functions (e.g. spatial planning; economic development) of the council to shape the conditions where all people can achieve their full potential.

We have found that enabling 'older people' to achieve their full potential can only be realized by thinking of this issue across the life course, not for later life alone.

6. *What are the key challenges facing local government in respect of health and social care as a result of population ageing? What needs to change (structurally, culturally or financially) to enable local government to tackle these challenges in cooperation with health and other partner organisations?*

The challenges facing local government in respect of health and social care as a result of greater number of older people (and therefore increased numbers with needs resulting from health problems such as stroke, dementia) are well documented and include:

- Heavy demands on a system which was not designed to respond to people living many years with Long Term Conditions;
- Lack of integration between health, care and housing;
- Insufficient investment and 'action' upstream to prevent or delay need for health and care services;
- The quality of care services which enable older people to live their later life and die with dignity;

What needs to change?

- We need a more radical shift from the current crisis response after people get ill, towards early intervention and prevention. This requires greater integration between health, care and housing with an 'invest to save' mentality. Initiatives like the Better Care Fund can only play a small part in creating this change. Newcastle is interested in a health and care equivalent of 'city deal' with devolved resources and greater governance freedoms.
- At a local level we also need to use our 'place shaping' functions more creatively to create the conditions where people grow up and age well. However, we can only achieve these responses if the national policy also considers health, equity, ageing and sustainability in a holistic way.

7. *How is an 'ageing' strategy being developed in your area? What are the personnel, structures and processes necessary to support that strategy? What are the means by which 'buy-in' and engagement with the strategy are achieved? How is the strategy informed by the needs and aspirations of older people and how is integration achieved between officers and members and local authorities and partner organisations in the health and voluntary sectors?*

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Newcastle has joined the WHO Global Network of Age Friendly Cities and Communities and is an active member of the UK Urban Ageing Network. Newcastle is also a designated city in the WHO European Healthy Cities Network and has actively participated in their programme on 'Healthy Ageing'. We are using our participation in these networks to learn with and from other cities and remain at the 'edge' of innovation.

We have cross party support for becoming an age-friendly city, and an 'age friendly city' portfolio has been established. This portfolio is held by a Deputy Cabinet Member, working to the Deputy Leader.

Consistent with the comment above on embedding adaption to demographic change across all areas, we have included 'Becoming an age friendly city' as a cross cutting theme in Newcastle's Wellbeing for Life Strategy (our statutory health and wellbeing strategy) which was adopted by the Wellbeing for Life Board (our statutory health and wellbeing board) in 2012 (www.wellbeingforlife.org.uk). The strategy itself drew on a range of data about people in the city which we drew together in a profile called 'Know your city' – as far as data allowed this included information on the ageing demographic in the city and information on how the city is experienced differently by different age-groups.

Organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors who bring expertise and resources towards our collective ambition to become an age-friendly city, come together regularly in meetings chaired by our portfolio lead. This partnership approach is enabling us to develop stronger synergy and co-ordination between the activities on ageing in different sectors. We are particularly proud of the links we have made, and continue to develop, between researchers in our local universities and policy-makers and practitioners. We commission a VCS organization to provide the coordination for this work and contributions are also made towards this by health and Newcastle University.

'Buy-in' and engagement with 'age friendly cities' is being achieved through aligning the 'age friendly city' ambition with key priorities in the city e.g alignment with 'working city' priority to develop a joint narrative and plan by which we can ensure that the impact of the changing demographic is being taken into account.

In relation to taking account of the needs and aspirations of older people, Newcastle City Council invests in Elders Council of Newcastle – an independent forum for older people in the city (www.elderscouncil.org.uk). The Elders Council is a partner in the age-friendly city work and works to gather the views and experiences of older people; to disseminate information to older people and to foster older people's contribution to the city, in particular through supporting their peers. In addition, Newcastle City Council has a range of engagement mechanisms e.g. Let's Talk Newcastle; U-Decide participatory budgeting; Signature, through which the needs and aspirations of not just older people, but wider community are articulated.

[If a strategy document exists please attach it]. **Attach our Age Friendly Pack and Wellbeing for Life Strategy**

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8. *If you are within a local authority – What are the governance arrangements on ageing issues? Which officer leads on the implementation of your ageing strategy or leads on ageing issues (in the absence of a strategy). If possible please include contact details? Which elected member or board or committee deals with ageing issues?*

Please refer to Section 7 above for the way we have organized ourselves. The key contacts are:

- Cllr Ann Schofield is Newcastle City Council's Age Friendly City portfolio lead - ann.schofield@newcastle.gov.uk;
- Steve Park, Assistant Director Policy, Communications and Performance is the lead officer for Age Friendly City – steve.park@newcastle.gov.uk;
- Barbara Douglas provides co-ordination support to age-friendly city – barbara.douglas@qualityoflife.org.uk;
- Helen Wilding is Wellbeing for Life Development Lead – helen.wilding@newcastle.gov.uk

9. *Which national policy levers and drivers assist you to prepare and respond for an ageing society locally? What has assisted you and what has been a hindrance? What would assist you to respond more actively or help you to undertake an appropriate role for your community?*

Policy levers and drivers continue to have a strong focus on health and social care e.g. Care Act 2014; Better Care Fund, rather than on the broader issues relating to adapting to demographic change. There is also a tendency to see older people as a homogenized group of people with housing, mobility and poverty needs – this is not the case with all people in later life and it is important to distinguish between universal policies and those that need to be proportionate to need regardless of age

New policy drivers are emerging but some do not go far enough in enabling local action e.g. current consultation by DCLG on Housing Standards which proposes that 'age friendly' and 'space' standards should be optional creating lack of clarity and potential tensions for cities in relation to planning and development.

10. *Do local authorities have a role in addressing digital exclusion or in helping their older populations deal with the national government's 'digital-by-default' strategy?*

Being digitally engaged is becoming increasingly important in enabling older people to live full and independent lives ranging from access to information; developing and maintaining social networks; access to employment and, access to assistive technologies. Digital Inclusion is key to early intervention.

Local Authorities have an important role in addressing digital inclusion and enabling all people (not just older people) to have opportunities to learn and refresh their digital skills, as well as ensuring they have easy access to 3G/wi-fi/broadband.

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11. *How can or should local authorities support older workers and address the ageing of their own workforces?*

Local Authorities should develop strategies which address age-related issues in the workforce, including:

- Developing approaches to extending working lives, to maintain the capacity of the labour force - including by flexible forms of employment, career breaks, and removing blockages faced by older workers
- Skills development - meeting skills gaps by refocusing education and training, and promoting skills transfer from retiring personnel to new or developing staff
- Enabling the current experienced workforce to both pass on knowledge to the emerging workforce and where appropriate transit between mid-life careers effectively.

Whilst many of these policies were originally put in place as part of equalities; 'family friendly' or 'investing in people' initiatives it is important that HR policies are re-examined through the lens of an ageing workforce to ensure they are robust.

12. *We would like to hear of any services, activities or initiatives which you believe are good practice and innovative with regard to an ageing society – please note – please provide a short description. If there are any reports or evaluation documents please attach.*

In the earlier sections of this report, we have described our long term strategic approach to becoming an age-friendly city. Below we have provided examples of practical initiatives which support older people in the here and now to age-well.

Case Study 1

Information NOW (www.informationnow.org.uk) is an on-line resource developed with and for older people. It helps older people, their families, friends and carers to stay informed, make choices, plan ahead and live a good quality of life. It is also an essential resource for staff who work with older people and support them to decide on their care and support plans. The website was successfully redesigned and relaunched in 2013 through consultation with older people and professionals. Working with older website users and non users gave a unique insight into the requirements of older people. The preference of all was for a user friendly interface, using bold high contrast colours and icons to convey meaning. Connecting the information logically to ensure the website was easy to navigate and to share information was of high importance. A clean design with accessibility features was necessary to ensure the website could be used by all.

In 2013 the website reached over 10,000 people per month and continues to grow in popularity. Many of the regular users of the site are information and advice professionals who pass information on to older people. They often print out pages or if the person has a computer they can help them to navigate to the information that is most relevant to them.

- **In 2013 there were 94% more unique visitors in total than 2012 (108751 unique visitors in 2013 vs. 44008 in 2012).**
- More visitors are accessing the site using mobile technology than ever before. **285% more visitors using mobile phones (24,386 in 2013 vs. 6,330 in 2012).**
- The main information priorities of our visitors continue to be Bereavement, Benefits, Health, Leisure, Driving as you get older, Getting Online and Information Now.

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- At the end of 2013 there were 831 organisations listed and 267 articles on Information Now. This includes 11 new articles which were researched and developed to meet information needs in the city.
- **There has been an 85% increase in the number of visitors reaching Information Now using the direct website address.** This illustrates how Information Now is a more recognised brand within the city and its reputation has grown.
- Recite Me accessibility software has been added to the site which means Information Now can be;
 - read aloud
 - translated into over 52 languages
 - explained using an interactive dictionary
 - tailored to suit the visitors access needs including altering the colour, contrast and size of the font.

Information NOW is part of 'Information in the City' which is a group of trusted on-line information resources working together to improve the quality of information for the people of the city; share good practice and resources in relation to maintenance and regular updating of key websites.

Case Study 2

Elders Council of Newcastle (www.elderscouncil.org.uk)

The Elders Council of Newcastle was established in 2001 by older people in the city to provide a mechanism for enabling older people to have a stronger voice and to provide a platform for older people to make a contribution to the life of the city. Membership of the Elders Council is free and open to anyone aged 50+ who lives in the city. It currently has a membership of c. 2000 people from all parts of the city.

The aims of the Elders Council are:

- To ensure that older people are well informed so that they can make positive choices;
- To understand issues from the perspective of older people in the city and to work in partnership with policy makers and providers in the public, voluntary and private sectors to develop solutions;
- To encourage and support older people to make a positive contribution.

The work of the Elders Council is delivered by its members who are volunteers, with support from a small staff team who work on Newcastle's Age Friendly City programme. The Elders Council is funded by Newcastle City Council with a small contribution from the NHS. The work programme includes:

- Communications: a bi-monthly newsletter; a monthly radio programme; presentations to older people's groups and community events; information days and an e bulletin and website. The Elders Council also promotes and supports the development of Information NOW (www.informationnow.org.uk), the city's key information resource for older people;
- Understanding older people's needs and aspirations using a variety of methodologies including creative arts; world café methodology; joint research projects with our local universities as well as focus groups;
- Ensuring older people's views are taken into account in policy and service development through participation in Age Friendly City and related consultation and engagement processes e.g. Newcastle City Council's Let's Talk.
- Enabling older people to make a contribution, in particular by encouraging older people to develop activities for their peers to address social isolation. Currently the Elders Council is running a small grants programme called Staying Connected which aims to inspire older people to develop local activity programmes.
- Encouraging older people to get on-line through a digital drop-in provided jointly with students from Northumbria University, which attracts c 30 people every week.