

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 28 FEBRUARY 2012

CHAIRMAN OF COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

“AGEING WELL” – A SCRUTINY DISCUSSION WITH EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HEALTH, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

WARD(S) AFFECTED: all

---

**Purpose/Summary of Report**

- This report is intended to support the discussion with Executive member for health, housing and community support on the question “Ageing Well – how is East Herts working to make this a good district to grow older in?”

<b><u>RECOMMENDATION FOR : COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></b>	
<b>(A)</b>	that the themed questions form the basis of the scrutiny discussion with the Executive member; and
<b>(B)</b>	comments are passed to the Executive on the perceived strengths and challenges in the council’s forward thinking in respect of the ‘ageing well’ and ‘later life’ agenda.

1.0 Background

1.1 At the last meeting of Community Scrutiny committee the issue of an ageing population generally and the demographic data for East Herts particularly were raised as a concern. Members agreed to initiate a discussion with the Executive on the topic - with a view to exploring the council’s readiness, resilience and sustainability in respect of the ‘ageing well’ and ‘later life’ agenda.

2.0 Report

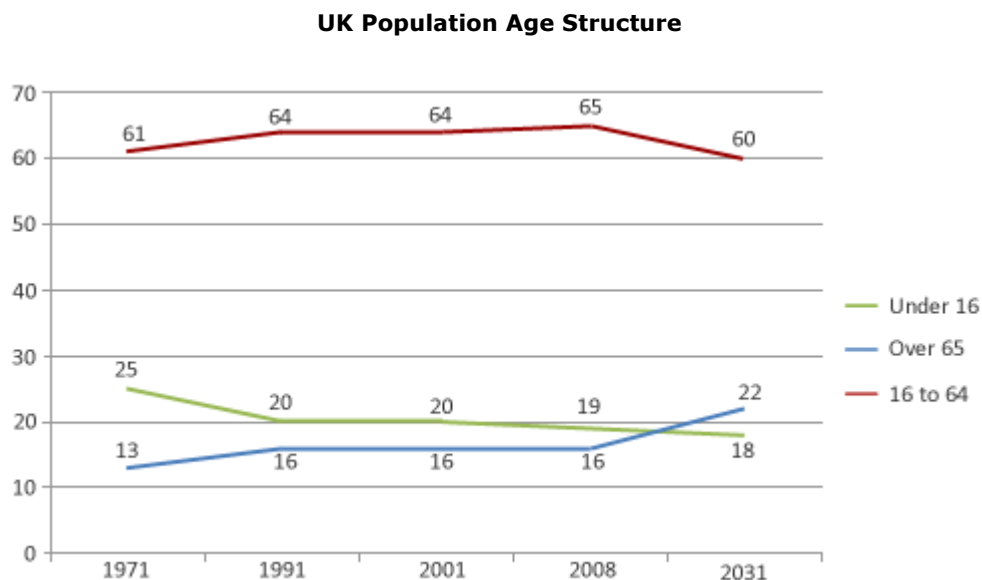
2.1 “Ageing Well – how is East Herts working to make this a good district to grow older in?” Why does this question need to be asked?

## 2.2 The Ageing Population – national overview

The UK population is forecast to grow from around 60 million in 2008 to 71.6 million in 2033. Part of this growth is being driven by an ageing population.

In December 2009 the Office for National Statistics reported that the proportion of the UK population aged under 16 had dropped from 25% in 1971 to 19% in 2008. At the same time, the proportion aged 65 and over had risen to 16% compared to 13% in 1971. This trend is projected to continue.

By 2031, 22% of the population will be aged 65 and over compared to 18% aged 16 or younger.

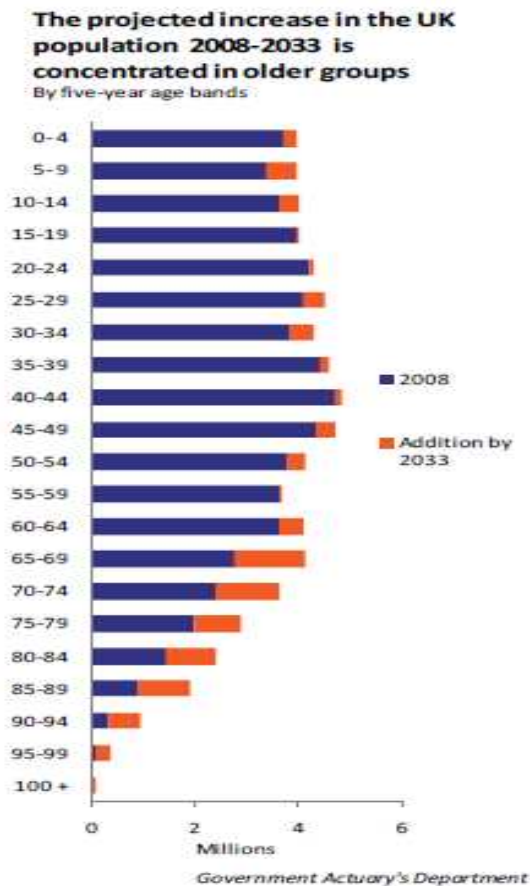


Source: Office for National Statistics; General Register Office for Scotland; Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency  
Mid-year estimates for 1971 to 2008, 2008-based projections for 2031

The fastest increase has been in those aged 85 and over, the 'oldest old'.

- In 1983, there were just over 600,000 people in the UK aged 85 and over
- Since then, the numbers have more than doubled, reaching 1.3 million in 2008
- By 2033 the number of people aged 85 and over is projected to more than double again to reach 3.2 million, and to account for 5% of the total population

## 2.3



State benefits and the NHS accounted for just under half of government expenditure in 2009/10. With much of this spending directed at elderly people, their growing number will present challenges for providers of these particular services as well as for the public finances as a whole.

Ref: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/research/key-issues-for-the-new-parliament/value-for-money-in-public-services/the-ageing-population/>

## 2.4 The Ageing Population – local perspective

As a district council, East Herts does not have responsibility or direct liability for state retirement pensions or NHS health care, however the 'strain' on broader public finances caused by increasing expenditure in these areas will have considerable impact on second and third tier authorities as resources are squeezed.

## 2.5 East Herts does have need to consider an ageing population in respect of

- Its universal services generally being age accessible and meeting the broader 'equalities' agenda
- Council Tax benefits

- Housing benefits
- Concessionary Travel (bus passes) – although administration passed to county council from 1 April 2011, East Herts has an ongoing liability for funding the scheme (was £790K in 2010/11)
- Parking and transport – the district is the parking authority, it contributes to community transport and seeks to influence the county council (as HCC is the local highways authority)
- Planning
- Public health – major changes in devolved responsibility due to come into force as part of the Health and Social Care Bill
- Community safety
- Parks, open spaces, leisure, arts
- ... this list is not exhaustive, all aspects of the council's work will potentially be affected by changes in local demographics and the authority will be operating under the wider Big Society, Localism and Wellbeing agenda set by central government.

2.6 When considering the council's readiness, resilience and sustainability in respect of the 'ageing well' and 'later life' agenda members need to be aware of the projected population figures for East Herts to get an understanding of the potential scale of impact.

Age group	%age change in 2009-15 period	Estimated number of people (in 000s) in 2015
65-69	29.8%	7.4 (up from 5.7)
70-74	12.2%	5.5 (up from 4.9)
75-79	7.1%	4.5 (up from 4.2)
80-84	20.0%	3.6 (up from 3.0)
85-89	22.2%	2.2 (up from 1.8)
90+	55.6%	1.4 (up from 0.9)
		<b>24,600 residents aged 65 and over by 2015 (which would be 17.5% of the 141,800 population projected for EH at this date)</b> Note: 65+ were only 13.0% of 136,400 in 2009

Age group	%age change in 2009-15 period	Estimated number of people (in 000s) in 2015
45-49	0.7%	11.8 (up from 11.1)
50-54	1.9%	11.1 (up from 9.2)
		<b>These groups represents the most numerous 'decade' in the 2015 projected population at 16.1% of total - is EH ready to manage as these 22,900 people reach 65+?</b>

Ref: data extracted from Office of National Statistics projected number of population and forecasted percentage change in East Herts for 2009-2015

2.7 With the scale of the ‘problem’ become clear and the concerns of scrutiny being voiced, the following themed questions were prepared in consultation with the Community Scrutiny chairman. These will be used to structure the discussion with Executive member for health, housing and community support (Cllr Linda Haysey).

2.8

	THEME	Questions
1	<b>Strategy and Partnerships</b>	What priority is EH giving to ‘age proof’ its own strategies, policies and services?
		What responsibility do you feel EH has to work with its main contractors on the broader ‘later life’ agenda?
	<i>LSP = Local Strategic Partnership</i>	What role can EH play within the LSP to ensure the partnership actively engages in addressing the needs of the increasing older population?
2	<b>Achieving cost effective services</b>	Given an uncertain economic future, how can the council and its partners best get to understand the needs and manage the expectations of an increasing number of older people across the district.
		What work has been done on the medium term financial strategy to take into account the local population trends, demand forecast for services and any impact of an aging population on EH?
		What plans does EH have to work with county and neighbouring authorities to develop co-ordinated strategies (on public transport, housing, leisure, health inequalities etc) to support independent living for a greater number of older people?
3	<b>‘People’</b>	What thoughts do you have on the level/extent of involvement of older people in the design, commissioning, procurement and delivery of services in future?
		What are the key contributions you think individual district councillors could make to the ‘later life’ agenda within their own ward?
		What role do you foresee the district being able to play within the changing landscape of health and social care in the short, medium and longer term future – with particular reference to championing the needs of older EH residents?
4	<b>‘Place’</b>	What is your vision for the development of “lifetime neighbourhoods” ** in EH?
		What do you think are the greatest challenges around rural isolation (of older people) that the

		council needs to address or seek to influence?
<b>5</b>	<b>'Prosperity'</b>	<p>Given an aging workforce and increase in state pension age, does EH have any plans to work with the local business community to promote flexible employment and training opportunities for older people to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• help maintain their own financial independence?</li> <li>• continue to contribute to the economic viability of the district?</li> </ul>

NOTE \*\* *the concept of a **Lifetime Neighbourhood** is one which offers everyone the best possible chance of health, wellbeing, and social, economic and civic engagement regardless of age. It provides the built environment, infrastructure, housing, services and shared social space that allow us to pursue our own ambitions for a high quality of life. It does not exclude us as we age, nor as we become frail or disabled.*

2.9 Members are asked to consider the report, engage in discussion with the Executive member and pass constructive comments onto the Executive on the perceived strengths and challenges in the council's forward thinking in respect of the 'ageing well' and 'later life' agenda.

### 3.0 Implications/Consultations

3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'** which follows.

#### Background Papers

Four principles of good public scrutiny published by CfPS (Centre for Public Scrutiny) [click here for link to CfPS external site](#)

East Herts Council own current guidelines for selecting issues for review. A summary of this information is printed at the back of Essential Reference Paper B.

Contact Member: Cllr Graham McAndrew, Chairman: Community Scrutiny Committee

Contact Officer: Lorna Georgiou, Performance and Improvement Co-ordinator and acting manager – Extn 2244

Report Author: Marian Langley, Scrutiny Officer – Extn 1612

## ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

<p>Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives</p>	<p>Effective use of the scrutiny process contributes to the Council's ability to meet two core objectives:</p> <p><b>Fit for purpose, services fit for you</b>  <i>Deliver customer focused services by maintaining and developing a well managed and publicly accountable organisation.</i></p> <p><b>Leading the way, working together</b>  <i>Deliver responsible community leadership that engages with our partners and the public.</i></p> <p>In monitoring the performance of the council's services and action plans, the Committee is monitoring the Council's achievement of all of its corporate objectives.</p> <p>Any additional issues identified for scrutiny will relate to at least one of the Council's corporate objectives.</p>
<p>Consultation:</p>	<p>Potential topics for scrutiny are always invited from members of the public, the Executive and all Members.</p>
<p>Legal:</p>	<p>According to the Council's constitution, the scrutiny committees are responsible for the setting of their own work programme in consultation with the Executive and in doing so they shall take into account wishes of members on that committee who are not members of the largest political group on the Council.</p>
<p>Financial:</p>	<p>Any additional meetings and every task and finish group has resource needs linked to officer support activity and time for officers from the services to make the required input.</p>
<p>Human Resource:</p>	<p>none</p>
<p>Risk Management:</p>	<p>Matters which may benefit from scrutiny may be overlooked. The selection of inappropriate topics for review would risk inefficient use of resources. Where this involved partners, it could risk damaging the reputation of the council and relations with partners.</p>