

Get it right

Hartlepool Older People's Consultation Event

FIRST DRAFT

Please note this draft will be used to develop a plan of action.

Report of the Friday November 6th 2009
event held at the Hartlepool Historic Quay

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1. Introduction

1.1 On Friday November 6th 2009 over 150 older people gathered together for a day of consultation around a number of issues relevant to older residents of Hartlepool along with local authority, PCT and voluntary sector support staff, other people with an interest in supporting work with older people, performers, speakers and exhibitors.

1.2 The event is a continuation of previous and current work around the Hartlepool Older Persons Strategy, which is aimed at ensuring that growing old in the Hartlepool is an enriching and enjoyable experience.

1.3 The event was designed to give older people the space and encouragement to discuss their experiences with each other and to voice their concerns and ideas. This was achieved by designing the event in a way that supported everyone to 'have their say'. The participants were seated at twelve round tables, each with facilitators who encouraged the discussion and noted down the responses.

1.4 The event was marketed to those who are already active in the community and to the general public. With this in mind the consultation questions were designed to.

- Stand alone – *so required no previous knowledge*
- Be easily understood
- Be relevant and link to the presentations
- Create meaningful answers/data
- Stimulate round table discussion
- Be recorded at the tables and then reported back via this report

1.5 The consultation questions linked directly to the ten objectives within the Hartlepool Older Persons Strategy drawn up by the Hartlepool 50+ Forum, in partnership with the Older People's Local Implementation Team. This Strategy is linked to an Action Plan. The Information from the 'Get It Right' event will provide a snapshot to consider how the Strategy/Action Plan is impacting on the lives of older people in Hartlepool.

The questions asked at the 'Get It Right' event generated two types of answers:

- In some cases they collected concerns and ideas.
- In some cases they involved the people around each table as a sample to gather data.

1.6 This report is a direct transcript of what was recorded on the day at the tables. It needs to be noted that although all tables contributed to all questions the 'sample' data cannot be considered as a constant sample for the whole event as often a box requiring a number has been ticked to indicate this is the choice of the table. In these cases the average number at each table has been taken as eight to contribute to the sample. Hence the sample size varies slightly throughout this report. All participants contributed fully to the information that gathered the concerns and ideas.

1.7 In addition to the consultation questions there were suggestion sheets at each table. These were for any additional questions or concerns. The information from these are reported within each relevant section in this report, with additional suggestions listed after the evaluation comments.

1.8 The information gathered will help to inform statutory, voluntary and private sector organisations involved in housing, education, community and leisure activities and health and social care in Hartlepool to design, develop and improve their services and activities for older people.

1.9 The day was organised by a planning group that included representatives from The Hartlepool 50+ Forum, Hartlepool Borough Council, Hartlepool Primary Care Trust Hartlepool, 50+ Development Officer and Hartlepool LINK's.

1.10 The event was publicised via a 'flyer' that was distributed to VCS groups and public buildings and through press releases to local media.

1.11 While the event was primarily focused on consultation it included an element of entertainment with performances from 'Echoes' a Hartlepool based voluntary drama group formed by ex-carers. The day also included a number of exhibits and display/information stalls from organisations that provide services accessed by older people in Hartlepool.

1.12 A programme for the day is included as an appendix to this report.

Feedback from table discussion one

2. Income

2.1 What the strategy says: 'Help older people to maximise their income and claim available benefits and entitlements'.

'It is estimated that nationally up to 3 BILLION pounds of potential benefits are not claimed by older people each year'.

2.2 Question 1: Participants were asked if they knew where to go to get help to access benefits.

- West View Advice and Resource Centre (12)
- CAB (11)
- Civic Centre/HBC (7)
- Benefits Office/DHSS (DWP - toolkit) (4)
- Age Concern (4)
- Community Centres (3)
- Manor Residents (2)
- Internet (2)
- Libraries – including mobile service (2)
- Housing officer/estates officer/rent office (2)
- Financial Inclusion Days
- Job Centre Plus
- Hartfields
- Hospital
- Hartlepool Carers
- HVDA
- Skillshare
- Mind
- Belle Vue
- Richard Court

Notes:

- 5 people at one table did not know where to go for information
- No one place to get help – seems to depend on who you know and pot luck. There needs to be one organisation that co-ordinates benefits information and put it in a newsletter or Hartbeat.
- All areas seem to have a place to access, everyone knew where to go.
- We need the right information at the right time.
- A lot of people are too scared/proud to ask for information or help.
- We don't want people to know all our business.
- People are entitled to it.
- Some schemes e.g. handy person, are not known about.
- Forms can be hard to understand.

Relevant suggestion sheet comments

Benefits

- Information needed on what is not means tested – we need a list please.
- Why are pensioners without benefits not able to access ‘free’ offers for tickets etc. Is there any way this can be addressed/queried?
- The financial services do not tell you all you are entitled to. We have to find out from others if we are lucky.
- Because I am not on benefits I have to pay the dentist or for glasses. That is the price I have to pay because I am independent. I even have to pay to go to any classes for recreation.
- We need a debate on welfare rights in relation to pensions – older people are living in poverty. (same suggestion recorded twice)

Employment

- More local firms need to have an older person employment policy.

2.3 Question 2: Financially had life become easier or harder since retirement

Easier	Harder	No difference
54	12	12
69%	15.5%	15.5%

2.4 Comments from the participants about life becoming easier or harder since retirement:

- Financial management – if you cant manage before retirement you wont after.
- You need to prepare for your retirement.
- I had a fear of managing before retirement but in reality it has not been a problem. I do worry about things going wrong with the house etc and not having the money to pay.
- You are OK if you are sensible.
- If you have been responsible and made provision then you get penalised i.e. no free dental service.
- The system is unfair due to some people claiming who have never worked or contributed into the system.
- This country does not treat older people fairly, earnings related supplement should be reintroduced now or standards of income will be much worse in future years. People are already working longer!
- Finishing work due to ill-health now income is not enough.
- There is an injustice of being penalised if you have worked hard.

- Pension credits are adequate and make life easier.
- The system should be more flexible the basic pension is not enough.
- Having a private pension helps a lot.
- Use of 0845 numbers – I have spent 2 hours on the 'phone!
- People are penalised 'in the system' for having savings
- More help from agencies
- More money
- More things to do
- It is easier as the family has left home, only self to look out for.
- Classes etc are very expensive if you are not on benefits.
- One of us is still working so busses still have to be paid for.
- Need to downsize but cant sell house at the moment.
- It is harder since my husband died.
- People living on their own find it harder.
- Penalised when paying bills etc as we do not have a computer.
- I get less money but feel better off as I do not need as much and have social freedom.
- Free bus pass is great.
- Concessions are excellent, particularly the green bus pass as I go places I have never been before it improves mental and physical health.
- I do not know about pension credits – this is a problem.
- Frightened of filling in forms.
- Hard to get the right advice – if you are not entitled to one benefit they do not advise you about benefits you may be entitled to.
- Prices go up but benefits don't keep up with prices.
- Going from a regular income to living off savings is hard.
- There are problems if you have no savings.
- People have to wait 6 months before claiming attendance allowance despite being very ill on discharge.
- Low level of wages before carers could claim their allowance.
- Availability of free transport and concessions makes life easier.
- Fuel allowance helps.
- Home insulation scheme and free prescriptions are good.
- Getting the right accommodation is important
- Access to surgery – new knees
- Better social life – more time

Commentary on the 'Income' feedback

2.5 A total of 20 different places in Hartlepool were identified as places to go to get help to access benefits, the two most popular were voluntary sector organisations.

2.6 The West View Advice and Resource Centre was identified by all groups as the place to go to get help to access benefits (identified by 100% of the discussion groups). CAB was the second most identified source (by 92% of the groups) followed by HBC (58%).

2.7 Some people did not know where to go to get help to access benefits.

2.8 The majority of people (69%) felt that financially life had become easier since retirement. The comments indicate that some of this 'wealth' is due to increased social freedom.

2.9 There were a number of comments about the 'system' being unfair as it penalises people with savings and people who are not 'on benefits'.

2.10 The feedback suggests that due to the work of the VCS groups and statutory provision the strategic aim to '**help older people to maximise their income and claim available benefits and entitlements**' has largely been met. However the comments indicate that the claiming of benefits/pension credits can be confusing and that some people did not know where to go to get help in Hartlepool and that some are too scared/proud to ask for information or help.

Feedback from table discussion two

3. Housing

3.1 What the strategy says: ‘Ensure that older people can live in houses of their choice which best meet their needs and promote their independence with funding for support’.

3.2 Participants were involved in discussions to find out:

- If people plan to move in the next 10 years
- Why they would move
- Select three things that could be done to existing homes to make them better suit their lives in the next 10 years

3.3 Question 1: The type of housing participants are living in

Type of housing	Own home	Privately rented	Sheltered accommodation with emergency alarm service only	Sheltered accommodation with Warden Manager & emergency alarm service	Extra Care housing	Residential - Nursing care home	Other please list
Number of people	54	5	5	14	0	0	8 Social landlords Hartfield One with alarm button
As %	63%	6%	6%	16%	0%	0%	9%

3.4 Question 2: Did participants feel their home was suitable for their needs at the current time?

Yes	No
76	10
88%	12%

3.5 Question 3: What could be changed to make it better?

Participants were asked to list improvements – these have been categorised under a number of headings.

Bathing

- A shower
- Housing Hartlepool I asked for a walk in shower and got a hand rail – bath is too small can't get in easily – age does not qualify (aged 90) as do not have a disability
- Anchor only has communal shower – why should we queue?
- Anchor – some people have to pay to get a shower installed.
- We need showers and stair-lifts when needed to help us stay in our own homes.
- Anchor – we have had to pay for our own shower – baths are too small.
- An over bath shower.
- Walk in shower.
- Physical changes to property e.g. downstairs toilet and bathroom.

General housing/adaptations

- Adaptations when needed.
- 'Fire Places' by Housing Hartlepool.
- Anchor bed-sit – lounge needs to be separate for bedroom.
- Carbon monoxide detector.
- Ramp up to house.
- Better security.
- Require stair-lift to allow husband to access bedroom, long waiting list.
- Problems with private landlords putting unsuitable characters in neighbourhoods causing problems for older people feeling they are not safe.
- Wheelchair access property – but one doorway needs to be widened.
- Shorter waiting time for adaptations.
- Grants for improvements.
- House is too large to manage.
- Cost of standard home v bungalow/flat not equitable.
- Anchor bedsit – poor design the bedroom needs to be separate from the lounge.
- A bigger budget for adaptations to allow independence
- Improved safety measures, sensitive mats, cards and alarms provided free.

Services

- Maintenance of gardens to make life easier and reduce stress.
- Help with gardening and other low-level support.
- Services to help stay in own home just not there can wait 6 weeks to have light bulbs changed with the handyman service.
- Better protection from rogue builders.
- Repairs to own home - difficult to find someone who is reputable and low cost, would benefit from firms being

recommended and set tariff being agreed.

- Council to be more supportive and flexible on waste management.
- Transport near home.
- We know of services that have been available e.g. gardening and decorating but we do not know if they are still

running and how we can access them.

- Monitoring of work that is provided free – e.g. loft insulation
- Pest control, getting no response from the council.
- More care in the community – carers need to gang round.

Energy efficiency

- Better energy efficiency.
- A decent boiler that is energy efficient.
- Condensing boiler.
- New PVC windows.
- Double glazing.
- Energy saving efficiencies.

General

Information to be the same one says one thing someone says another

Relevant suggestion sheet comments

Housing

- Lower or no steps at old people's bungalows.
- Volunteers to do painting and decorating.

3.6 Question 4: What participants felt could be done in Hartlepool to help as many older people as possible to live in their own homes.

- Help with repairs and gardening.
- Gardening help.
- Low-level support and handyman scheme for small repairs.
- Adaptations, shower bath, handles etc.
- Energy saving efficiencies, insulation etc.
- Provide steps into house.
- A ramp and handrails.
- Better bus service.
- Improved alarm and security.
- Help when we need it – it should be free.
- Help with housework/domestic tasks.
- Food delivery – access to services that suit.
- More information and someone to contact proactively for advice/support before a problem arises.
- Better street lighting, walking to the bus when dark is frightening.
- Police presence – feel more content/confident in own home if police present.
- Easy access to help and friends.
- Adaptation when needed – good example adaptations done before someone left hospital, bad example 30foot ramp in Hartlepool Mail.

- Support and advice service.
- Panic buttons and general use of technology.
- Burglar alarms and security – a lot of burglars target older people.
- Help with gardening.
- Help with small jobs e.g. changing light bulbs and decorating.
- Help for owner-occupiers.
- Good reliable 'handy-man' service.
- Help for private owners to adapt their homes.
- Good community policing to keep people safe – good work around Oxford Road.
- Building more suitable homes.
- More support for older people in the home with social visits and befriending schemes.
- More flexible services.
- More consistent care services.
- Choice of care and support.
- Clear pricing for care and support.

3.7 **Question 5:** Did participants think they would move from their current home in the next 10 years?

Yes	No
29	63
32%	68%

3.8 **Question 6:** Why participants felt they would move from their current home?

- Health problems.
- Old age.
- Fall ill and need to move.
- If house is not suitable for adaptations.
- Access to bus services.
- Need for a smaller property.
- House too big.
- Too lonely and isolated.
- To feel safer.
- Need for a bungalow – but bungalows are more expensive than houses so need bridging help.
- Feel like I am too old to live alone.
- For safety and security reasons.
- Cannot look after yourself.
- Can't manage the upkeep of house and garden.
- Wheelchair access – becoming housebound.
- Ill health.
- Anti-social behaviour in the area.
- Landlord's reluctance to carry out adaptations.
- To be closer to family.
- Mortgage concerns.
- Don't know what will happen in next 10 years.
- Social isolation.
- Downsizing to free up money in house.
- Mobility.
- Lottery win!

3.9 Other comments

Anchor rules are silly – and have dramatically changed for the worse.

There are lots of ‘downsides’ to sheltered accommodation – the rules on the notice-board are all about political correctness and not about community.

Commentary on the ‘Housing’ feedback

3.10 The majority of people (63%) were living in their own home, there were a significant number (22%) living in some type of sheltered accommodation.

3.11 The majority of people (88%) felt their home was suitable for their immediate needs.

3.12 The physical improvements to housing that people wanted to see to make them more suitable were generally small scale to do with improved access and easier bathing. There was a significant request for energy efficiency measures. There was a clear call for ‘low-level’ type services to help with small-scale maintenance, and confusion as to the availability of past ‘low-level’ services.

3.13 This call for low-level’ type services was stressed when participants identified what could be done ‘to help as many older people as possible live in their own homes’.

3.14 Almost one third (32%) of people thought they may move from their home in the next 10 years. Reasons included the physical suitability or size of the housing, deteriorating health and social reasons that included a fear of isolation and anti social behaviour in the area.

3.15 The housing feedback did identify some specific concerns with social landlords that need to be communicated.

3.16 The feedback suggests that access to ‘low-level’ support and access to smaller scale adaptations and energy efficiency schemes will go a long way towards meeting the strategic aim to **‘ensure that older people can live in houses of their choice which best meet their needs and promote their independence with funding for support’**.

Feedback from table discussion three

4. Community Life

4.1 What the strategy says: 'Expand opportunities for older people to participate in, and be part of, community life'.

4.2 'Ensure opportunities for older people to take part in lifelong learning, leisure, culture and sharing of skills'.

Loneliness in older people is recognised as an issue.

One in five people over 65 are alone for more than 12 hours a day

Britain's older people are living in isolation, with those over the age of 65 twice as likely as other age groups to spend over 21 hours of the day alone

4.3 Question 1: What participants felt could be done to encourage older people to make and maintain friendships and be active in the community?

- Join friendship clubs.
- Improved transport, support for transport, regular transport, better transport at night.
- More local clubs 'out in the community'.
- Weekly clubs (Hartfield's very good) some educational/recreational classes are good but only run for a few weeks, would like longer term classes.
- Need one place that co-ordinates information about activity – library is good.
- Travelling alone can be frightening we need a scheme that matches people up for travelling together.
- A list of local groups in Hartbeat that is advertised to everyone.
- Daytime rather than evening activities.
- Someone to introduce you so you are not going along alone at first.
- Asking people what they want.
- Communities have to take better care of each other.
- Library service to visit housebound people.
- Use all sorts of information sources to tell people what is going on, papers, radio, computers etc.
- Join a group or a club – but issues are the cost and knowing where they are.
- A buddy system to help shy people access activities.
- Find something that matches your personal interest.
- Maintain facilities that are accessible and affordable.
- Consistency of available concessions (Town Hall Theatre!).
- Cost of getting involved can be too much.
- There is an assumption amongst workers and some group leaders that people with disabilities and older people can't manage or integrate and get to know group members without support. This can create barriers with health and

- safety taking priority over social activities.
- Training to use a mobility scooter.
- Social outings that suit older people.
- More clubs for older people who live independently – not those in sheltered accommodation.
- Inter-generational activities.
- Give people information about their local voluntary organisations.
- Access to gardening and decorating.
- Have approved contractors.
- A handyman service that will do very small jobs.
- Remember that some people like to live a quiet life.
- Nothing for pensioners in bungalows it is all for sheltered accommodation.
- St Columbus Church was holding classes for older people but it finished at 9.30pm too late for older people.
- Use local schools and youth facilities during the day and 'out of hours' for older people to access in all areas – not just the NDC.

Bringing together young and old people

4.4 **Question 2:** Participants ideas for events or activities that would bring old and young people together.

- Older people in schools- history, life stories, war veterans.
- Bringing children into community centres – linking people together.
- Do they want to be brought together?
- Arts and crafts sessions.
- Social clubs.
- Walking groups.
- Would young people want to join in with older people?
- Sometimes older people feel threatened by younger people.
- Provide activities that would appeal to a wide age range.
- Example is 'food and friends' cooking classes with old and young in community centre.
- Skills exchange, young people helping with IT old people teaching cooking.
- Recent church project brought young and old together – realised that not all young people are scary.
- Volunteering where young and old work together.
- Joint Wii (computer game) event.
- Gym membership.
- Friends of Rossmere Park a good example where volunteers of all ages run Halloween Walk and Summer Fayre type events.
- Invite younger people to places predominantly occupied by older people – Care Homes, Hartfields etc.
- Events like this that also involve younger people.

4.5 Question 3: Participants ideas for training, leisure or cultural activities for older people in Hartlepool that they felt would be successful.

- Going to college for free IT training.
- Better support for people with sight problems when trying to access college.
- How will we manage our priorities with the expected cuts – will leisure be the first to go?
- Intergenerational history group to work in schools.
- Art therapy and relaxation.
- Computer skills.
- Need carers to assist.
- A walking group.
- Musical events.
- Drama groups.
- Exercise, mobility, dance etc
- Coping with technology, digital TV's, mobile phones and other gadgets
- Family history/town history.
- Ballroom dancing.
- Silver surfing – internet training.
- Activities where all people pay a small amount, even those on benefits.
- Join Friends of Rossmere!
- Flower arranging.
- Exercise classes that are specifically for older people.
- One stop shop to advertise events in the town.
- Better over 50's concessions.
- Healthy living – diet and fitness training.
- A lot goes on already.

Relevant suggestion sheet comments

- We want more intergenerational work.
- Reduce fear of crime by encouraging older people to participate in community events 'fear of leaving home' is an issue.
- How many 50+ people are there in Hartlepool? Opportunities to share experience with younger people and each other.
- Residents from Tweed Walk raised issue of former warden's house, why cant it be used for residents meetings? (same suggestion twice)

Commentary on the 'Community Life' feedback

4.6 The need for improved publicity and promotion information about what was available was stressed. In order for some people to access activities the need for a 'buddy system' was raised.

4.7 There was a clear identified need for activities that take place during the daytime rather than evening or night-time sessions.

4.8 The recurring theme of transport (including poor night time services) was raised, as was the call for local community based activities.

4.9 There were some specific issues raised that need to be communicated to the Adult Education service.

4.10 There were some innovative ideas about events that could bring younger and older people together, some involved skills exchanges. There was also an idea that older people could take an active role in helping to run 'living history' type sessions in schools.

4.11 The feedback suggests that improving the publicity of what is already available will go a long way towards meeting the strategic aim to **'expand opportunities for older people to participate in, and be part of, community life'** and **'ensure opportunities for older people to take part in lifelong learning, leisure, culture and sharing of skills'**.

Feedback from table discussion four

5. Community Safety

5.1 What the strategy says: ‘Ensure that older people have a safe and secure environment to live in, to reduce their fear of crime and promote their personal safety and wellbeing’.

5.2 Question 1: What made participants feel unsafe in their community.

- Too much hype in the media over crime.
- Darkness – poor streetlights we need better security lighting – this is a cheaper option.
- Attitude towards teenagers.
- Poor street lighting.
- Strangers coming to the door to try and sell things.
- Recorded message phone calls.
- People delivering leaflets that leave half sticking out of letter box informing everyone you are not in.
- Groups of younger people – may be innocent but frightening.
- Nighttimes in the town is unsafe.
- Groups and gangs of people.
- Fear of crime – drugs and young people.
- Anti-social neighbours.
- Environment – poor lighting, 24 hour shops, late night opening, close to cemetery.
- Taking care in the home – not climbing on tables to change bulbs.
- Pavements in poor repair.
- A bunch of youths at twilight.
- Insecurity after a break-in or attempted break-in at home.
- The need for more reassurance that things are happening with Police/housing etc when you report something.
- Better home security schemes to fit window locks etc.
- Anti-social neighbours in private landlord accommodation.
- Lack of respect.
- Police making no effort to respond.
- Ground floor at St Joseph’s get nervous when people knock on windows as can’t open windows and need secure door.
- St Joseph’s - was promised by NDC to fit security locks but it has not happened.
- Groups of young people getting into the garden.
- Poor transport links – not close enough to front door.
- Not enough respect, discipline or deterrence.
- Punishments that fit the crime

5.3 Question 2: What participants felt could be done to help people feel safer in their communities.

- More Community Police Officers in certain higher crime areas.
- Greater confidence in the system to address crime and know that something is being done.
- Public notices (via mail) of con people coming round areas. Reminders to not let people in and hints on community safety.
- Chains and locks for doors.
- Re-invent Neighbourhood Watch.
- Police to respond quicker when crime is reported.
- Punishment to fit the crime.
- Police presence on the streets.
- More Police on the beat or Community Support Officers.
- More activities for young people.
- Look at Stockton 'Street Angels' scheme – trained volunteers who operate at closing time.
- Better pavements.
- Better community spirit – where we look out for each other.
- Quicker Police response and better after care – strong group feeling about this.
- Activities to keep young people off street corners.
- More CCTV cameras.
- Community Safety Officers should introduce themselves to vulnerable people and keep in contact and build relationships. Information needs to be shared between Social Services, health staff etc to identify vulnerable people and should involve neighbours, postman, milkman etc.
- Option for people to report incidents over the phone so that neighbours don't know.
- Local police stations.
- Public 'naming and shaming'.
- Better values taught in school and at home.
- Better laws and more deterrence.
- Bring back conscription or alternatives like community service for 2 years.
- Give the Police more powers.

Relevant suggestion sheet comments

- Homer Grove – 2 lights not working. I want this looking into. I have rang twice and had no response and lights are still off after 6 weeks.

Commentary on the 'Community Safety' feedback

5.4 Some people felt that media reporting was increasing a fear of crime.

5.5 There were several ideas to improve local policing and the better deployment of Community Safety Officers, with an idea that resources should be more focused on people identified as vulnerable.

5.6 Many comments were to do with national issues regarding law and order and a dissatisfaction with the justice system.

5.7 There were a number of calls for improved home security and a call for improved information about 'con' people working in neighbourhoods, along with a call to 're-invent Neighbourhood Watch'.

5.8 Several ways of helping people feel safer were identified that if implemented could help meet the strategic aim to **'ensure that older people have a safe and secure environment to live in, to reduce their fear of crime and promote their personal safety and wellbeing'**.

Feedback from table discussion five

6. Health and Social Care

6.1 What the strategy says: ‘Help Older People to stay well by identifying ways of preventing ill health and accidents, but when they fall ill to ensure they receive the right services in the right place at the right time’.

6.2 Question 1: Participants were asked if they had ever felt disappointed with any of the health or care services they have used.

Disappointment with health care		Disappointment with social care	
Yes	No	Yes	No
29	50	22	53
37%	63%	29%	71%

Note some people answered ‘not applicable’ as they do not use health or social care services – hence the sample size is smaller than the number of participants

Note at least one disappointment with ‘social care’ was with a private not local authority service.

6.3 Question 2: Participants were asked if they knew how, and where, to make a complaint about health and social care services.

Where people felt complaints should be made.

For health care:

- PALS
- LINK
- PCT
- At the point of service.
- Should be able to contact an independent organisation that will take things forward.
- Complaints form in GP surgery.
- Complain to your GP.
- CAB
- To library
- Friends and family
- Errors on a ward were not seriously looked into by PALS
- PALS not very effective.

For social care:

- Civic Centre Director of Adult and Community Services.
 - Local councillor.
 - PALS
 - At the point of service.
 - People feel frightened of asking for social care.
 - Should be able to contact an independent organisation that will take things forward.
 - An issue with having to make complaints in writing – with an assumption that everyone can write letters,
- also a fear of putting your name to a complaint as there may be recrimination.
 - Often people are upset when things go wrong eg deaths in family – not the time to complain.
 - Complaints need to be independent of the commissioned services.
 - Fear of reprisal.

6.4 General comments made about Health and Social Care**For health care:**

A lack of dentists.

Length of time it takes to get hospital treatment.

Good examples for people in sheltered accommodation with a quick response from visiting nurses.

Out of hours service is poor.

Need to know information about the Health Bus, where it visits on what days.

Hospital car parking charges are prohibitive.

Problems with telephone appointments for GP's.

Problems with a lack of privacy when dealing with GP reception.

Having to wait 3 days for a prescription.

Getting an appointment is a real problem – having to wait in a queue a real problem for older people.

Discharged too early from North Tees when still poorly.

For social care:

Lots of good examples for people in sheltered accommodation with a quick response from wardens.

Bring back the home help, they get to know the client.

No continuity with carers coming to the home, different people entering the house uninvited.

Length of time spent with the client does not coincide with the cost paid by the client.

People not aware of their rights with regard to personalised budgets .

Rapid response service - excellent

6.5 Question 3: What participants felt could be done in their community to help prevent ill health and accidents involving older people.

Ways identified to help prevent ill health and accidents

- Take responsibility – do not stand on chairs, no flat slippers etc.
- Slip-mats about the place.
- Exercise sessions, Tai Chi etc.
- Improve the telephone booking system at GP surgeries.
- More consistency from GP's.
- Improved information for bereaved relatives.
- Eat well, sleep well and take medication properly.
- Fire alarms and smoke detectors.
- Electric and gas meters are high up in terrace houses, so a fall risk.
- Having someone to do little jobs like changing bulbs and hanging curtains.
- Kerbstones and potholes repaired.
- Better day care facilities that are affordable.
- Better lighting.
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle.
- Falls detectors.
- Better promotion and availability of the Health Bus.
- Falls awareness.
- Keep home well maintained and heated.
- Home safety checks.
- Mobility scooters.
- Cars parked on pavements.
- Leaves in autumn cause slips.
- Handyman service.
- Nutritional value of meals.
- Support workers in homes with a wider remit of what they can do.
- Pavements gritted in frosty weather with grit/salt left for community use.
- Keep hedges cut so not a hazard over the pavement and are not a place for people to hide behind.
- Get GP's to listen better and to treat people better.
- Treat people with respect

Relevant suggestion sheet comments

- More publicity for Hartlepool LINK and the service it provides
- Dementia strategy – mental health issue generally touched on only and passed.

Commentary on the 'Health and Social Care' feedback

6.6 More than one third of the people responding (37%) had been disappointed with health care services, more than one quarter (29%) had been disappointed with social care services.

6.7 The awareness of the PALS service was not high (the majority of tables had not mentioned it).

6.8 Once again the need for 'low level' support was raised several times

6.9 The feedback indicates a number of preventative actions that could help meet the strategic aim to **'help Older People to stay well by identifying ways of preventing ill health and accidents, but when they fall ill to ensure they receive the right services in the right place at the right time'**.

Feedback from table discussion six

7. Age Discrimination

7.1 What the strategy says: 'Root out discrimination without fear of repercussions in all areas of daily living'.

7.2 Question 1: instances where participants have been discriminated against due to their age

- By GP's and Hospitals who talk to son/daughter rather than me.
- Travel insurance – more expensive or refused.
- Personal insurance.
- Forced into saying 'do not resuscitate' when in hospital.
- Knee replacements – will give you when over 60 but not 50.
- Bus passes – assumptions made about the client.
- Wrong diagnosis and lack of treatment due to age.
- NHS withholding treatment due to age.
- Employment service around age and jobs.
- Speak to son or daughter instead of me.
- Lack of ramps in shops if disabled.
- Own family treats you as if you are 'losing it'.
- Old people have to give up seats on bus if young people with pushchairs get on as they have dedicated seats.
- Job applications – not said but implied.
- Hospital care withheld due to age.
- Screening procedures.
- Women over 65 not allowed to have mammograms.
- Older people wait longer to be seen by a consultant.
- Being told you are over qualified – but it really means you are too old.
- Compulsory retirement.
- Compulsory re-application for a driving licence.
- On line requirements – older people may not have IT access.
- Unequal pay for women.
- Cant move house from the area we are in to the area we want to live in.
- If you have worked all your life you are 'over the limit' for any help or benefits.
- Generally do not feel we have been discriminated against although it may be difficult to know e.g. if applied for a job and did not get it, how can you prove it was due to age?
- Overall do not feel Hartlepool discriminates on age.
- There is positive discrimination – prescriptions, leisure activities, transport.
- Working over retirement age is only an option when there is full employment otherwise they are taking the jobs that younger people need to support families. An example is Corus where older people took voluntary redundancy to help those with younger families carry on working

7.3 **Question 2:** Participants were asked ‘what could be done to reduce discrimination of older people in Hartlepool’?

- Education for older and younger and vice versa.
- Intergenerational work for better understanding.
- Treat people as individuals.
- Assertiveness training for older people.
- More positive portrayal of older people in the media.
- Challenge it through education.
- Treat older people with respect.
- Legislation to enforce anti discrimination.
- Do not collect age information on applications that may allow people to withhold services.
- Change the culture.
- Education about courtesy and manners.
- Shops to have a policy about employing older people.
- Do not call elderly, call us experienced!
- Do not call us ‘old age pensioners’.
- Make insurance available to over 70’s.
- People who have retired working as volunteers.
- Older people being out and about and engaged in their communities.
- More IT provision.
- Get rid of the stereotypical images of older people in the press and on TV.
- People feel isolated by technology.
- Get more older people to take part in meaningful consultation.
- Help older people to access PC’s and give training because so much info is now web based and older people missed this at school. Older people are excluded from web-based energy saving offers etc.
- Make retirement age a choice.
- Have an older persons advocate.

Commentary on the ‘Age Discrimination’ feedback

7.4 Although the questions asked did not prompt positive statements about age discrimination a significant number were offered.

7.5 Many of the specific instances of age discrimination (while valid) are national issues.

7.6 The feedback suggests that the strategic aim to ‘**root out discrimination without fear of repercussions in all areas of daily living**’ has largely been met and that the positive statements about Hartlepool reinforce this.

7.7 However the situation could be improved with improved access to IT training for older people (to counteract the discrimination linked to on-line inclusion) and improved training for health service and other public sector staff around age discrimination and dignity in later years.

Feedback from table discussion seven

8. Transport

8.1 What the strategy says: ‘Take action to ensure older people can go where they want to go safely, conveniently and affordably by having easy access to appropriate transport’.

8.2 Note – Before starting this consultation event the organisers were aware that public transport (and in particular local Bus services) was a big issue. With this in mind a separate consultation event was organised to deal specifically with older people’s transport in Hartlepool. The transport event was programmed to take place a week after ‘Get it Right’ and was actively promoted on the day.

Consequently the transport consultation questions asked at ‘Get it Right’ considered alternatives to public transport.

Getting out and about

8.3 Question 1: Participants were asked about ways that people get about without having to rely on the bus network. (prompts were car sharing, community transport etc)

- Family members, sons, daughters etc lift in car.
- Own car.
- Taxi.
- Bicycle.
- Walk.
- Dial-a-ride
- Disabled taxi (when available!) (twice the price!)
- Hartfield’s community transport
- Taxi sharing with friends – safer on a night.
- People did not know if Dial-a-ride is still running or how to use it.

Personal mobility aids.

8.4 Question 2: Participants were asked if they use any personal mobility aids.

- Walking stick.
- Wheelchair – occasional use
- Wheelchair.
- Shopping trolley.
- Rolater.
- Stairlift.
- Bath/shower chair.
- Walking frame.
- Hand rails.
- Grab rails.
- Elbow crutch.
- White cane.

8.5 Question 3: Participants were asked if there were any issues relating to ownership or hire of personal mobility aids in Hartlepool.

- People buy their own as the NHS waiting list is so long.
- Once NHS equipment has been finished with no one comes to pick it up and they will not let people drop stuff off. I had a three-year wait for equipment to be collected.
- Had to borrow a wheelchair for a wedding – my daughter ended up having to go to the Red Cross in Middlesbrough, this took a long time to arrange.
- No one at our table (of 9) knew where you could go in Hartlepool to hire a scooter or mobility aid.
- Mobility scooters are expensive to buy and expensive to maintain.
- Difficulty in obtaining shower chair for O.T. 11days without at present.
- Difficulty to renew scooters or purchase suitable wheelchair.
- Scooter re not insured and on the pavement.
- There is no training to ride and use mobility scooters.
- Cyclists on pedestrian crossings.
- Can't use scooters on coaches so this limits your ability to go on days out.
- We could re-nationalise the buses!
- Shopmobility – hire for an hour or hire for a week.
- Ramps in the town are good.
- Problem with lifts at Middleton Grange – only one of the two is ever working due to breakdowns – a real problem with wheelchairs.
- Also shops in Middleton Grange are piling up stock in the isles making getting round difficult with wheelchair, scooter or stick.
- Need a mobility scooter training scheme.
- Had to buy three scooters before getting a suitable one – need for a try before you buy scheme.
- Charging of mobility scooters in sheltered accommodation.
- Shopmobility scooters not certain how you use them.
- Issues with dropped kerbs and lo-loader buses.
- Concerns about the location of the new hospital and public transport links.
- Public transport costs are very high and routes are badly planned.
- Shopmobility is useful and a reasonable cost.
- People need training and insurance when they use electric scooters.

Relevant suggestion sheet comments

Public Transport

- There is a lack of bus shelters due to vandalism – they need to have seats in them, which will help you get out and about and wait for a bus.
- The Blue bus that replaced the 7A in the Rossmere area should go to Asda, turning left after Victoria Road as turning right into Hartlepool Road proceeding to do a 'U' turn at the roundabout, not stopping until M&S.
- Make all buses low loaders for wheelchairs and buggies.

Private transport

- Have the council a discrimination policy against car users?
- The Blue Badge Scheme in Hartlepool is a terribly complicated application process – I have been part of this process since May and it is now November. I've been told that in Stockton the process is so much easier and the bloke who came to do the adaptations said he could have given me a Blue Badge there and then if I lived in Stockton.
- Parking charges at the General Hospital are disgusting.
- Cycles on pavements will lead to accidents – we need more cycle paths.
- Better thinking on car parking for residents in Macaulay Road. Removal of grass verges so cars can park closer to the pavement. This will facilitate a mud free exit from the car.

Commentary on the 'transport' feedback

8.6 Issues were expressed about the availability, waiting times and collection after use of NHS adaptations and mobility aids.

8.7 Only three tables mentioned Shopmobility – suggesting that awareness of their service may not be high.

8.8 There is a clear call for training and 'try before you buy' schemes for mobility scooters.

8.9 The recurring theme of issues with public transport throughout all discussions during the consultation event suggests there is a way to go before the strategic aim **'to ensure older people can go where they want to go safely, conveniently and affordably by having easy access to appropriate transport'** is met.

Feedback from table discussion eight

9. Information Sharing and Planning

9.1 What the strategy says: 'Move towards organisations working together to share information and resources for the benefit of older people'.

9.2 'Ensure that there is opportunity for real involvement by Older People in the planning and delivery of services to meet their needs'.

9.3 Question 1: What information did people want that they don't get at the current time?

- A range of information in a variety of formats.
- Need hard copies of bus timetables as well as internet and bus timetables displayed at bus stops.
- Information for out of town buses – Durham, Newcastle, Sunderland etc.
- Benefits for retirement delivered from specialists at Job Centre or by home visits.
- Pro-active approach about benefit information.
- Better pension advice.
- Information on benefits.
- Day-centre availability and costs.
- Personalised budget information.
- Leisure activities.
- Terminal illness – what help is available.
- Had to pay and 'jump through hoops' to access health records.
- Advice on managing risks and of cons etc taking place.
- Bus and train timetables.
- Activities in the town.
- Hospital, what will happen, how will I get there, what will it mean for me?
- Feedback on the older person's strategy and its effects.
- How to get a bungalow.
- Advice and information on carers allowance.

9.4 Question 2: What did people consider the best methods for getting information across?

- Radio.
- TV.
- Back of buses.
- Internet.
- Libraries.
- GP surgeries.
- Newspapers.
- 50+ Forum looking at communications and doing out-reach
- Not on-line!
- Telephone – but not 0845 numbers.
- Age concern.
- Face to face over a cup of tea.

- HVDA.
- Events like this!
- Hartbeat magazine (but distribution is poor in some areas of the town).
- Notice board in the central library (used to have one but now it is just leaflets).
- DVD or CD of what's on and services in the town.
- General information guide – as a hard copy.
- Word of mouth works well in Hartlepool.
- Staff who know how to deal with an enquiry and who to pass it onto.
- Stall in the town centre.
- Wardens in sheltered housing.
- Through the libraries.
- Drama groups.
- Need a 'one stop shop'.

9.5 Question 3: What are people's thoughts on using newer technology to help spread information? (web sites, email, text messages etc)

- Only use ICT if you have got it. Some people cant afford, similar for mobile 'phone, ringmaster.
- Good for people with a computer.
- Care homes should have internet access.
- Some people do not want to use a computer.
- People would use internet if trained.
- Also need training on how to use mobile 'phones.
- Mobile phones good for emergency.
- People are interested in learning computer skills.
- Technology reduces personal contact.
- Computer skills courses should be free.
- Problem with an expectation that older people will go on-line when sometimes the best approach is to speak face to face or on the 'phone with someone.

Relevant suggestion sheet comments

Technology

- Exclusion from inclusion in a vast area of knowledge/info due to no 'computer' use for many reason (illiterate, cant afford, don't want to learn) most media, newspapers, radio do not give an address or 'phone number just a www.
- Do not penalise or discriminate against those people who do not have up to date/modern technology.
- I am penalised on my telephone bills because I have no computer. I have to pay £1.25 a month just to get a paper bill.
- There is IT poverty – if you are not on line you are disadvantaged.

9.6 **Question 4:** Did participants want to continue to be involved in events like this where you share your thoughts, experience and ideas?

Yes	No
96	1 (maybe)
99%	1%

Commentary on the 'Information Sharing and Planning' feedback

9.7 There was a clear call for bus and train timetables to be available as 'hard' copies and not just on-line.

9.8 Participants generated an impressive list of promotion methods and locations to disseminate information about activities and services. The list has potential to be used as the basis of a checklist for future promotion.

9.9 The need for improved information about benefits, pensions, leisure activities and care and health services was reinforced.

9.10 While training in the use of technology was not universally desired a significant number wanted help in using computers and mobile 'phones. There was also a call for on-line access to be available in care homes.

9.11 Almost all the participants (99%) wanted to continue to be involved in similar consultation events, only one person was undecided.

9.12 If the desire to continue to be involved in consultation is met along with improved publicity then moves will have been made to meet the strategic aim of a **'move towards organisations working together to share information and resources for the benefit of older people'** and **'ensuring that there is opportunity for real involvement by Older People in the planning and delivery of services to meet their needs'**.

Evaluation – a total of 97 evaluation sheets were completed

1. What participants thought about the **venue**

	Poor	OK	Good	Very Good
Number	1	5	18	73
As a percentage	1%	5%	19%	75%

2. What participants thought about the **refreshments**

	Poor	OK	Good	Very Good
Number	0	5	19	73
As a percentage	0%	5%	20%	75%

3. What participants thought about the **content of the day**

	Poor	OK	Good	Very Good
Number	0	2	22	73
As a percentage	0%	2%	23%	75%

4. What participants thought about the **opportunities for them to have their say**

	Poor	OK	Good	Very Good
Number	1	1	20	75
As a percentage	1%	1%	21%	77%

Other comments received about the day and ideas for improving similar events

- Well covered
- Would like to see the day repeated, enjoyed it very much!
- Not waiting outside in the cold, signing in indoors. Should have been told the meeting was upstairs
- Please can we have some more.
- Very good.
- Good
- Very informative
- Felt too many discussion questions, could have amalgamated questions.
- Interesting company.
- Enjoyed the day and look forward to hearing about the outcome.
- Can we have more please.
- Great facilitator.
- Venue rather noisy.
- Excellent event.
- Very positive image of older people in Hartlepool.
- I have had a very enjoyable day, can we have a repeat next week?
- Very good.
- Cannot think of any way to improve this, unless we can get smaller numbers at the tables.
- Enjoyable and informative.

- If possible more space – especially with disabled attending.
- I had my back to the performances and stage because of the round table.
- Did me good. Happy day. Table was a very happy one.
- The venue was noisy and some found it difficult to hear.
- You are doing a very good job.
- Thanks for a very enjoyable day.
- Not so much sitting down (you stiffen up when you get older).
- Great day – but a long day.
- No way to improve – just more often.
- Facilitator did a great job at timekeeping and making sure we did not over-run.
- Keep them going – good day out.
- Enjoyed today a real delight meeting Chris Akers Belcher.
- Christopher Akers Belcher explained perfectly.
- Access for wheelchair users and toilet facilities are poor.
- Chris made sure we all understood and handouts helped us stay on topics.
- Fire escape access if in wheelchair.
- Christopher Akers Belcher excellent facilitator.
- Facilitator seemed to ignore me quite a bit and was a bit rude saying ‘OY You’! a little arrogant.
- My table was ‘professional-heavy’ only two elderly people fielding questions for the rest of us. Could this have been better organised?
- Enjoyed today very much.
- Enjoyed today very good.
- Venue was excellent but too many people in room.
- Workshops too short
- The day was a good balance, information, entertainment, refreshments, interesting people and the topics covered.
- Hope this day will achieve something.
- Very pleased with all that has been talked about.

Other questions or concerns that participants wished to report that had not been covered during the day

- Well covered
- Need a contact in care of poor health other than social services, Police, Doctors. Someone like NHS Direct but more local for when people are feeling frightened and alone.
- Proposed diminishing Fire Services in the area.
- I think everything has been covered.
- Have other opportunities to express questions etc.
- My questions were covered, thank you.
- Not much room to get in and out between tables and chairs.
- More on disability.

Suggestion Sheet Comments

The suggestions, concerns, questions and ideas that people wanted reporting – where possible these have been included in the general feedback – these are the additional comments.

Environment

- Better clearance of bins and re-cycled goods.
- Most places in town we cannot let our dog off lead. They need to play with other dogs and socialise. There is spare ground on Kingsley Avenue recreation ground?

About the Get it Right event

- The facilitator should have listened to everyone and given all an equal amount of time. Could not hear half of the time too much noise in the room. I felt other people dominated the discussion.
- Historic Quay room far too crowded and a fire hazard were there to be a fire.
- Room too small for number of elderly and disabled people attending meeting.
- Well-designed programme. Paul Hyde kept timing well.
- The venue was crowded and it was difficult hearing with many people talking at other tables. Pleasant surrounding.
- The meal was very tasty unfortunately the person serving was disgruntled and made it known.

Appendix One – event programme

Get it right

Hartlepool Older People's Consultation Event

The Historic Quay

Friday November 6th - 2009

During the morning

9.30am to 10.00am	Tea & coffee – you will be welcome from 9.30am onwards with tea and coffee served in the foyer
10.00am	Opening address – Joan Scrafton
10.10am	Performance 1 Carers Echoes Drama Group ('Next Factor')
10.20am	Introduction to the event – how you can join in and have your say (Paul Hyde)
10.25am	Table discussion 1 – income and benefits
10.50am	Presentation: Christopher Akers-Belcher – benefits and an introduction to housing
10.55am	Table discussion 2 - housing
11.20am	Performance 2 Carers Echoes Drama Group ('Doctor doctor')
11.30am	Presentation: Keith Bayley – community life
11.35am	Table discussion 3 – community life
11.45am	Introduction to the next table discussion (Paul Hyde)
11.50am	Table discussion 4 – safe and secure
12.10pm	Sian Johnson – HVDA 50+ Development Officer introduction to her role and details of lunch/exhibition arrangements
12.15pm	Lunch will be served

During the lunch break there will be 'Market Stall' display from organisations that work with, support and are of interest to older people living in Hartlepool will be setting up displays, talking to people and even giving out free gifts.

Get it right

Hartlepool Older People's Consultation Event

During the afternoon

1.30pm	Sports Development – join in with their gentle exercise session and introduction to healthy and well discussion
1.45pm	Table discussion 5 – healthy and well
2.10pm	Presentation: Councillor Ged Hall – tackling discrimination
2.15pm	Table discussion 6 – age discrimination
2.40pm	Introduction to the final table discussion sessions (Paul Hyde)
2.45pm informed	Table discussion 7 and 8 – transport and keeping you
3.20pm	Closing address - Joan Scrafton
3.25pm	Evaluation and raffle

The event will finish at 3.30pm