

Valuing Older People

Update Report 2004–08



Foreword

For a number of years, Manchester City Council, Manchester NHS and partners in the community and the voluntary sector have developed a national reputation for being at the forefront of innovation in challenging mainstream attitudes about older people and ageing. And for good reason: the city's industrial decline of the 70s and 80s has left a legacy of poverty and poor health experienced by many of Manchester's older residents. The facts are startling: the city has the lowest life expectancy for men and the third-poorest older population in England.

The city has made important steps forward in developing services and providing opportunities that can improve the quality of life of the city's older residents. For example, from 1 June 2008, all Manchester residents aged 60 and over can swim for free in the city's public swimming baths – a first for an English city, and a policy adopted by the Government.

In many areas the city has made progress: from impressive regeneration and housing programmes, to the modernisation of social care services and the investment in transport options, cultural opportunities and healthy ageing projects. Manchester has also developed partnerships with academic institutions and is supporting a number of ongoing investigations into the lives of the city's older people, designed to influence how we develop new policies and services.

At the centre of Manchester's Valuing Older People (VOP) strategy has been the engagement and involvement of the city's creative and resourceful older population, through a board of older people, a city-wide forum of older people's groups, and a number of locality projects.

This report is published as a new Ageing Strategy for Manchester is being written. The new strategy will map out how the city is to achieve its Community Strategy aim of being a Pioneering Third Age City by 2015.

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Introduction

Welcome to our Valuing Older People (VOP) update 2008. We have produced this update for two reasons.

First, we want to show the progress made since the VOP strategy was launched in 2004, which includes successful projects, the promotion of the older people's agenda across the city and the development of structures giving older people a greater say in their communities and in the services they use.

Second, it forms part of the development of a new Manchester strategy for ageing and older people which will cover the three years from summer 2008 until 2011 and progress towards making Manchester a pioneering third age city by 2015.

This report is divided into three sections. The first covers the work co-ordinated by the VOP core team, including efforts to engage and involve older people, the nationally acknowledged positive images and communication project, the annual VOP Full of Life Festival, and our mapping, research and information work.

The second offers an overview of how the city's agencies have contributed towards improving the lives of older Mancunians since 2004.

A short final section outlines how Manchester is developing the new ageing strategy. The report represents real progress made by the city, but we know there is much more to do.

National context

Over the lifetime of the VOP programme there has been an explosion of activity in the ageing agenda, the most high profile developments being the Turner inquiry into the future of pension provision and the Wanless reports on the future of health and social care services.

Other important national programmes have included:

- Opportunity Age, the Government-wide strategy for ageing
- The Social Exclusion Unit report A Sure Start in Later Life
- The academic sector led the Growing Older and New Dynamics of Ageing programmes
- The Transformational Government strategy for older people
- The Partnerships for Older People's Projects (POPPs) programme
- The health and social care and public health White Papers
- The Better Government for Older People programme
- The Local Government Association Action Learning Sets
- The Public Service Agreement 17 tackling poverty and promoting greater independence and wellbeing in later life.

Officers and older people from Manchester have helped shape some of these initiatives, working closely with national agencies, giving advice and making the case for Manchester.

The local picture

In 2004 the Manchester Partnership adopted VOP as a cross-cutting priority and in 2006 implemented the city's community strategy, known as 'The Manchester Way'.

The launch of the Manchester Local Area Agreement (LAA) in 2006 committed the city to a number of 'stretch' targets and contained a section on older people with dual emphasis on:

- Improving the quality of life for some of the city's poorest older residents through the

take-up of the Pension Credit, access to white goods and furniture packages, and energy-efficiency advice and measures

- Projects aimed at improving health, including exercise on prescription and smoking cessation schemes.

The 2008 LAA contains a commitment by the city's agencies to improve health later in life, as well as adding extra years to life expectancy.

What the Audit Commission has said about Manchester

"Manchester City Council has developed a good strategic approach to older people with many examples of good engagement and consultation processes leading to positive outcomes. The Council and its partners, through Valuing Older People, have made good progress in ensuring that older people's issues are fully considered as a cross-cutting theme."

The Audit Commission 2006

In their latest report, 'Don't stop me now: Preparing for an ageing population' (July 2008) the Audit Commission points out that most councils should do more to create

an environment in which people thrive as they age. They reviewed councils' preparedness for an ageing population, and explored how councils' should plan strategically, increase awareness and develop engagement and innovative solutions. Manchester was one of the areas described as demonstrating good practice, specifically:

- Understanding and engaging the older community, as we have champions at all levels and an evolving Older People's Board
- Age-proofing mainstream services and involving older people in service design
- Targeted services that promote independence via the user committees at the older people's resource centres.

Section 1: Engagement, locality working and communication

Engaging older people

Engaging older people in decision-making has been central to the VOP programme. We have achieved this by setting up a board of older people, a city-wide forum, developing local networks, and involving older people in our task groups and events.

The VOP Board

The first Valuing Older People Board meeting was held in July 2004 and has continued to meet every six weeks. Its core business has been to agree plans and priorities, debate key issues and hold to account officers from a wide range of agencies.

VOP Board members have been involved in various initiatives. Here are just a few examples:

- Member of Healthy Ageing Strategy Group
- First 'lay' member of the City-wide Falls Prevention Group
- Member of Partnerships for Older People's Projects (POPPs) bid team to the Department of Health (DoH)
- Members of Positive Images and Communications Task Group
- Newsletter Editorial Board and production of quarterly VOP newsletter
- Central and South Manchester Local Implementation Teams for the National Service Framework for Older People
- Presentation to Northwest Older People's Champions Network convened by Better Government for Older People
- Presentation to the Culture North West steering group
- Assessor for Prospectus for Change social care project
- Member of the Local Strategic Partnership Transport and Crime Subgroup
- Members of the VOP Small Grants Panel
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Task Group
- Designing the Valuing Experience lifelong learning course
- Attendance at the Social Exclusion Unit visit to Manchester
- Members of the Ageing and Ethnicity steering group
- Member of the group to steer the local Intergenerational Programme

The membership of the original VOP Board was agreed by an expert panel. Following a review in 2007, the Board is now made up of fifteen members comprising:

- Five members nominated by city-wide older people's organisations
- Five members elected by Manchester Older People's Forum
- Five members appointed by a panel.

This new structure was designed to ensure continuity with the original VOP Board while also allowing new people to get involved, achieving a balance of involvement from across the city while maintaining effective leadership of the VOP programme.

The 2007 structures linked the Board into the city's main community sector groups and gave members of the Older People's Forum the opportunity to stand for election.

VOP Board members 2007–09

Bill Booth, Margaret Bruce, Mike Delaney, Jaya Graves, Simon Katzenellenbogen, Josie Loftus, Margaret Parkes, Veronica Powell, Tony Rock, Kate Torkington, Jim Trotman, Elaine Unegbu, Bhim Virmani, Tommy Walsh, Dave Williams.

Forum events

The Forum events were created to gain a wider pool of information than could be provided solely by the board members and the organisations they represented, to better consult and inform service planning.

The first Forum was on Housing for Older People, bringing older residents, from a range of tenancy types across the city, to present their own housing experiences and

generate discussion in groups and workshops. Subsequent forums have included Transport Information, which attracted over 200 people to the Town Hall, and Older, Out and Proud, an event that gave voice to Manchester's older lesbian and gay population.

Following the success of the themed Forum events, a city-wide Older People's Forum was launched in February 2007. The Forum, which meets four times a year, is made up of representatives from a wide range of community groups and individuals who have expressed a wish to be involved with VOP, and provides an opportunity for many more people to have their say.

Task groups

Developed to address some of the issues highlighted in the 2004 Quality of Life Strategy, all task groups contain officers working with older people, whether members of the board, of Manchester's Older Peoples Network or self-selected concerned residents.

Some task groups were time-limited with specific targets, while others have an ongoing role in the implementation of the strategy. Groups have ranged from a multi-agency task group looking at the needs of Manchester's older lesbian and gay population to a Maximising Income Group exploring measures to ensure that more older people received their full benefit entitlement, had access to training and were given support to return to work if they so required.

VOP local networks

VOP networks work in a defined geographical area, bringing together local agencies, older people and other interested parties to identify concerns, share ideas, take action and find local solutions to local problems. Networks help

Information and communication

place the older people's agenda at the centre of regeneration and capital investment programmes across the city.

Each network has a core duty to provide and co-ordinate local information about services and opportunities. To date there have been five local networks and two more are under discussion.

VOP Small Grants scheme

This scheme was launched in September 2004 and is promoted to community groups in order to enable them to organise local work that includes older people. It allocated £27,135 in its first year to a diverse range of initiatives across Manchester, involving 34 groups. In its second year, it allocated a further £26,900 to 39 groups, mostly new groups with repeat grants to six groups. The allocation panel consists of a majority of older people. Panel members visited projects to learn more about the groups and their suitability for awards, and took part in the monitoring process. In 2007, VOP teamed up with Help the Aged to run a further small grants scheme for groups that might have difficulty accessing other pots of money due to grant criteria. The fund provides resources for one-off pieces of equipment, day trips and social events.

Older people consider access to accurate, up-to-date information a priority. The VOP team have addressed this in a number of ways:

The VOP newsletter

The VOP newsletter is our most important tool for communicating with thousands of older people across Manchester, providing a mixture of Manchester news, real-life stories and information on national developments.

Currently circulated quarterly with a print run of 12,000, the VOP newsletter is available in all the city's libraries and resource centres, and is also distributed by home care teams and mobile library services in order to reach housebound older people.

Issue 12 saw older people taking over the majority of the editorial duties and the team has plans to introduce new features and regular columns in 2008 and beyond.

Guide to Life in Manchester

The Guide to Life in Manchester, first published in May 2006, is a 32-page guide to services, opportunities and advice for Manchester's older people. 15,000 copies of the first edition quickly ran out, leading us to produce a second print run of 20,000 in conjunction with the Gateway service, a one-stop shop for information for older people, their families and carers.

The guide provides a clear and concise summary of a wide range of services and contains real-life case studies to highlight the benefits such services provide. Using positive portraits of Manchester people and a colour-coded, easy-access system, the guide is a great example of effective information provision.

Website/e-bulletin

The Valuing Older People website (part of the Council's website) can be found at www.manchester.gov.uk/vop. Developed in 2006, the website provides information about services and opportunities across the city, as well as links to relevant sites.

As well as each quarterly newsletter, website users can also access our e-bulletins – a monthly electronic newsletter circulated to 700 officers and organisations working with older people in Manchester. The e-bulletin contains details of new national policy developments and local initiatives, and enables Manchester organisations to share good practice and learn what is happening across the city and across the diverse themes covered by the VOP programme.

VOP mapping project

Mapping and information development helps us establish how well the Council and its partners are serving the older people of the city. Mapping involves collating information about services, facilities, local groups, activities and opportunities for older people. It also provides information for the older people themselves and their advisers, practitioners, other service providers and locality and city-wide commissioning.

The Manchester Community Health Information Profile (mCHIP) was an important tool. VOP extended mCHIP's contents to cover local older people's groups. The database was shared with the Partnership for Older People's Projects, and became the basis for the directory in the Gateway website now informing Manchester Advice adults' directory development.

The group developed the VOP 'Directory of Data Sources Relating to Older People's Health, Wellbeing and Quality of Life in Manchester', showing what data is available and how it is aggregated and can be broken down by area, age groups, etc. This helped highlight information needs and develop an Outcome and Performance Management framework.

How VOP is organised

Council Champions

Council Deputy Leader, Councillor Val Stevens is the Executive lead member for Valuing Older People. Councillor Sue Coolley is the VOP Council Champion and Councillor Rosa Battle is the Intergenerational Champion. Councillor Basil Curley is Executive member for Adult Services. Caroline Marsh, the Director of Adult Social Care, is the Chief Officer lead for VOP.

VOP Officer Group

The VOP Officer Group is made up of representatives from Council departments, the Manchester Primary Care Trust and community sector groups. The officer group produces an annual action plan and meets every two months to plan and coordinate action, support the VOP Board and monitor progress.

VOP and the Manchester Joint Health Unit

The VOP team is part of the Manchester Joint Health Unit, which is based in the Chief Executive's Department in Manchester City Council. The Joint Health Unit was set up in 2002 and charged with co-ordinating action and strategies to reduce health inequalities in Manchester, and between Manchester and the rest of the country.

Positive images of ageing

Nearly every older person has a story about being on the receiving end of some form of ageism. The VOP Positive Images of Ageing campaign promotes a positive and healthy attitude towards ageing in older people and challenges negative stereotypes of older people.

Calendars and billboard campaigns

Thirty thousand copies of our Positive Images calendars have been circulated over the past four years, and the calendar has attracted an enormous amount of attention country-wide. Images from the calendars have been used in the Opportunity Age national policy documents, cited as good practice by the Audit Commission and used in postgraduate university courses.

Full of Life Festival

The Full of Life Festival is an annual celebration of ageing in the city. Best remembered for the chance to go-kart around Albert Square, Valuing Older People's first Big Event in October 2004 proved that older Mancunians don't need much encouragement to get out there and enjoy themselves. Over 350 people turned up to sample the activities and entertainments on offer at the Town Hall,

which also gave them access to information from around 80 organisations working with older people across the city.

In 2005 the Big Event expanded into the Full of Life Festival, a week of activities including everything from conferences to local events and workshops, as well as a fashion show hosted by Marks & Spencer, city-centre activities in the theatres, galleries and museums, and the Town Hall Big Event, attended by around 500 eager participants.

2006 saw 85 community groups holding events across the city, and an expansion of the free programme of cultural activities (see page 28 for more on cultural aspects of the 2006 and 2007 festivals). In 2007 the continued expansion meant that the Big Event became the 'Big Three', with over 3,000 older people getting involved, and 27 local events were organised by grant-aided groups who recruited 85 new members and volunteers.

The VOP calendars

- The 2005 Challenging Older People in Manchester calendar featured a 90-year-old, rugby-playing 'Mr March', generating local television and radio coverage.
- The 2006 calendar, Growing Older with Attitude in Manchester, ran alongside a city centre billboard campaign. The media latched onto the naked 'Mr and Mrs September', an image that again generated considerable interest and debate.
- The Older and Bolder in Manchester calendar, billboard campaign and VOP newsletter encouraged older Mancunians to try something new in 2007.
- Intergenerational relationships was the theme for the 2008 A City for All Ages calendar. Some of these images have been adopted by the National Centre for Intergenerational Practice and can be seen on their website at: www.centreforip.org.uk

Women's Voice Awards

In 2005 female members of the VOP Board were recognised by the Council, receiving a certificate, chocolates and flowers at a dinner celebrating their work. In 2006, Marie Koudellas from Gorton was recognised for her tireless input into her local community and her support for the VOP agenda.

What older people value

During the summer of 2005, local artist and reminiscence facilitator Roger Sim worked with older people's groups across the city to explore what older people value. After a series of workshops and photographic sessions, a large photographic montage was created; this was launched at the City Art Gallery and went on to tour libraries and resource centres across Manchester.

Researching ageing in Manchester

Manchester is becoming a centre for research with older people. So far we have:

- Conducted a major research project into services for black and minority ethnic elders (see page 11)
- Started to investigate engagement and social inclusion of older people in four Manchester neighbourhoods – this major three-year project with Keele University is part of the New Dynamics of Ageing research programme: see www.keele.ac.uk/research/lcs/csg/callme/
- Supported a project by Manchester Metropolitan University into older people's involvement in the VOP Board and its effectiveness
- Via Manchester Enterprises, commissioned research into worklessness among people over 50 and the services that support them to find employment
- Fed local POPP programme evaluation into Department of Health research to inform national development of low-level and preventative services
- Been a case study for the Local Government Association and others
- Participated as one of the ten fieldwork sites in the Audit Commission's National Study on Wellbeing in Later Life in 2007 to assess the impact of Opportunity Age on local government; and the preparedness of councils for the challenges of an ageing population.

Ageing and discrimination

Ageing and ethnicity

VOP has worked with the Policy Research Institute on Ageing and Ethnicity (PRIAE) to research the barriers facing minority and ethnic communities in accessing services.

The research is based on PRIAE's previous European study on minority elders' health and social care and housing-related support. VOP will also develop a strategy to improve the quality of life of Manchester's black and minority ethnic elders alongside the work done by the Manchester Race and Health Forum, Agenda 2010 and other Council and PCT partners.

Local field workers interviewed over 440 older people between June 2006 and February 2007; health and social care professionals have been surveyed via online questionnaires, and the minority ethnic voluntary sector have been consulted via in-depth interviews.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT)

Older lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people have remained a hidden minority for many years. To focus on this underrepresentation, we convened a time-limited VOP task group drawn from the Council, the voluntary sector and Manchester's older lesbian and gay community. The group worked closely with the Lesbian and Gay Foundation, and with Age Concern's 'Out in the City', to examine the needs of older LGBT people, working towards bringing about a cultural shift to ensure that the needs of older LGBT people are routinely considered within mainstream provision.

In May 2006 the group hosted an event that saw addresses from high-profile national speakers and encouraged our older LGBT community to

have a voice and to be older, out and proud! VOP continues to support the work of the 'Out in the City' group and other initiatives.

In 2006 Supporting People commissioned a housing support service specifically for older lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. The aim of the service is to support older people from the LGBT community to maintain their independence and access other services, whilst protecting anonymity; in particular to sensitively monitor the gender identity and sexuality of clients and to evaluate the benefit of the service. Anyone can use the service, including Adult Social Care, local housing officers, the Lesbian and Gay Foundation and other more generic support services.

Age discrimination

Age discrimination results from ageism, a form of prejudice that can be direct (where an individual is treated less favourably because of their age), or indirect (where care is offered in such a way that older people are disadvantaged). The reasons for this are varied and ageism is widespread.

In conjunction with the Manchester Older People's Network and the Manchester Primary Care Trusts, the Strategic Health Authority held an event focusing on education and training in challenging age discrimination. The decision to look at this was generated by older people themselves through the Manchester Older People's Network, and over a third of delegates at the event were representatives of older people's organisations. The resulting feedback was that older people wanted to see improved training for front-line staff with regards to age discrimination.

Section 2: Mainstreaming ageing

Crime and community safety

An increased fear of crime can lead to social isolation, depression and lack of confidence.

Since the launch of the VOP strategy, the Manchester Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CRDP) has supported several initiatives aimed at reducing crime and the fear of crime among older people. Particular effort has been made to reduce distraction burglary.

Achievements

1. Manchester is a partner in the north west early-warning scheme for distraction burglary, sharing information about distraction burglars across the north west. This helps improve detection rates and ensures measures can be put in place to stop such burglaries. Since intelligence indicates that, for this particular crime type, perpetrators travel extensively using the same scam, these measures include circulating descriptions of offenders

KEY FACTS

- 56% of Manchester residents in 2005/06 perceived their area to be safe
- Older people in the city are as likely to say their area is safe, or unsafe, as people of other ages. However, the proportion feeling very safe in specific daytime situations (including being home alone) decreases with age
- Although older people may feel less safe in certain situations, they are least likely to be victims of crime. For example, over the past two years (April 2006 to March 2008), the percentage of victims of crime aged 51 and over was 14%, whereas 44% were aged 19–35 years
- The over-50s are also less likely to experience antisocial behaviour
- Burglary has shown a 26% reduction since 2003/04
- Distraction burglary is a key area where older people need support and where they need to be vigilant. Between April 2004 and March 2007, most victims were over 51 and the large majority were over 66
- Personal robbery is down by 9% since 2003/04 and theft from the person is down by 34%.

- to surrounding areas to ensure that police and other CDRP partners are aware of their activity.
2. 'No cold-calling' zones have been implemented across areas of Manchester, where signage is erected and residents 'buy into' the scheme. The project has been particularly effective and well received in sheltered housing schemes.
 3. An extensive programme of alley-gating has been implemented across city hot spots for burglary. Housing Services installed over 1,800 sets of gates, benefiting around 25,000 Manchester residents. During April to September 2007, 694 new alley-gates were provided, with older people prioritised. These schemes contribute to the impetus of building clean and safe sustainable neighbourhoods.
 4. Target-hardening schemes have been introduced, allowing residents, particularly older people, to feel safer in their homes. Security measures, including new locks, are offered to burglary victims and residents of hot-spot areas. More than 4,000 residential properties were target-hardened in 2006/07.
 5. In 2007/08 the POPP Gateway sent information about community alarms to 405 housebound older people. 465 service users have a community alarm due to fear of burglary, and 30 alarms were installed from April to September 2007. Of these, 34 were provided for older disabled people living alone or with a carer and in fear of crime.
 6. Funds have been invested to promote the Community Alarms service to those people who are retired and living in Manchester's city centre.
 7. Crucial Crew events for older people continue to bring personal safety messages from the police, fire service, transport and health services to older people at luncheon clubs and in sheltered housing schemes. These events also allow the CDRP to publicise the services their programme supports. In 2007 young people from local schools helped out with the organisation on the day, facilitating a better understanding between the generations in local areas.
 8. One of the South Manchester VOP Networks held a public community safety event attended by 90 local residents, who all received home safety advice packs. Various over-50s' roadshows and other older people's events included community safety stalls where similar information and support was available.

Transport

Lack of mobility can exclude older people from services, social events and relationships.

Older people consistently cite access to flexible, affordable transport as being a vital link to friends, family and the wider community. In Manchester we have identified the main areas for action: reducing the cost of public transport, increasing access to it and local flexible community transport; reducing crime and fear of crime around public transport; and improving road safety.

Achievements

1. In December 2005 VOP hosted a conference to gather the views of older people on their priorities for improving local transport. 250 people attended. In the spring of 2006, VOP newsletter's front page was dedicated to promoting the new free travel scheme for disabled people and people over 60.
2. In April 2006 free off-peak travel on local buses, trains and trams across Greater Manchester was introduced for over-60s. The decision, made by Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority, went much further than the Government pledge to provide free off-peak travel on local buses, by including travel by rail and Metrolink trams.

KEY FACTS

- Over-60s in the city are more satisfied with the bus service overall than younger residents – over 70% of 60 to 69-year-olds and over three-quarters of over-70s were satisfied or very satisfied. They were also satisfied with other aspects, except how easy it is to get on and off the buses
- The Ring and Ride service had passenger satisfaction levels of 98%
- Over-60s' uptake of new concessionary bus passes was 3,027 in 2006/07; this was more than in previous years, and it trailed off following the introduction of the new 'smart card' national free travel passes from April 2008
- The average incidents of crime and antisocial behaviour reported on general bus services in the city of Manchester was 876 per calendar year in 2005–07 (2.4 per day) but fell by 7% between 2005 and 2006, and damage to bus shelters fell by 20% in the same period
- 60% of pensioners' (and 52% of over-50s') households do not own or have access to a car
- The importance of road and pavement repairs rises with age
- Road traffic collisions involving a pedestrian over 65 are about a quarter of all fatal collisions and 30% of fatalities involving a pedestrian.

3. From 1 April 2008, over-60s have been entitled to free travel on buses throughout England after 9.30am. As well as offering free off-peak bus travel, Greater Manchester pass-holders can continue to travel free on the county's tram and train network after 9.30am, with concessions before then.
4. From January 2008 the Ring and Ride service in Greater Manchester was expanded with the introduction of cross-boundary services, enabling passengers to travel beyond the city boundary but not across two districts.
5. Taxi and other private hire vehicle operators have been encouraged to participate in the travel voucher scheme. The vouchers provide substantial discounts on community transport and participating operators.
6. The Council has worked with Greater Manchester Police, the Greater Manchester Transport Executive (GMPTA) and local transport providers to take initiatives to reduce crime on public transport by: gateway check schemes to reduce ticketing evasion and associated offences; marshals policing city centre and crime 'hot spot' bus services; and the introduction of 'spit kits' on buses to identify known offenders.
7. In June 2007 the Manchester Road Safety Team and VOP launched a road safety guide, Older and Wiser, for older people who use public transport, cycle or drive. The guide contains advice on using road crossings, driving safely and safer cycling.
8. Older people in Manchester are benefiting from the £60million investment in quality bus corridors, making waiting facilities and environments around bus stops safer and more pleasant. A good example of this is the interchange at Shudehill. Raised kerbs have made it much easier for older people or those with less mobility to board buses.
9. Manchester City Council's engineers, with support from VOP, put in a successful bid for road safety and the improvement of pedestrian routes. Road crossings will be introduced or improved where there is a record of accidents involving older people, and at locations with accessibility problems. Measures will be taken to reduce the number of falls and collisions involving the over-65s, and attention will concentrate on wards where there are a high number of accidents among older people.

Housing and the home

Most older people live in their own homes and can benefit from a range of support and services that maintain their quality of life. There are also many specialist housing choices in the city.

Manchester housing is undergoing renewal and improvement. Transfer of Council stock to new local not-for-profit housing organisations unlocks resources and investment in improvements. The forthcoming Housing Strategy for Older People outlines a range of measures to provide the city's older people with greater quality, choice and access to safe, accessible housing located in attractive neighbourhoods.

Achievements

1. Promoting participation
 - The Supporting People (SP) Core User Group mainly promotes service user involvement in improving services for older people and has a national reputation for excellence. It reviews and approves all key SP policy

decisions and is involved in recruiting 'lay assessors' to review service quality.

- The new local housing organisations have enabled older tenants to get actively involved in the management of their neighbourhoods. Over half the tenant board members are in the older age range.
- Sheltered and Supported Accommodation
- A supported accommodation masterplan included a survey of sheltered housing conditions to inform regeneration strategies and ensure the residents don't miss out on improvements in their neighbourhood.
- Manchester's wide range of available sheltered accommodation has poor take up, especially in particular areas. The Housing Allocations Section and ten key Registered Social Landlords are working to increase awareness.
- Further 'Extra Care' accommodation through the National Affordable Housing Programme will complement the schemes

KEY FACTS

- 47% of households in the city include someone over 50, and 27% include someone of pensionable age. About half of these are owner-occupiers (51% and 49% respectively, 17% and 8% with mortgages); over 40% are in social rented property (42% and 44%); and 5% and 4% (5,065 and 2,541) are older tenants in the private rented sector
- 24,599 people over state-pension age live on their own in the city – including 3,424 over-85-year-olds (almost one-fifth of them being men)
- 45% of households needing support due to being frail or elderly are owner-occupiers and 48% live in socially rented homes
- Over 40,000 Council homes have transferred to new ownership or management and will soon meet the Decent Homes Standard. Over 12,000 more homes will join them in the next two years.

recently set up. Two new schemes will benefit older households: an extra care sheltered housing scheme in Higher Blackley, and a holistic Retirement Village project in Wythenshawe. Both schemes aim to offer appropriate new and refurbished housing options supported by services for older people in these localities.

1. Manchester Equipment and Adaptations Partnership broke their record in January 2008 when over 98 per cent of equipment and minor adaptations were delivered/installed within seven working days. Between April 2007 and March 2008, 90 per cent of the 38,342 deliveries/installations were completed within seven days. Such delivery of beds and hoists enables hospital discharge, eases transition from hospital to home, helps people live more safely and reduces falls.
 2. Manchester's Home Improvement Agencies, Care and Repair and Anchor Trust, now include home safety assessments and services, handyperson services and a decorating service for carers. POPP funding extended Care and Repair's handyperson service to all wards and tenures so it reached 1,000 households by 2007, and 600 had 'falls prevention' measures fitted.
 3. Supporting People funded Manchester Care and Repair's extra crisis-intervention worker for older people with complex needs, and a Home from Hospital service, run by Anchor Staying Put, giving practical help to older people returning to independent living after a hospital stay. In 2007 People First began an early intervention service providing housing-related support for older people with early signs of dementia.
 4. Independence through housing support
 - The Council's Housing Support services enable older people to stay in their homes, and actively promote the service to potential
- clients of all tenures. All clients can receive full fire-safety checks. 2061 new clients have been supported since April 2003, and at any time some 550 clients are receiving support.
- The Generation Project, linked to New East Manchester, supports older people through moving home. Adactus Housing provided similar support for households affected by compulsory purchase in Miles Platting.
 - In 2006 Manchester commissioned support for older people with mental health problems in Wythenshawe, to maintain their independence, reduce hospital admissions and prevent the need for care homes.
 7. Over 600 households, including over-60s, live more comfortably and safely each year following the Council's energy-efficiency interventions, which reduce fuel poverty and assist owner-occupiers and private tenants to improve their living conditions.
 8. To maximise the reach of such services, a pilot project promotes referrals for Decent Homes Assessments from the NHS to the Energy Efficiency team and Home Improvement agencies. Operating in Gorton and Longsight, this is done on a case-by-case basis, and includes elderly and vulnerable households.
 9. The Furnished Accommodation Team provided packages of furniture and/or white goods for over 640 older clients in 2008, including 68 new cases.
 10. Housing Market Intervention: The National Affordable Housing Programme is funding 16 affordable older persons' bungalows in Blackley. This has met local need and proved very popular. There are plans to develop more with Registered Social Landlords to tackle underoccupation and provide needed accommodation.

Economic life and income

It is increasingly recognised that poverty and unemployment in mid-life are almost inevitably followed by poverty in old age.

The city has taken a twin-track approach to reducing the number of older adults who live on low incomes: maximising the number of people aged above state retirement age claiming their entitlements, such as Pension Credit; and promoting age-positive employment.

Maximising the number of people aged above state pension age claiming their entitlements

Nationally, entitlements worth £2.5 billion a year (£5 million a week) go unclaimed. Manchester has one of the highest levels of pensioner poverty in the country. Many older people are living on low incomes because they do not know they can get financial help, while others wrongly assume they are not eligible for help because they have small savings or own their home.

Achievements

1. The Council is promoting the take-up of entitlements, such as Pension Credit, through a wide range of community events and targeted publicity, including 10,000 VOP leaflets and one-to-one advice. Since October 2007 the Take the Credit campaign has reached 500 older people, advised 150 in person and worked with groups in and around Gorton. The POPP Gateway dealt with 359 benefit queries between April and September 2007.
2. Council campaigns have included special publicity aimed at those eligible for Housing Benefit and Council Tax rebate. The Benefits Fraud Inspectorate reported on these initiatives in 2007 and concluded that, "the Council had a clear commitment to improving the level of benefit take-up within the community" and "found strong evidence that the Council worked with external stakeholders... to promote benefit take-up."
3. A survey of a representative sample of 411 residents living in the most deprived parts of Manchester was conducted in June 2006 to provide baseline information for the Council's Financial Inclusion Strategy.
4. VOP is also supporting the Tax Help for Older People (TOP) project, helping older people on low incomes with their tax problems.

KEY FACTS

- 26,080 of Manchester's estimated 60,140 pensioners (as of mid-2006) claimed pension credit in May 2007
- In February 2008, of the 67,565 Manchester residents aged over 60, 18,830 were claiming Housing Benefit and 24,497 were claiming Council Tax benefit
- The 359 benefit queries between April and September 2007 were 26% of all Partnership for Older People's Projects (POPP) Gateway queries.

Promoting age positive employment

Promoting age diversity in employment for those aged between 50 and state retirement age (which is still 60 for women and 65 for men).

Achievements

1. The work that has been delivered through the City Strategy initiative has had an impact on moving many residents aged over 50 from benefit dependency into employment. Between November 2006 and November 2007 there was a reduction of 400 in the number of residents aged over 50 claiming benefits. This exceeded the City Strategy year 1 target of 383 and made it a reduction of 720 over the three years to November 2007.
2. Last year through the Stepping Stones project, 97 older residents moved from benefit dependency into sustainable employment. This was an increase on the previous year.

Working in partnership with other organisations (including Jobcentre Plus) the Council and Manchester Enterprises have promoted a programme of work that has included:

- Promoting Age Positive standards and Age Discrimination legislation to local employers and hosting, with The Age and Employment Network and the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, two well-attended events for local employers
- Reducing the number of local residents dependent on out of work benefits, which includes residents in receipt of Jobseekers Allowance (JSA), Incapacity Benefit (IB) and Income Support (IS)
- Arranging a number of Jobs Fairs across the city that targeted people aged 50 and over
- Supporting older workers to adopt new skills
- Securing support in the City Strategy for work aimed at reducing unemployment across Greater Manchester.

KEY FACTS

- Manchester has a higher number of people on out-of-work benefits and the employment rate is lower than the national average
- From January 2004 to January 2006 the number of people between 50 and state retirement age dropped from 47,356 to 47,942, while the number of people

unemployed dropped from 690 to 650. By January 2007 the number had risen to 720 and in January 2008 it was 710

- In May 2007 out-of-work benefits were claimed by 18,890 Manchester residents aged between 50 and state pension age.

Health and social care

Older people unable to access services risk not receiving the care they need to live a healthy and independent life.

During the past two years there have been important developments in health and social care designed to prevent admission to hospital or long-term residential care, while promoting choice and independence. These are guided by the principles in the Our Health, Our Care, Our Say White Paper.

Achievements

1. Extra Care Sheltered Housing has been and is being developed in the city. Extra Care schemes have social care on site at all times that is responsive to changing needs. Three schemes opened in 2005 and provide 95 places, with one of the schemes offering specialist services to sufferers of dementia and other memory loss conditions. The schemes all proved popular and a successful alternative to residential care, helping to avoid hospital admissions and in some cases reducing the amount of care needed. Another scheme to provide 80 flats opens this winter.

2. Reablement and Intermediate Care
- Building on the successful Short Term Assessment and Rehabilitation (STAR) service and Home Care Pathway of Central Manchester intermediate care, the Adult Social Care in-house homecare service is becoming a 'reablement' service. A pilot provided intensive short-term support (six weeks or less) for most new users of the service in the north of the city. Results were very encouraging: of 174 people who received the service by last December, 41% had no care need at the end of an initial package. The service is going city-wide during 2008.
 - In April 2005 Active Case Management by nurses or other practitioners was introduced across the city for older patients with two or more chronic diseases and hospital admissions in the previous year. This has led to improved health outcomes in the nine months after getting active case management (compared to the nine months before) and 138 fewer emergency hospital admissions, 2018 fewer days in hospital and shorter average lengths of stay.

KEY FACTS

- When surveyed in 2006, 64% of homecare service users over 65 were satisfied or very satisfied with the services they received
- In 2007, 82% of the older NHS patients consulted by Manchester Health Watchdog were satisfied or very satisfied with the health services they received
- The number of older people helped to live at home by Adult Social Care was around 5,500 per year (5,704 in 2005/06 and 5,651 in 2006/07)
- There was a reduction in delayed hospital discharges for people aged over 65 between 2005/06 and 2006/07, from 959 to 799
- 93% of delayed hospital discharges

- Expansion of residential beds for Intermediate Care services has continued over the years with 12 new beds from 2006 at the Peele Centre in south Manchester (additional to the 14 beds at Buccleuch Lodge); 30 beds at Kirklees in central Manchester, where there were 10; and, in addition to the current 15 beds in the north of the city, 10 new beds are due in July 2008.
3. Individual Budgets and Home Care commissioning and provision
 - Manchester has been one of the authorities piloting individual budgets, and had the target 300 clients by April 2008, the majority being older people. A cash or 'virtual' budget is now offered to all new customers, and to existing ones on case review.
 - Adult Social Care changed how it commissions homecare to increase flexibility of service, increase providers' local knowledge, and cut travel time. From 27 providers, many working city-wide, the area was divided into eight localities with one major provider for each. Now customers and staff alike are offered a transfer to the new provider, and customers are also offered the choice of an individual budget.
 4. Since 2004 carers' grant aids have increased from just over £1million to over £2million, so between April and November 2007 approximately 1,500 carers aged 50 and over accessed grants/support; and approximately 1,350 people aged 50 and over benefited from support to their carers of all ages.
 5. New Carers' services developed since 2004 include:
 - Decorating through one-off payments
 - Increase in information to carers (newsletter, DVDs, multilingual, GP packs), a carers' network and events
 - Emergency respite and new funding for respite for older carers from 2008/09
 - Carers' assessment training for all care managers
 - Questionnaires sent out to all carers to get feedback on their assessments.
 6. The Prospectus for Change partnership works with five care providers to deliver new assessment and respite beds for older people with mental health problems. There has also been a pilot project providing home support such people and their carers.
 7. The Change in Mind proposals for mental health services have led to joint community health teams and social care community teams for older people, and better access for older people to emergency mental health services and mainstream services, in particular intermediate care.
 8. New protocols introduced for the referral and treatment of depression and dementia are being used by GPs and community health and social care teams.

9. 47 POPP preventive schemes were funded from May 2006 to March 2008, with 4,868 people accessing schemes between April 2007 and March 2008. These services include projects to support older people with low-level mental health needs and carers of people with dementia. Adult Social Care has provided funding to continue most of the schemes for a further six months, and the PCT is funding them for the rest of the year. This is to allow time for more realistic monitoring and evaluation, as many of the projects have not been long in existence. POPP also funds the Gateway information access service, whose work is continuing throughout 2008/09; and The Business Improvement Project, which will continue to provide small organisation support and capacity building within the voluntary sector
10. Adult Social Care is developing a prevention strategy via detailed analysis of 206 case files of people aged between 65 and 75 and over-75s, summarising their reasons for seeking help/referral and underlying causes. This is to help develop and commission services to help prevent occurrence of falls, 'carer breakdown' and other triggers and underlying causes of the over-65s' need for intensive care.

Healthy ageing

Socio-economic factors earlier in life contribute to the state of health in older life.

Increasing public awareness of factors that cause poor health in later life has led to increased demand for projects and services to address these risks. Although life expectancy in the city is poor, the good news is that the gap between Manchester and England is closing. Manchester's agencies support a wide range of low-level preventive projects and services, designed to improve quality of life in later years.

Achievements

1. The VOP Healthy Ageing task group prioritised two areas: preventing falls and increasing physical activity. A conference was held during the 2006 Full of Life Festival, drawing delegates from across the city to discuss and promote the benefits of physical activity for older people: the city's three referral schemes are central to this. Over 500 over-50s have attended exercise on referral sessions each year. In 2007 a Healthy Ageing report with mid-life and life-course focus was produced, an open workshop was held, and outline strategy formed. The new Leisure-led Sport and Physical Activity Alliance is well positioned to build on Serco concessions, over-60s' free swimming, exercise on referral schemes, etcetera.

KEY FACTS

- Life expectancy at 65 in Manchester (using 2004–06 averages) was 15.3 years for men and 18.4 years for women, ranked 426th and 399th out of 432 UK local authority areas
- Healthy life expectancy at 65 for England (calculated from the Census data and 1999–2003 death rates) was 12.5 years for men and 14.5 years for women, whereas in Manchester it was 9.7 years for men and 12 years for women
- Similarly derived disability-free life expectancy at 65 for England was 9.5 years for men and 10.6 years for women
- In 2006, the age-standardised death rate from circulatory diseases (heart disease/stroke) for Manchester's under-75s was 138.1 per 100,000 (in England it was 79 per 100,000)
- In the same year and for the same population, the age-standardised death rate from cancers was 167.3 per 100,000 (in England, 115.5)
- The recorded number of over-75s living in the city whose falls lead to attendance at Accident and Emergency is rising. This may be due to better recording of falls and ages, as well as more residents in the city reaching their 80s
- The large majority of older residents do not eat the recommended five portions of fruit and vegetables per day, reported levels drop from 20% of 60 to 69-year-olds to only 16% of over-75s.

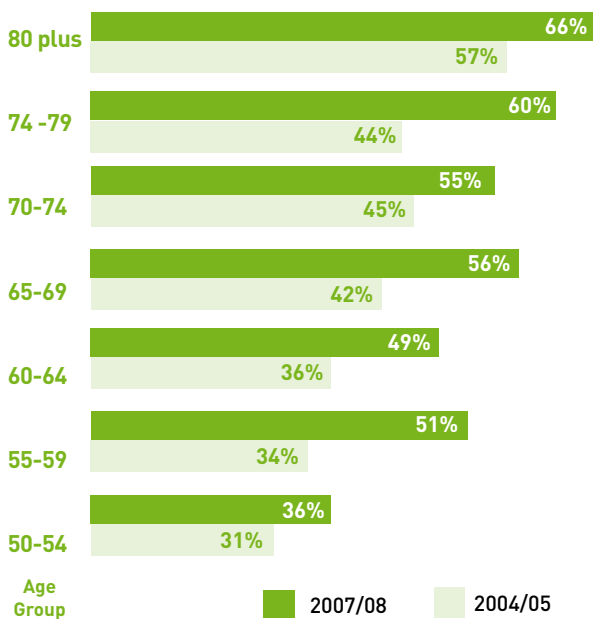
2. Between April 2004 and September 2007, almost half (49%) of the over-65s who accessed smoking cessation had quit at four weeks (1,809 over-65s among 6,258 over-50s). Smoke-free legislation meant more clients of all ages set quit dates last year: from April – September 2007, 26 per cent more attended smoking cessation than April – September 2006 and four-week quitters increased by 10 per cent.
3. Manchester Healthy Living Networks and Manchester Public Health Development led a range of community-based activities. More opportunities for gentle exercise have been organised through various providers and promoted via Falls Prevention Day in June 2007. Manchester Community Resource Centres for older people also developed a range of healthy-ageing activities, and Manchester Libraries are piloting small health-information collections in Community Resource Centres.
4. Following a well-publicised campaign, 73 per cent of over-65s were immunised against influenza in 2005/06 and 2006/07 (only 67% were immunised in 2003/04, 71% in 2004/05) taking the city close to regional and national averages.
5. Manchester Food Futures supports Herbie, a mobile greengrocer run by Manchester Environmental Resource Initiative (MERCi). Herbie provides affordable good-quality fruit and vegetables in parts of the city where access to fresh food is poor. Herbie expanded in 2007 specifically to reach older people. Food Futures also funded a number of community projects that contributed to the health and wellbeing of older people, including start-up funds for the Tree of Life Centre café in Woodhouse Park, two community allotment projects, and community and voluntary-sector collaboration to extend and build on lunch clubs' good practice. The latter includes 'shared taste' client share, sessions to improve clients' access to healthy food, and education for the providers of healthy foods in particular cultures.
6. Alcohol is a priority area with a new inter-agency strategy. A new social marketing campaign targets consumption of alcohol in older age groups, and a health trainer is training front-line staff to address excess alcohol consumption in older age groups.
7. The Manchester Leisure over-50s' Sports Development programme expanded into more areas of the city, working with community and statutory agencies, providing various exercise sessions as well as allotment activity, health walks and an annual Lord Mayor's Games. The number of visits made by over-50s to these sports development activities keeps rising: 7,463 in 2005/06, 9,923 in 2006/07 and 10,107 in 2007/08. Last year, 701 people visited a wide range of activities, including armchair-based exercise sessions, bowling, t'ai chi, curling, dance, golf, aqua-aerobics, 'learn to swim' and other indoor activities. In 2007 three new sessions were established, 27 allotment plots were cleared and there were improvements in use of leisure centres and indoor facilities in parks.
8. Inspired by a playground in Germany, the Dam Head Residents Association, the Friends of Dam Head Park, Northwards Housing and Manchester Leisure researched, funded and installed the Dam Head Park play area. It was built close to the under-5s' play area, so grandparents could share in the fun and stay fit. The six pieces of equipment gently exercise different parts of the body.

- 9. In 2006, the City-Wide Falls Prevention group produced a leaflet for national Falls Prevention Awareness Day. In 2007 opportunities for gentle exercise were mapped and promoted via an event on national Falls Prevention Awareness Day.
- 10. The VOP Programme teamed up with Manchester Primary Care Trust and Manchester Leisure to secure free swimming for the over-60s in Manchester's pools, launching The Big Splash in June 2008.

Manchester: A good place to grow older?

In 2004 and 2007 Manchester residents were asked if their neighbourhood was 'a good place to grow old'.

Percentage who agree that their local area is a good place to grow old: by age.



Source: Manchester Quality of Life Surveys 2004/5 and 2007/8.

Neighbourhoods

When older people feel isolated and uninvolved in their own communities, it can lead to poor health and depression.

Many of Manchester's neighbourhoods have been undergoing a process of renewal through major investment programmes. Our aim is to ensure that the existing and emerging requirements of, and issues for, older residents are incorporated into the reshaping of the city. In this section we highlight how the VOP vision is translated to the local level, through the development of Valuing Older People Networks, and also how some important projects have been improving the quality of life for older people in local communities.

Achievements

1. Since 2004 VOP Networks have been developed in local areas and currently cover Miles Platting, Ancoats and Collyhurst; Newton Heath; Didsbury and Burnage; and

Gorton. Three of these networks have their own newsletter updating older people on news and initiatives in their community. The Networks are co-ordinated by local officers from the statutory, voluntary or independent sectors and bring together local service providers, community groups and older people to develop local objectives and support projects. Officers from across the city come together at the VOP Neighbourhood Co-ordination Group to learn and plan together.

2. There have been various events, activities and meetings that involve older people in their communities, including cultural activities in Wythenshawe, over-50s' health roadshows organised by the PCT in Gorton, Levenshulme and Longsight, monthly tea dances in Miles Platting, an information session for older people in Chorlton, work with the East Manchester Over-50s' Forum, Health information events in Newton Heath

KEY FACTS

- Over-65s are satisfied (55%) with their local area as a place to live and 55% to 66% think it is a good place to grow old; 45% are satisfied with opportunities for local participation in decisions, compared with 30% of the total respondents; 64% say they are kept well informed; and 77% agree that local people of different backgrounds get on well together (Best Value Survey, 2006)
- Over-55s said the level of crime (69%), clean streets (55%), and road and pavements (47%) are the most important considerations in making a good place to live (2004)
- The importance of road/pavement repairs and health services in making a good place to live rises with age
- In 2004/05 the top two priorities for improvement for over-55s were curbing crime levels (69%), followed by clean streets (55%) and roads and pavements (47%)
- Public transport, shopping facilities and health services were also higher priorities for the over-55s than for the panel overall.

and a consultation event for Didsbury and Burnage on the south Manchester regeneration plan.

3. Local regeneration teams have been developing their Strategic Regeneration Frameworks that reflect older people's issues.
4. The Ageless City work resulted in a wide range of designs by Manchester School of Architecture (MSA) students with older residents who attended sessions. This led to a successful exhibition held in January at the Centre for the Urban Built Environment (CUBE), further meetings, an end-of-year exhibition in June 2008, and a joint publication with MSA.
5. In early 2007, the Valuing Older People team commissioned a report from the Beth Johnson Foundation, which created the Centre for Intergenerational Practice to help the city develop a more co-ordinated city-wide approach to intergenerational work. This has resulted in a programme of work including:
 - A series of training workshops for front-line staff
 - Six demonstration projects, learning from which was used for an online resource
 - A city-wide learning event in early 2008
 - Development of an effective evaluation tool.
6. Older people's aspirations to live at home for as long as possible, and their possible isolation, are issues that do not impact only on older people. The Manchester Partnership supports an intergenerational approach to maintaining and strengthening communities and neighbourhoods of choice. The review of the Community Engagement Strategy included a focus on community cohesion. March 2008's Manchester Conference displayed the Ageless City students' work
7. Older people are often more attached to their neighbourhoods than younger people. There has been an increase in the number of older people active in community engagement projects, such as the Council's Area Co-ordination work, the Community Guardian scheme, volunteering and environmental projects. Numerous articles have been published in ward newsletters promoting services for older people.
8. In 2006 the Council published an important report, 'The Last Post', which highlighted the importance of post offices to local communities, and in particular older people. The council is now working with Royal Mail to limit the impact of any closure programme. This initiative is part of a broader approach to ensure that all local communities have access to basic services and amenities.
9. The Generation Project in East Manchester co-ordinated advocacy and consultation events, benefit take-up campaigns, case work and a befriending project. It provides a local model for the Sure Start to Later Life model promoted by Government's Social Exclusion Unit in their 2006 report.
10. As part of the Sense of Place initiative, Manchester Partnership has recently commissioned the Local Wellbeing Project, which includes a trial of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy involving older people as both volunteer trainees and as clients. The programme aims to enable older people to develop the skills and resilience to come through life-changing experiences, feel optimistic about the future and assist others.

Cultural life and lifelong learning

It is in the cultural sphere that ageist images of older people are most likely to be found. Older people should be able to enjoy a diverse cultural life, with a wide range of opportunities and recognition of the contribution they make to the cultural life of the city.

VOP's definition of cultural activity is wide, including arts, heritage, festivals and events, leisure, sport (see the Healthy Ageing section), pastimes and cultural learning. Nationally, the numbers of people attending arts or cultural events falls sharply around retirement, with the biggest obstacles to attendance being poor health, lack of transport and cost. Local cultural providers have recognised that, in addition to promoting their services to older people, providing outreach sessions and community-based projects is key to opening up the city's world-class cultural opportunities to older Mancunians.

Achievements

1. Every year the VOP Full of Life Festival engages more older residents in more cultural activities; for example, 2006 saw 85 community groups events. Each year there has been an expansion of the free programme of cultural activities managed by the Library Theatre Company, including workshops provided by Manchester Art Gallery, Urbis, Cornerhouse, the Hallé Orchestra, Manchester Museum, Manchester Camerata and many more. In addition to city centre opportunities, these activities were taken out to more community groups in their own venues to accommodate those unable to access the city centre. In 2007 VOP Partners supported local cultural events through 160 small grants and the Festival saw an expansion of the cultural programme with Reels on Wheels film screenings being moved around the city and a high-profile national event being hosted by Urbis.
2. In 2005, VOP partners funded the training of a group of older Wythenshawe residents to write, edit, produce and present their own radio show on Wythenshawe FM. Grey Owls, the weekly two-hour show

KEY FACTS

- 20,000 library members over 50 years of age have used the service in the past year; they borrowed 750,000 books, DVDs, videos, music CDs and music scores
- Between September 2004 and July 2007 (three academic years) Manchester learners aged over 50 attended 21,610 Adult and Further Education courses. During the same time 2,451 older learners attended libraries' learning opportunities
- Between September 2004 and July 2005, 4,442 over-50s attended a Manchester Adult Education course.

- 'by older people for older people', addresses local issues and invites comments on regular phone-ins.
3. Manchester Library service has increased access to mobile library services and reading groups and has made new contributions to local leisure events and facilities. There are seven new mobile library stops and more home visits are made (varying with seasonal needs). Mobile libraries also now offer internet access. In spring 2007, VOP launched the olderandboldermanchester.co.uk weblog.
 4. The Council's Wartime Memories project was launched to mark the 60th VE day celebrations in 2005. A specially commissioned Tree of Remembrance commemorating civilian wartime dead was unveiled in Piccadilly Gardens. A book and audio CD containing moving wartime memories of Mancunians was also published, along with a special edition of Manchester People.
 5. More older people are engaged in a wider range of activities that includes cultural activity in regeneration areas from the north of the city to Wythenshawe. These include libraries' reader, reminiscence and local history groups; and those available at the Library Theatre Company:
 - 'Solos evenings' encouraging people to visit the theatre as part of a group, with a meal before the performance in a nearby restaurant, interval drinks, and if required, an escort to a bus/tram stop or car park after the show
 - Over-50s' play reading groups
 - Discounted performances, including special prices in the first week of productions and for matinee performances
 - Community-based opportunities for older people, including visual arts workshops in sheltered housing schemes, an intergenerational blog project, and creative writing projects based in local libraries.
 6. In 2007 the VOP partners presented to a meeting of the Culture Think Tank North West forum.
 7. Although during the last year national funding for schemes not aimed at people of working age has been reduced, over the past two years local agencies have:
 - Developed learning opportunities in sheltered and residential accommodation for older people who cannot travel and independent learning groups
 - Provided IT training in libraries for about 800 older people each year
 - Increased provision and developed learning opportunities for BME (black and minority ethnic) older people.
 8. Manchester Adult Education dedicated a percentage of its Personal and Community Development Learning funding to a Valuing Older People strand, piloted a Valuing Experience programme addressing older people's issues, and provided learning opportunities for them in community settings.

Section 3: Looking forward

From March to June 2008 officers from a wide range of Manchester organisations, along with older residents from across the city, have been working on a new ageing strategy for Manchester.

A series of workshops, meetings and consultation events was held in order, first, to map out a three-year plan to improve the services and opportunities for older Mancunians, and, second, to identify a series of longer-term objectives.

As part of this process, officers from Manchester met twice with a panel of national experts from academic institutions, national charities and age-sector agencies, while the VOP Board and VOP Forum played an important role in making the views of older people central to this new strategy.

The strategy document will be published in the summer of 2008 and will address issues, including:

- Improving the health of people in mid- and later life
- Reducing poverty and exclusion experienced by older people
- Reducing health, age and income inequalities
- Expanding culture and learning participation
- Reducing social isolation and loneliness
- Improving care and support outcomes
- Building lifetime neighbourhoods.

If you would like a copy of the new strategy document, please contact:

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Front cover: left to right; Leonard Graham, Gilbert Prince and Margaret Reynolds from Great Western Street Tenants and Residents Association, Moss Side. Photo: Paul Herrmann.



Manchester
Primary Care Trust



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